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DOSSIER

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI: VESPERS DELLA
BEATA VERGINE (VESPERS 1610) - SV 206

Choral Technique:
The Sistine Chapel Choir:
between tradition and modernity

INTERNATIONAL CHORAL BULLETIN

COVER

The Sistine Chapel Choir, Vatican

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



DR. MICHAEL J. ANDERSON

President

Dear friends,

During the past three years, we have focused on a new operational model for IFCM. Among the many changes made, to ensure the solvency and sustainability of IFCM, is bringing the center of our attention back to our Founding Members (FM). By doing so, we are building a true global model in which the FM will have an integral role in the international projects of IFCM. By tying in all the members of the Founding Members, our intent is to provide significantly more opportunities for everyone.

As I finish my time as President of IFCM, I want to take this opportunity to thank those who have served our membership so well, beginning with the Founding Members. They are A Coeur Joie International, represented by Thierry Thiebaut, the Japan Choral Association, represented by Saeko Hasegawa, the European Choral Association-Europa Cantat, represented by Gábor Móczár, the American Choral Directors Association, represented by Tim Sharp, and the Nordisk Korforum, represented by Håkan Wickström.

The other board members that provided vision and critical support to IFCM are Oscar Escalada, Argentina, Cristian Grases, Venezuela/USA, Sang-Kil Lee, South Korea, Jean-Sébastien Masiala,

DR Congo, and Theodora Pavlovitch, Bulgaria.

Special thanks must go out to our staff, because they are the people who keep this organization running on a day-to-day basis. They are Nadine Robin Ryan, Office Manager, USA, Francesco Leonardi, Project Manager, Italy, Andrea Angelini, *International Choral Bulletin* (ICB) General Manager, Italy, Theodor Lind, Legal Committee Chairman, Norway, Jack Hoeschler, Attorney, USA, Angelina Vong, Translator and Events Administrator, USA, and Vladimir Opacic, Former World Youth Choir Manager, Serbia.

There are so many others who have assisted with running IFCM and not enough room to mention each by name. For instance, the writers for the ICB, the translators for the ICB, the designers for IFCM Publications, the Board of Directors at IFCM-US, volunteers at our two overseas offices, the technical designers and experts for the IFCM website, the numerous volunteers at all events, and on, and on. We are extremely grateful to you all!

IFCM owes its new-found direction and vitality to the Executive Committee, who is charged with the day-to-day running of the organization. Massive accolades should go to: Vice-Presidents Stephen Leek, Australia; Emily Kuo Vong, Shanghai, China; Philip Brunelle, USA; and to Treasurer, Håkan Wickström, Finland.

On a personal note, I want to say a particular thank you to Philip Brunelle. Not only has he served IFCM for many years first as Treasurer, and now Vice-President, but it was he who sustained me at a devastating and disheartening time in IFCM. We had lost all funding, much of the leadership, and our home—forcing us to “start over.” However, his enormously positive witticisms such as, “IFCM is worth saving...,” or “Life is too short to worry about...,” or “Oh well, we smile and move on,” and his never-failing confidence, are what kept me going. He is a special friend, one who stays when everyone else heads for the door. Thanks, Philip!

I feel comfortable, as I step down, that IFCM is in good shape and ready to be a strong leader for many more decades of choral music for all the world. Our movement toward global education, the change of our operations to a stronger business model, and the focus on the Founding Member’s (FM) involvement in the world-wide projects, are working. This, along with the establishment of a 10-year plan of operations, which includes more projects, publications, and opportunity for choral musicians along with the methodical implementation of these changes, positions IFCM as the global umbrella of choral music.

As we say, IFCM is made up of many *Volunteers Connecting our Choral World!* I thank everyone for your support and encouragement during my tenure as President of IFCM.

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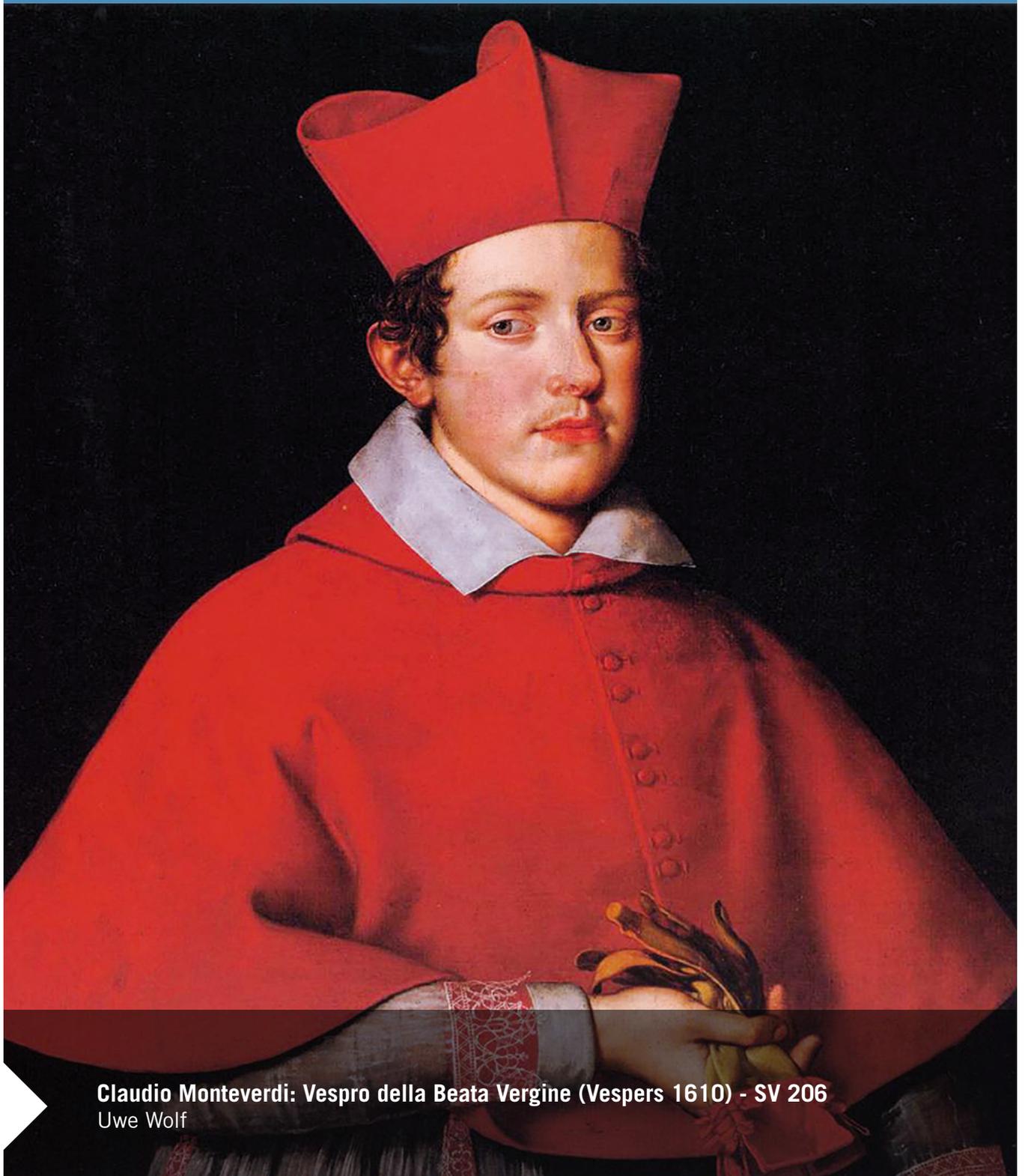
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CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI: VESPRO DELLA BEATA VERGINE



Claudio Monteverdi: Vespro della Beata Vergine (Vespers 1610) - SV 206
Uwe Wolf

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI: VESPRO DELLA BEATA VERGINE (VESPERS 1610) - SV 206

UWE WOLF
musicologist

INTRODUCTION: THE *VESPRO DELLA BEATA VERGINE* IS PART OF A COLLECTION WHICH APPEARED IN 1610 BEARING THE TITLE "SANCTISSIMAE VIRGINI MISSA SENIS VOCIBUS, AC VESPERE PLURIBUS DECANTANDAE."¹ IT BEGINS WITH THE *MISSA IN ILLO TEMPORE*, A MASS WHICH PARODIES NICOLAS GOMBERT'S MOTET OF THE SAME NAME, AND IS FOLLOWED BY THE SEQUENCE OF PIECES KNOWN AS THE VESPERS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN, WHICH WE PRESENT IN OUR SCORE: RESPONSORY, FIVE VESPER PSALMS FOR MARIAN FESTIVALS, HYMN AND MAGNIFICAT (IN TWO VERSIONS), AS WELL AS THE CONCERTI *NIGRA SUM*, *PULCHRA ES*, *DUO SERAPHIM*, *AUDI COELUM* (INTERPOLATED BETWEEN THE PSALMS), AND THE *SONATA SOPRA SANTA MARIA*.

Very little is known about the genesis of the Vespers of the Blessed Virgin, or more specifically, about the collection containing it. The collection was first described in July of 1610 by Monteverdi's assistant Don Bassano Casola (the dates of his lifetime are unknown). In a letter to Cardinal Ferdinando Gonzaga, the younger son of Monteverdi's noble employer Vincenzo Gonzaga, Casola wrote that Monteverdi's six-voice "Messa da Cappella" on themes from Gombert's motet "In illo tempore" was currently being published. Along with the mass, psalms for a Vespers of the Blessed Virgin ("Salmi del Vespro della Madonna") were being printed. These were to consist of varying and diverse inventions and harmonies over a *canto fermo* (cantus firmus). Casola further reported that Monteverdi intended to travel to Rome in autumn, in order to personally dedicate the collection to his Holiness the Pope.²

The print does indeed bear a dedication to Pope Paul V which is dated 1 September 1610. Researchers unanimously assume that Monteverdi wished to recommend himself as a composer to the Pope – and most likely to other potential church employers – with this collection. The characteristic of a "portfolio" has left an essential impression on the 1610 print in many respects, and it is certainly an important key to understanding the collection. Certainly, this was the reason for combining a mass and vespers music in one volume. The mass was traditionally conservative, while more modern trends³ were pursued in the vespers; Monteverdi utilized the tension between these contrasting idioms more than any other composer of his time.

On 1 September, the date of dedication, the print may well have been nearly complete, since Monteverdi set out for Rome shortly after this date, already arriving at the beginning of October.⁴ Monteverdi's attempts to attain entrance into the Seminario Romano for his son Francesco were the main purpose of his trip to Rome. However, the trip was hardly successful: Monteverdi neither succeeded in securing a place for his son at the Seminario nor did he obtain an audience with the Pope to present his print in person.

1 For the complete title cf. Critical Report.

2 In the original: "Il Monteverdi fa stampare una Messa da Cappella a sei voci di studio et fatica grande, essendosi obligato maneggiar sempre in ogni nota per tutte le vie, sempre più rinforzando le otto fughe che sono nel motetto, *in illo tempore* del Gomberti e fa stampare unitamente ancora di Salmi del Vespro della Madonna, con varie et diverse maniere d'inventioni et armonia, et tutte sopra il canto fermo, con pensiero di venirsene a Roma questo Autumno, per dedicarli a Sua Santità." This letter was first published by Emil Vogel, "Claudio Monteverdi. Leben und Wirken im Lichte der zeitgenössischen Kritik und Verzeichnis seiner Werke," in: *Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 3 (1887), p. 430. The letter has been cited often in literature on the Vespers.

3 Cf. Uwe Wolf, *Notation und Aufführungspraxis. Studien zum Wandel von Notenschrift und Notenbild in italienischen Musikdrucken der Jahre 1571–1630*, Kassel, 1992, vol. I, p. 44ff.

4 One must consider that at the time, music prints could only be produced in a few locations. Monteverdi's collection appeared in the very center of music publication, in one of the large printing offices of Venice (Riccardo Amandino). From there, the copies first had to reach Monteverdi.

Monteverdi may possibly have met the Pope already in 1607 in Mantua. This could explain why Monteverdi quoted his opera *L'Orfeo*,⁵ which had been performed for the first time that year in Mantua, in the vespers' responsory and magnificat.

Monteverdi's intention of travelling to Rome was probably also the motive for the publication of the mass and vespers, which might have been planned for a longer period of time, but had not yet been carried out. Casola's first reference to the collection already associates it with the trip to Rome (cf. above). Publication most likely took place under considerable time pressure, since Casola mentions the work on the print in July as a novelty, the dedication is dated 1 September, and Monteverdi already had to leave for Rome shortly after this date. At any rate, such time pressure could explain certain discrepancies in the print of 1610, especially the existence of deviant versions of various pieces in the basso continuo score (see below) – which are presumably earlier – as well as a larger number of printing errors.

Whether a "premiere performance" of all or some of the pieces took place before the collection went to press is unknown. While it seems more plausible in the case of the mass that it was created especially for this publication, the instruments employed in the three movements with obbligato instruments (Nos. 1, 11 and 13) vary considerably, which allows for the assumption that at least some of these pieces were composed for different occasions,⁶ with instrumentation specifically tailored to the particular performance situations. Differing versions of the basso continuo and the vocal parts in no less than five pieces allow the assumption that existing pieces were revised.

However, church music was not actually part of Monteverdi's vocational obligations in Mantua, though this does not rule out that he also took part in church music performances at important festivities.⁷ Various hypotheses on the occasion and purpose of the compositions have been brought forward in the last fifty years, none of which could be supported by any documentary evidence at all up until now.⁸ No

performances can be verified for Monteverdi's Venetian period either (although we can safely assume that at least individual sections were performed). By contrast, when Monteverdi applied for the position of *maestro di cappella* at San Marco in Venice, the 1610 print was surely an essential argument for actually entrusting him with the position.⁹

THE 1610 PRINT

Along with Monteverdi's later collection *Selva morale e spirituale* (1641), the print of 1610 belongs to a category referred to as repertoire prints, which unite in one volume music for the two most important worship services of the universal church, the Mass and Vespers. The description of the collection in the signature marks on the vocal parts is in keeping with the tradition of such repertoire prints: "Messa & Salmi di Claudio Monte Verde."¹⁰ Although the collection's contents possess parallelisms in genre with a number of other repertoire prints (mass, psalms, magnificat and motets),¹¹ there are major differences between Monteverdi's collection of 1610 and other contemporary prints of this kind:

1. Psalms and concerti are not in separate categories, they alternate.
2. The magnificat settings are two versions of the same composition.
3. The mass setting adopts a very archaic form of parody mass.
4. Psalms and magnificat follow a clearly-defined and even named common principle.

Especially the first point has been the topic of much discussion. The hypothesis that we have a complete vespers setting at hand – and not merely a series of vesper compositions – is primarily and definitively based

5 Jeffrey Kurtzman, *The Monteverdi Vespers of 1610. Music, Context, Performance*, Oxford, 1999, p. 14. The Pope was staying in Mantua in May 1607. The performance of *L'Orfeo* had already occurred in February of 1607, but it still could have been a topic at the court.

6 For example, the absence of a third cornetto part in the responsory (the part of the first viola would match perfectly) is just as difficult to explain as the absence of violas in the Sonata and the *Magnificat*.

7 Cf. among others John Whenham, *Monteverdi: Vespers 1610*, Cambridge, 1997, p. 29ff.

8 Various theses are summarized by Kurtzman 1999, p. 11ff.

9 A Venetian document mentions that not only the test pieces Monteverdi performed, but also his printed works spoke for his election (cf. Whenham, 1997, p. 40 and Kurtzman, 1999, p. 52f). We can presume with certainty that only church works were consulted. Aside from the early three-voice pieces *Sacrae cantiunculae* (1582) and the print of 1610, Monteverdi had not published any sacred works.

10 Michael Praetorius abbreviates the title even further and speaks of Monteverdi's ("Claudii de Monteverde") "Psalmi vespertini," a common title-page formulation of the time (*Syntagmatis Musici ... Tomus Tertius*, Wolfenbüttel, 1619, reprint, Kassel, 1954 (Dokumenta musicologia, I: XV), p. 128; Praetorius describes the verse sequence of the hymn "Ave maris stella" here).

11 Some examples: Giovanni Paolo Cima, *Concerti ecclesiastici*, Milan, 1610; Francesco Rognoni Taegio, *Messa, salmi intieri et spezzati, Magnificat, falsi bordone & motetti*, Milan, 1610; Valerio Bona, *Messa e vespro a quattro chori*, Venice, 1611; Tomaso Cecchino, *Psalmi, missa, et alia cantica*, Venice, 1619; Sigismondo Arsilli, *Messa, e vesperi della Madonna*, Rome, 1621.

liturgical context. The two versions of the magnificat¹⁸ could also be indebted to Monteverdi's incentive to prove his capability to create equivalent compositions: one for a large instrumental apparatus, and an *a cappella* version.

In all of the movements scored for instruments where the actual

¹⁸ Scholars have discussed several questions, such as: which of the versions is the earlier one, are they two versions of the same composition at all, or are they merely similar compositions? (see Whenham, 1997, p. 78f. and Kurtzman, 1999, p. 264ff., with a summary of the discussion to date). Meanwhile, some indications speak in favor of the idea that the interrelationship of the two *Magnificats* is more complicated, and cannot simply be described with the one-dimensional terms "first version" and "second version": Both compositions contain passages for which one could well argue that they should be considered to be earlier material. Most likely, precursors existed which influenced one another reciprocally.

number of participants exceeds the number of available part-books (i. e., seven), vocal and instrumental parts are printed together on each left and right hand facing page of a part-book, respectively. The page turns for these shared parts concur. The distribution of the additional voices was carried out differently in the part-books for each composition. In the three works with obligato instrumentation (Nos. 1, 11 and 13), the same instrument is hardly ever assigned to the same vocal part twice. The *Missa* and *Magnificat* are treated as works with more than one movement. When voices pause during a certain piece, the marking "tacet" is used. Other compositions are treated as individual works of their own, since these are not mentioned in the part-books which are not involved.

The oversized "Bassus generalis" part-book contains, for the most part, a basso continuo part largely without figuration, which still frequently takes on the form of a *basso seguente* in longer passages. On the other hand, the four concerti are printed in full score in the "Bassus generalis," as was the general custom with this type of music.¹⁹ Full scores are also extant for the *Crucifixus* of the mass, for Nos. 13g, and 13l. This part-book also contains short scores for Nos. 1 (two voices), 4 and 6 (three voices). In our edition, we therefore generally refer to a "basso continuo score." Incidentally, the "Bassus Generalis" is already labeled as the "Partitura del Monteverde" in its signature marks. In the organ part published within the performance material of this edition, we have followed the notation of the short score and print the staves of orientation as given in the original "basso continuo score"; in addition, we have supplemented the vocal texts which were not rendered in the original basso continuo score.

¹⁹ The score has no text, since a separate vocal part exists; by contrast, secular monodic music was only published in score form.



Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

LITURGICAL PROBLEMS

In the monastic hours of prayer, vespers consists, in essence, of the responsory, five psalms, which vary according to the church festivals, and the Magnificat. Other spoken texts may be added. Psalm and Magnificat are framed by antiphons (sung before and repeated after the psalm), which establishes a reference to the respective festivals.²⁰ The psalm tone conforms to the tone of the antiphon; various cadential phrases (*differentiae*) of the psalm tones facilitate reconnecting with the antiphon. For a long time, literature on Monteverdi's *Vespers* has described the fact that no Marian festival exists with the psalm tone order which occurs in the print of 1610. Numerous hypotheses fall into line with these findings, ranging from the assumption of special liturgies,²¹ via the assertion that tonal reference was no longer taken seriously in Monteverdi's age, to the denial of liturgical unity, which prevails today.

Many indications, however, point to a liberal treatment of the psalm tones at least, although it is not entirely clear what this means in detail. Apparently, the *differentiae*²² were no longer in use. Collections exist which allegedly offer material for all of the high festivals of the church year, containing all the psalms implemented in the vespers, but all using just one psalm tone²³ apiece. Monteverdi also uses final cadences for the psalm tones which were apparently the only ones remaining. He sometimes employs the liturgical tones at different levels – at the beginning and end of the psalm as well – making a coherent return to the antiphon impossible.²⁴ In his overview of vespers for the church year, Adriano Banchieri lists only psalm tones²⁵ which vary from festival to festival for the magnificat, additionally underscoring the apparently slight significance of the psalm tones (and hence for the antiphons as well?).

The position of the concerti between the psalms is most often explained with the reasoning that instead of a repetition of the antiphon these concerti were performed as substitutions. This theory has been reinforced by accounts of Vespers in which motets were performed between the psalms. However, accounts of vesper services in which motets were performed between the psalms²⁶ must not inevitably be interpreted as documentary

20 Cf. Whenham, 1997, p. 8ff. on the structure of the vesper service after the reforms of the Council of Trent.

21 The most prominent example is Graham Dixon's hypothesis that the vesper is actually not in honor of the Virgin Mary, but was composed for St. Barbara of Mantua, following a special liturgical form for Mantua ("Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610: „della Beata Vergine“?," in *Early Music* 15 [1987], pp. 386–89). This view must primarily be countered with the argument that a vesper according to Mantuan liturgy would hardly have been fitting for a dedication to the Pope, and probably not even for publication.

22 Whenham 1997, p. 22; Pietro Pontio, *Ragionamento di musica*, Parma, 1588, reprint, Suzanne Clercx (ed.), Kassel et al., 1959 (Documenta Musicologica, I:XXVI), p. 97f.

23 For example, Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, *Psalmi ad vespertas in totius anni solemnitatibus*, Venice, 1588, ²1592; Adriano Banchieri, *Salmi festivi intieri, coristi, allegri, et moderni*, Venice, 1613. Cf. also Whenham, 1997, p. 15.

24 For details, cf. Whenham, 1997, p. 60ff.

25 Adriano Banchieri, *L'Organo Suonarino*, Venice, ¹1605, reprint, Amsterdam (together with the editions of 1611 and 1638), n.d. (Bibliotheca Organologica, XXVII). In the "Norma a gli organisti" (p. 118ff.), only the hymn and the magnificat tones in both vespers are named for the various feasts.

26 Whenham, 1997, p. 20. Banchieri refers to organ playing between the psalms (*L'Organo Suonarino*, Venice, ²1611, p. 45 of the facsimile edition, see footnote 25).

evidence that they were substituted for the antiphons. This could have been a practice which was not "liturgical" in a narrower sense of the word, since vespers of the early seventeenth century were nearly concert-like in character. This might possibly explain more conclusively why Monteverdi exemplarily placed concerti between the psalms than the idea of antiphon substitution.²⁷ In principle, one can only regret the lack of research on liturgical practices at this point, without which a solution ultimately cannot be given.

By now, the majority of researchers assume that the vespers part of the 1610 print cannot be viewed as a liturgical entity for which a contemporary performance can be postulated.²⁸ But rather, Monteverdi would have expected individual sections to be performed in different contexts. The fact that Monteverdi broke with the custom of placing the concerti in a separate section of the print – in addition to the order of psalms and the magnificat in their liturgical succession customary in prints of the vespers – and set them between the psalms instead, could indicate an intended order of performance. This, in turn, should be understood as "exemplary" and not as an actual "performance unit."

EDITIONS OF THE VESPERS A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Over the course of the years, the Vespers of the Blessed Virgin have been the subject of more editions than any other seventeenth-century composition. Carl von Winterfeld²⁹ was the first researcher to publish

27 Cf. also Whenham, 1997, p. 19.

28 Ibid., p. 2, and Kurtzman, 1999, p. 39.

29 Carl von Winterfeld, *Johannes Gabrieli und sein Zeitalter*, Berlin, 1834, reprint, Hildesheim 1965, vol. III, p. 112f. (*Dixit Dominus*) and p. 114f. (*Deposuit of Magnificat a 7*).



Portrait of Pope Paul V (c. 1605–1606); painting by the Italian artist Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571–1610), now in Palazzo Borghese, Rome

isolated examples. Gian Francesco Malipiero brought out the first edition of the complete collection in 1932³⁰; it appeared within the complete edition of Monteverdi's works, of which he was the general editor. It was not an academic edition by today's standards. No critical remarks were given, and only a few footnotes make reference to grave deviations from the source. The numerous mistakes in the musical text are partially a result of the editor's alterations, and even more so of misinterpretations of the historical evidence handed down to us. Nevertheless, his edition was the starting point for a series of editions (which frequently adopted Malipiero's mistakes, as must be admitted). Practical editions followed, which were often marked by encroachments of various kinds: re-instrumentation, abridgements, rearrangements, and transcriptions of the late mensural notation, which seems absurd to us today. Simultaneously, editors begin to omit parts of the print of 1610 (concerti) or amend it (antiphons); in both cases, the goal is the construction of a liturgical vespers.³¹ For a long period of time, Gottfried Wolters' edition (1966) of the complete vesper section of the print (with only the *Magnificat à 7*) was authoritative for musical practice.³² Wolters' edition is the first which contains critical remarks, albeit incomplete. The note values and the meters are still subject to drastic changes. Although the score only contains the original instrumental voices, Wolters supplied a full orchestration of the

30 *Monteverdi Opere*, vol. XIV, parts 1 and 2.

31 For information on editions up to 1999, cf. Kurtzman, 1999, p. 15ff.

32 Claudio Monteverdi, *Vesperae beatae Mariae virginis. MarienVesper 1610*, ed. by Gottfried Wolters, Wolfenbüttel and Zürich, 1966.

entire *Vesper* within the part material, as was the case in many editions. Fortunately, he retained the historical instrumentation to a large extent. Liturgical supplements (antiphons) are mentioned in an appendix. Wolters' edition has influenced the transmission of the *Vespers* as no other. With Clifford Bartlett's edition of 1986 (rev. 1990/2010³³), a new series of critical editions based on the source was initiated. However, the musical substance was alienated anew, due to problematical hypotheses (cf. transpositions and triplet transcription in the sonata, as mentioned below[in the original foreword; this is not part of this abridge edition]). On the other hand, problems of the 1610 print are left unsolved, and are passed on to performers due to exaggerated adherence to the source.³⁴ Three new editions have also appeared in the 21st century (the present one is the fourth). Among these, Antonio Delfino's³⁵ new edition, which has been published within the framework of the new complete edition of Monteverdi's works (2005), deserves mention. It is the first (and only) edition up until now which meets modern expectations of a critical edition, especially in its treatment of the historical material handed down to us and in its objective rendition of the musical text. On the other hand, the shortened forms of triple meter (transformed into sextuplets) in Delfino's edition are disturbing and no longer up-to-date; these result from the obsolete guidelines of the Monteverdi edition.

Claudio Monteverdi: Vespro della Beata Vergine, edited by Uwe Wolf, Stuttgart (Carus) 2013. Translation: Greta Konradt. Used with permission." (Abridged. This is followed by chapters on notation publication and performing practise in the original edition)

Edited by Taylor Ffitch, USA

33 Monteverdi, *Vespers (1610)*, revised editions 1990 and 2010, respectively, ed. by Clifford Bartlett, Huntingdon, 1990 and 2010.

34 For example, many incongruities still remain in the edition: Claudio Monteverdi, *Vespro della beata Vergini da concerto, composto sopra canti fermi SV 206*, ed. by Jerome Roche, London et al., 1994, such as rhythmic deviations between the bass and the basso continuo, or divergent mensural notational signs and time signatures

35 Claudio Monteverdi, *Missa da capella a sei. Vespro della Beata Vergine*, edizione critica di Antonio Delfino, Cremona 2005 (Claudio Monteverdi: Opera Omnia. Edizione nazionale a cura della Fondazione Claudio Monteverdi, Volume nono)..



UWE WOLF studied musicology, history, and historical ancillary science at Tübingen and Göttingen. After receiving his doctorate in 1991 he was a research fellow at the Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Institut in Göttingen. From 2004 he worked at the Bach-Archiv Leipzig. There he directed one of the two research departments, was substantially responsible for the redesigning of the Bach Museum, and he developed the digital Online-Projekt Bach. Since October 2011 he has been the Chief Editor at Carus-Verlag, Stuttgart. He has taught at various universities and also belongs to the editorial boards of several complete editions. Email: uwolf@carus-verlag.com

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR CHORAL MUSIC



2017 China (Qiandongnan) International
Folk Song Choral Festival and IFCM World
Voices Conference

Maestro Electo Silva Gainza Passes Away
Digna Guerra

2017 CHINA (QIANDONGNAN) INTERNATIONAL FOLK SONG CHORAL FESTIVAL AND IFCM WORLD VOICES CONFERENCE

KAILI CITY, 8-13 AUGUST 2017

ON 14 MAY 2017, A SUCCESSFUL PRESS CONFERENCE WAS HELD IN SHANGHAI PROMOTING THE UPCOMING 2017 CHINA (QIANDONGNAN) INTERNATIONAL FOLK SONG CHORAL FESTIVAL AND IFCM WORLD VOICES CONFERENCE.

During the press conference, music professionals and news/media outlets from China and abroad were able to experience the rich culture of the Miao and Dong people. Through a special live performance of their songs and dance, attendees observed the passion they have for song and dance and their role in daily life. Miao and Dong people have colourful costuming that is native to each village and tribe; these costumes are rich in colour and are hand-embroidered to show each village's colours. Known for their silver hand-made jewellery, Miao and Dong people wear astonishing headpieces, pins, necklaces, bracelets, and other accessories all crafted in, that make their costumes dazzle for the audience.

During this festival, as delegates learn about the Miao and Dong people, they will also discover other folk cultures from around the world. As part of the IFCM World Voices Conference, the Barents Ensemble (Lapland), Voz en Punto (Mexico), Dalinda Vocal Group (Sweden), Kentucky Harmony (USA) and The Chuck Nation Band (USA) will

perform concerts to promote the importance of folk culture exchange and education. Participants will observe lectures given by world-renowned ethnomusicologists including Márta Sebestyén (Hungary), Katarina Barruk (Sweden), Karen Brunssen (USA), Allen Henderson (USA), Samir Bahajin (Morocco), and Sylvie Le Bomin (Benin). Assisting Philip Brunelle, Co-Artistic Director for this Festival, was Gan Lin, Co-Artistic Director, and representatives from IFCM's Founding Members, Gábor Móczár from the European Choral Association-Europa Cantat (ECA-EC), Tim Sharp from the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), and Thierry Thiébaud of Coeur Joie International (ACI).

Experience the rich culture of Qiandongnan, and join us this August 2017 for a journey to experience folk music from around the world.

**2017 中国（黔东南）国际民歌合唱节 暨国际合唱联盟“世界声音对话”



MAESTRO ELECTO SILVA GAINZA PASSES AWAY

DIGNA GUERRA

choral composer and teacher

ON 30 MAY 2017, MAESTRO ELECTO SILVA PASSED AWAY. HE WAS AN EDUCATOR, COMPOSER, ARRANGER, CHOIR DIRECTOR, AND FOUNDER OF THE SANTIAGO ORFEON CHOIR AND UNIVERSITY CHOIR.

Silva Gainza was born in Santiago de Cuba on 1 November 1923. He graduated in psychology and education from the Universidad de Oriente. In 1955, he created his first choir, the polyphonic singers, and, from then on, dedicated himself to promoting choral singing, having a considerable influence on choral singing in Cuba. He founded the *Festival Nacional de Coros* (National Choir Festival) in 1961, in which choirs from many different countries participated, and which later became the *Festival Internacional de Coros de Santiago de Cuba* (Santiago de Cuba International Choir Festival). He formed several children's choirs and also the prominent women's choir 'Coro Femenino Sirenas' del Conservatorio Esteban Salas.

He directed many significant symphonic-choral works, notably *Fantasia Coral* by L.V. Beethoven, *Cantata Alejandro Nevski* by Prokofiev, and *Cantata to Santiago de Cuba* by Calixto Alvarez.

On an international scale, he worked with the 'Choir of Gothenburg' (Sweden), 'Tritonus Choir' (Denmark), The 'Dresden Radio Children's Choir' (Germany) and the 'University of Veracruz' choir.

As a composer, he wrote for all types of choirs: children, young male and female, as well as mixed-voice choirs. His works have been edited in Cuba, Denmark, Sweden, the United States and France, and were entered into contests in Latin America and Europe.

Maestro Silva's choral works, both his originals and his arrangements, are highly recognisable thanks to the timbre and pitch used by the Cuban singers. His use of rhythmic frames, as used in popular traditional Cuban music, and the use of polyrhythm within these frames, as well as his contribution to choral literature in general, certainly explain why he is considered as the figurehead of Cuban choral music.

He was awarded several honorary medals, including one for National Culture (2001) and the Felix Varela de Primer Grado order, awarded by the State of Cuba.

His most notable publications include:

- 30 canciones populares cubanas (30 Popular Cuban Songs)
- Canciones del Caribe (Caribbean Songs)
- Homenaje a la Trova (Homage to Trova)
- Haiti Canta. (Haiti Song)

He also published textbooks about choral music.

Santiago de Cuba is in mourning, as well as the entire Cuban choral movement. I am sure that many choirs from around the world who have sung his music will be as sad to lose him as we are.

Email: dguerra@cubarte.cult.cu

Translated by Alex Huskinson, UK

Edited by Emily Wood, UK



The funeral of Maestro Electo Silva Gainza

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CHORAL WORLD NEWS



**FICORU, the First University
Choir Festival**
Ana Patricia Carbajal
Córdoba

**EURASIA CANTAT:
IVth International Choral
Assembly**
Elena Bartnovskaya

**The 2017 International
Chamber Choir Competition
in Marktoberdorf, Germany,
2-7 June**
Tim Koeritz

**2017 American Choral
Directors Association
National Conference**
Tim Sharp

**“Finding the balance
between technical
proficiency and passion”**
Henriette Brockmann

FICORU

The First University Choir Festival

ANA PATRICIA CARBAJAL CÓRDOVA

professor and choir conductor

THE VERY FIRST INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY CHOIR FESTIVAL TOOK PLACE FROM 1ST TO 5TH FEBRUARY 2017 IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE NATIONAL AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF MEXICO. ON THIS OCCASION, MORE THAN 500 YOUNG CHOIR MEMBERS CAME TOGETHER FROM PRIVATE, STATE AND FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES.

During the first four days, the choral singers worked hard under the baton of invited workshop organisers: María Felicia Pérez from Cuba, who ran the “Caribbean Music” workshop; María Guinand from Venezuela, who offered the young people a workshop called “Venezuela in the voice”; and José Rivera from the USA, who ran the workshop “Singing for freedom”.

During each day, the choirs had the opportunity to listen to talks about the choral music scene in the countries represented by the workshop organisers, to appear in concerts together with other choirs and, at night, to attend gala concerts.

For the closing concert in the majestic Nezahualcoyotl Hall, a young composer was commissioned to compose a piece for choir and piano based on a poem by Nezahualcōyotl; a Mexican director was then invited to stage this work with the choirs who participated in FICORU 2017.

The University Choral Programme from UNAM’s Music Department was the host of this festival, with 15 volunteers from various choirs in charge of several tasks to help ensure that the festival ran smoothly. Mexico City is so large that many precautions had to be taken to be able to get things done in a timely manner, and to ensure this was not an obstacle to participants trying to reach the various activities offered throughout the Festival.

We are sure that an event the scale of FICORU 2017 enriches the education of the choirs on our University Choir Programme and also each and every participant, which is why it is worth making efforts to ensure this Festival grows and continues to take place in the future. The closing concert of the FICORU filled the Nezahualcōyotl Room with an audience interested in listening to the various repertoires that were rehearsed in the workshops and the guest choirs also performed a piece before the grand choral finale. It is important to

emphasize the importance of creating a cappella choral music and to demonstrate the beauty of this difficult and enriching art.

My sincere thanks to all those people and institutions who responded to this call, who joined in and gave their best to make the First University Choir Festival, FICORU 2017, happen.

For more information on the University Choir Programme, please write to procoral@unam.mx.

Translated by Lottie Valks, UK

Edited by Mirella Biagi, Italy/UK



ANA PATRICIA CARBAJAL CÓRDOVA studied Piano and Musical Education and is specialised in choral conducting. In 1989, she founded the *Voce in Tempore* Choral Ensemble, a group made up of amateurs, with which she won various awards. In 1997, she founded *Voce in Tempore A.C.*, a group dedicated to promoting, spreading and giving choral music in Mexico a professional status. She currently holds a Master’s degree in Cultural Promotion and Development, is the coordinator of the *Niños Cantando de la Universidad La Salle* Choral Conference, coordinates UNAM’s University Choral Programme and the Choral Conducting Programme at the University of the Americas, and is a professor of Choral Conducting at the Celaya Conservatory of Music and in UNAM’s Music Department. Email: voceintempore@yahoo.com

2017 AMERICAN CHORAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION NATIONAL CONFERENCE

TIM SHARP

ACDA Executive Director

THE BIENNIAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN CHORAL DIRECTOR'S ASSOCIATION TOOK PLACE MARCH 8-11, 2017, IN MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA. HOME TO TOP COLLEGE CHORAL PROGRAMS AND LEADING ENSEMBLES, ALONG WITH MORE THAN 4,000 CHOIRS, MINNESOTA WAS THE IDEAL LOCATION FOR THE UNITED STATES' PREMIER CHORAL CONFERENCE.

The theme for this year's National Conference was *A Life of Song*. Tom Shelton, chair of the Conference Steering Committee, stated, "I selected this theme to honor every singer—no matter the age—from birth to 100+ years old. Singing is something we can do our entire lives!"

The conference comprised over 90 performances and 53 educational seminars for the more than 5,000 registered choral directors in attendance, and the additional

10,000 choir members, singers, students, chaperones, industry leaders, audience members, and guests in attendance. Performances took place at four venues in the downtown Minneapolis area: the Minneapolis Convention Center, Orchestra Hall, Central Lutheran Church, and Westminster Presbyterian Church. ACDA's Director for Conferences Craig Gregory spends the two years between conferences carefully booking venues and scheduling

performances to best anticipate the size of the audience and needs of the performers.

Conference performers are invited to attend ACDA's national conference based on a process of blind judging, whereby a conductor submits a recording of his or her choir to be vetted anonymously by a panel of judges. Recordings are submitted from a range of choirs from middle schools, high schools, colleges and universities, and professional organizations.



Inner Mongolian Youth Choir, conducted by Yalungerile



The 2017 Award was presented to Andre Thomas at a special reception on Friday night

ACDA's premier choral event drew thousands from not just North America but from thirty-six different countries around the world. Included in the exciting and prestigious lineup of international performers was the Inner Mongolian Youth Choir; the eighty-voice Swedish male choir, Orphei Drängar; the Stuttgart Kammerchor; Canada's Hamilton Children's Choir; and Vox en Punto from Mexico. A favorite programming component for all attendees are the various international choirs.

The 2017 conference kicked off on Tuesday night with a "Welcome to Minneapolis" concert featuring Minnesota's own VocalEssence Chorus, Philip Brunelle, artistic director; the distinguished composer Dominick Argento; The Singers—Minnesota Choral Artists, Matthew Culloton, conductor; and The Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra. Another highlight of the evening was Garrison Keillor, a native of Minnesota and longtime host of the radio program *A Prairie Home Companion*, who led an audience sing-along. The entire city was invited to attend this opening free concert.

Another conference highlight was a performance of the renowned St. Olaf Christmas Festival, one of the oldest musical celebrations of Christmas in the United States (Anton Armstrong, festival director). The festival features nearly 600 student musicians, and participating ensembles include the St. Olaf Choir, the Viking Chorus and the St. Olaf Chapel Choir, the Manitou Singers, the St. Olaf Cantorei, and the St. Olaf Orchestra. Each group performs individually and as a mass ensemble, to the delight of listeners.

Honor choirs are an exciting component of each ACDA national conference. Singers from the elementary school age through college singers can submit recordings to be chosen through blind review by a panel of choral experts. The 2017 event included over 1200 singers across four honor choirs: children, conducted by Joan Gregoryk; middle school/junior high, conducted

ACDA strives to make their conferences inclusive of all genres, and attendees can find a wide range of music from across the country and around the world.

by Lynnel Joy Jenkins; high school, conducted by Eric Whitacre; and collegiate, conducted by Jeffery Ames. The conductors for each honor choir are esteemed names in the field of choral music and are chosen by the Conference Steering Committee. Eric Whitacre, Grammy-winning composer and conductor, also performed with his Eric Whitacre Singers for a packed house on Wednesday afternoon, March 8, the first full day of the conference.

ACDA's 2017 National Conference also included events such as a Gospel Brunch featuring LU Praise from Liberty University, and special evenings of music including Jazz Night, a Music in Worship Service, Contemporary/Commercial Showcase, and International Choir Concerts. ACDA strives to make their conferences inclusive of all genres, and attendees can find a wide range of music from across the country and around the world. Ringmasters, the 2012 World Champions of Barbershop, performed along with Crossroads, another world champion barbershop quartet. The United States Navy Band and Sea Chanters Chorus wowed audiences with their range of repertoire from the classic *God Bless America* to their spin on traditional sea chanteys.

Each national ACDA conference includes the world-premiere performance of the Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission. This choral series was established in 1991, and the ACDA Executive Committee commissions a recognized composer to write a choral composition to be performed at the national conference. This year's Brock Memorial composer was J. A. C. Redford, a well-known film and choral composer, whose music has been heard by tens of millions of people worldwide, although many may not have realized it. Among numerous television and movie credits, he arranged and conducted

Adele's Oscar-winning title song for the movie *Skyfall*, for which he also orchestrated the score. He wrote both the text and music for the 2017 ACDA Brock Commission piece, titled *Homing*. The work was first performed on Wednesday night by Magnum Chorum (Mark Stover, conductor). The second part of the program featured Orff's *Carmina Burana*, conducted by Robert Spano, Grammy Award-winning conductor, pianist, and composer. Keeping with tradition, the conference delivered 53 breakout "interest" sessions, tailored to the most critical and timely topics of concern and interest to choral directors and choral music educators. Topics included active aging and the choral ensemble, the adolescent female changing voice, building an intergenerational male choir, honoring LGBTQ singers in the choral classroom, multicultural programming, and new ways to improve your conducting gesture. There were also panel discussions with top names in the choral field: Jo-Michael Scheibe, Jeffery Ames, Hilary Apfelstadt, Lynne Gackle, James Jordan, Dennis Schrock, and Phillip Swan.

One exciting addition this year to the national conference program was a Composer's Track specifically designed to promote the growth of emerging choral composers. This set of sessions premiered at the 2015 national conference with the goal of further developing one of the 12 purposes of the Association: "To foster and encourage choral composition of superior quality." Sessions included topics such as "The Composer and



Philip Brunelle opening the ceremony with his Minneapolis based ensemble, *Vocaleissance*



High School students conducted by Eric Whitacre



Chorus," "Composing in Choral Classrooms," and a composition master class—an open forum with new compositions under composer-mentors Steven Sametz and Libby Larsen.

The Robert Shaw Choral Award is presented during each national conference to a choral leader who has made unusual and significant contributions to the art of choral music through teaching, conducting, and leadership. Nominations are submitted from ACDA membership, and the recipient is chosen by the ACDA Past Presidents' Council. Previous winners include choral giants such as Weston Noble, Paul Salamunovich, and Alice Parker. The 2017 Award was presented to Andre Thomas at a special reception on Friday night. There are other awards presented at the conference as well: the Julius Herford Dissertation Prize, sponsored by Classical Movements; the past-president's award; and inductions into the Wall of Honor, to honor deceased ACDA conductors. Seven conductors were inducted: Kenneth Jennings, Helen Kemp, Robert Page, Stephen Paulus, Raymond Robinson, Sir David Willcocks, and Stephen Zegree. During each National Conference, I have the opportunity to address our membership with my "State of the Association" address, highlighting the various choral initiatives at work through ACDA.

One of the major draws of ACDA's national conference is the opportunity for attendees to network with colleagues and "meet and greet" choral leaders and other mentors. Between concerts and interest sessions, there are a number of reading sessions, forums, exhibitor showcases, receptions, and rehearsals occurring throughout the day and into the evenings. For honor choir students, it is the highlight of their year to perform on a national stage, and teachers back

home are equally as proud to have their students and school represented. Those interested in taking a break from walking the exhibit halls, filled with booths from over three-hundred exhibitors and vendors, had the option of viewing one of two movies—*Big Voice*, an 83-minute documentary directed by Varda Bar-Kar that chronicles a challenging year in the life of a determined public high school choral director; and *Robert Shaw, Man of Many Voices*, a film about the music, life, and legacy of Robert Shaw that the *New York Times* called "poignant and compelling" (James R. Oestreich, April 27, 2016). The 2017 National ACDA Conference concluded on Saturday, March 11, with a performance by the high school honor choir, conducted by Eric Whitacre. The all-Whitacre program included his popular work *Godzilla Eats Las Vegas*. When asked how he selected the repertoire for the program, he said, "What I decided to do was just my own music, not out of a sense of vanity, but I thought at this point in my life I think I can be considered an authority on the music of Eric Whitacre. It was the one unique thing I, as a conductor, might be able to bring to their experience. I am the guy who wrote this, so here is the inner machinery of how all of this works" (interview with Tom Wine, November 26, 2016).

ACDA is now preparing for their 60th anniversary "Diamond Jubilee" National Conference, which will take place in Kansas City, Kansas, in March 2019. Each year the conference gets bigger and better, with more offerings, more venues, and more opportunity to learn from each other, share the beauty and passion of choral music, and live into our ACDA mission of "inspiring excellence in choral music education, performance, composition, and advocacy."



TIM SHARP (BM, MCM, DMA) is Executive Director of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), the national professional association for choral conductors, educators, scholars, students, and choral music industry representatives in the United States. He represents choral activity in the United States to the International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM). Sharp, himself an active choral conductor, researcher, and writer, has varied his career with executive positions in higher education, recording, and publishing. Prior to his leadership of ACDA, Sharp was Dean of Fine Arts at Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, and earlier, Director of Choral Activities at Belmont University, Nashville, TN. Tim's research and writing focuses pedagogically in conducting and score analysis, and various published essays and books betray his eclectic interests in regional music history, acoustics, creativity, innovation, and aesthetics. He has conducted university, community, church, and children's choirs, and continues to serve as choral conductor and clinician in the United States and internationally. He is in his tenth year as Artistic Director/Conductor of the Tulsa Oratorio Chorus, Tulsa, OK. *Innovation in the Ensemble Arts: Sustaining Creativity* is Tim's third book in the ensemble arts series published by GIA Publications, Inc. The other books in this series are *Mentoring in the Ensemble Arts: Helping Others Find Their Voice* and *Collaboration in the Ensemble Arts: Working and Playing Well with Others*. Dr. Sharp is a Life Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge University, with degrees in music and conducting from The School of Church Music of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Belmont University, and Bluefield College. He resides in Edmond, OK, with his wife Jane and daughter Emma Jane. Email: sharp@acda.org



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EURASIA CANTAT: IVTH INTERNATIONAL CHORAL ASSEMBLY

21-25 APRIL, 2017

ELENA BARTNOVSKAYA

artistic director of the International Choral Assembly EURASIA CANTAT

THE INTERNATIONAL CHORAL COMPETITION AND FESTIVAL, EURASIA CANTAT IVTH INTERNATIONAL CHORAL ASSEMBLY, TOOK PLACE IN EKATERINBURG FROM THE 21ST TILL THE 25TH OF APRIL, 2017.

Traditionally, the EURASIA CANTAT Assembly is organized by the Ekaterinburg City Administration, with support from the International Choral Union and the 'Foundation for the Support and Implementation of Creative Youth Activities in the Field of Musical Culture'.

The EURASIA CANTAT International Choral Assembly has become a creative brand and a significant cultural event in Ekaterinburg.

The Assembly is organized to develop choral musical culture through creative regional and international contacts. The main aim of this collaboration is to increase choirs' professional skills, enrich their repertoires and permeate performing styles with the best samples of musical culture in the world. Leading specialists in the field of choral and vocal music take part in EURASIA CANTAT. In total, more than 1000 people participated in the EURASIA CANTAT Assembly: 80 choirs from 25 Russian cities including Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Zhukovsky, Zelenograd, Izhevsk, Novosibirsk, Tyumen, Chelyabinsk, Perm, Nizhnevartovsk, Ekaterinburg and cities in the Sverdlovsk region.

Outstanding representatives from the choral world adjudicated the choirs' performances: Andrea Angelini (Italy), choral conductor and editor-in-chief of the FARCORO magazine; Romans Vanags (Latvia), conductor and chairman of the Latvian choral conductors' board; Manxue Hu (China), artistic director and conductor of the Lily girls' choir at the Shenzhen high school; Nina Groshikova (Russia), professor and Honoured Artist of the Russian Federation; Vladimir Zavadsky (Russia), professor, Honoured Artist of the Russian Federation, Dean of the Faculty for Vocal and Choral Arts, and Head of a Choral Conducting Department; Alla Litvina (Russia) – professor and chairman of the Sverdlovsk (Ekaterinburg) branch of the Russian Choral Society; Olga Davydova-Gurevich (Russia), winner of international competitions and a professor of vocal art.

At the EURASIA CANTAT events, there were representatives from the City Administration, members of the Ekaterinburg City Duma, representatives from the 'City of Ekaterinburg' Public Chambers, heads and deputy heads from the city's social policy department, rectors from creative universities



Choir of the ballet and opera theatre, conductor Elena Nakishova, Ekaterinburg

and vocational secondary schools in Ekaterinburg. The consular corps, the ministers for culture and education in the Sverdlovsk region were also invited.

The most vibrant choirs and winners from the EURASIA CANTAT IVth International Choral Assembly went on to participate in the gala-concert, which was held on the 25th of April, 2017 in the Ekaterinburg Young Spectator theatre.

The competitive performances were held in the best acoustic concert halls in Ekaterinburg: the I. Makletsky Concert Hall at the Sverdlovsk regional musical college named after P. I. Tchaikovsky, which is the concert hall used by Ekaterinburg's Male Choral College. This year the competition rules for choirs were more complicated. So a choral unison performance was mandatory. It was necessary to perform a varied programme of different genres and styles. A new category for beginners with no competitive experience was added to the list of events: this was a 'free category' without strict rules, where choirs could perform a programme of their own choice.

The EURASIA CANTAT International Choral Assembly programme was updated for 2017 with new events. For the first time within the framework of the Assembly, the 'Grand Choir' project was implemented. Each choir that wanted to take part in this project performed several works from different eras. Following their performance, each choir immediately received feedback online from the jury, regarding their quality, style and fidelity to features of the genre. Participation in this event required a very high level of professional training from the choirs. To the satisfaction of the organizational committee, whose main priority is to improve the choirs' skills, there were only entries from choirs from Moscow, Ekaterinburg and Saint Petersburg. This time, organizers chose a fundamentally new approach to festival concerts. Traditionally, at the EURASIA CANTAT Assembly, several choirs gathered in a concert hall and a concert took place in a warm, friendly but secretive atmosphere. At the IVth EURASIA CANTAT International Choral Assembly choirs performed in museums where the audiences were made up of citizens from Ekaterinburg, who were visiting the museums. At the same time as performing, the choirs were also able to see the unique

One unforgettable event was a concert by maestro Valery Gergiev with a symphony orchestra as a part of the Easter festival in the Sverdlovsk State Academic Philharmonic Concert Hall.



Choir of the Russian song "Vinograd", conductor Olga Makarenko, Magnitogorsk

collections at the Ekaterinburg Museum of Fine Arts and the Ekaterinburg History Museum following their performances.

A varied cultural program was organized for participants of the competition. The guests of the city were able to see the sights of the Ural capital and Sverdlovsk region, visit the border between Europe and Asia, and attend Ekaterinburg's churches. One unforgettable event was a concert by maestro Valery Gergiev with a symphony orchestra as a part of the Easter festival in the Sverdlovsk State Academic Philharmonic Concert Hall.

The Grand-Prix of the contest remained in Ekaterinburg for the very first time! The winner of EURASIA CANTAT was the student choir from the Ural University, under the direction of Svetlana Dolnikovskaya!

Members of the jury noticed a significant increase in the performance level of participating choirs in 2017.

A wonderful EURASIA CANTAT International Choral Assembly has come to an end and organizers already have new creative plans for the future. In March 2018, the International Choral Conference 'Choral dialogue' will be held in Ekaterinburg. During this event, choirmasters will be able to take advantage of seminars, creative meetings, and master-classes with outstanding figures from the world of choral culture from Russia, Italy, and Latvia.

Ekaterinburg is famous for its hospitality, goodwill and friendliness. Choirs of the world, join us! We are waiting for the most talented, the most vibrant, the most creative and the most musical! We look forward to welcoming you to Ekaterinburg for the Vth EURASIA CANTAT International Choral assembly in 2019!

Edited by Lottie Valks, UK



Choir "Istok", conductor Svetlana Shihovceva, Novosibirsk



Jazz-choir of the Children philharmonic, conductor Zlata Kozlovskaya, Ekaterinburg



ELENA BARTNOVSKAYA is an honoured artist of the Russian Federation. She attended the choral conducting department of the Ural state conservatory, named after M. Mussorgsky. In 1987, she set up the children's choir 'Gloria'. Nowadays, this choir is a winner of different international choral competitions in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Greece, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Since 1992, Elena Bartnovskaya has been the director of the Rachmaninoff children's music school №7. She's also the artistic director of the 'Gloria' concert choir and winner of international choral competitions. Since 2011, she has been the artistic director of the EURASIA CANTAT International Choral assembly in Ekaterinburg.
Email: info@eurasia-cantat.ru



Choir "Lel"; conductor Maria Eryemina, Ekaterinburg



Choir "Vdohnovenie" ("Inspiration"), conductor Natalia Filatova, Zhukovsky



Choir "Vdohnovenie" ("Inspiration"), conductor Tatiana Shackaya, Tyumen

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International Choral
assembly in 2019!

“FINDING THE BALANCE BETWEEN TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY AND PASSION”

Juror Michael Barrett on adjudicating, competing and his love for choral music

HENRIETTE BROCKMANN

Interkultur Communications Manager

MICHAEL BARRETT FROM SOUTH AFRICA IS A CONDUCTOR FOR SEVERAL CHOIRS, INCLUDING THE AWARD-WINNING UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA CAMERATA, AND IS A SOUGHT-AFTER ADJUDICATOR AT INTERNATIONAL CHOIR COMPETITIONS. IN JULY HE WILL COMPETE WITH HIS CHOIRS AT THE GRAND PRIX OF NATIONS IN RIGA, AND IN OCTOBER HE WILL ACT AS A JUROR AT THE INTERKULTUR EVENT “CANTA AL MAR – FESTIVAL CORAL INTERNACIONAL” IN THE FOLLOWING INTERVIEW HE SPEAKS ABOUT ADJUDICATING, COMPETING AND CHORAL MUSIC IN GENERAL.

Henriette Brockmann: *Acting as adjudicator at choral competitions: What is your main focus when evaluating, to what do you pay most attention?*

Michael Barrett: I think it is important to keep a balance

between all technical aspects (intonation, balance, blend, diction, etc.) and making the music live! Singing with integrity, heart and soul is so important for the music as it is this aspect that makes people feel something. As an adjudicator, but more importantly as a human being, I want to be moved by the message. So finding the balance between technical proficiency and passion is my main focus.

HB: *You regularly bring your choir “University of Pretoria Camerata” to national and international choir competitions. Why do you think it is important for singers and choirs to compete with others?*

MB: I believe it is important that we push ourselves to always be our best. By competing, we force ourselves to work harder and be better, and regardless of the end result, my choirs are always better singers and musicians after the journey. It is also so much fun to be able to enjoy the music of singers and choirs from other countries.

HB: *One of the first and most essential things for conductors prior to a competition is selecting an adequate repertoire. What is your advice, what makes a “good” competition program?*

MB: I think variety is the key. It is so important to showcase your choir’s strengths and abilities through the music you choose. I also enjoy music that is fresh and not overdone, and more often than not I have music commissioned for competitions. This is also a great way to expand on the choral repertoire.

HB: *As a conductor and sought-after juror at international choir competitions, you have been listening to a lot of choral music from all over the world. The choral music from which country or region has you impressed most?*

MB: I must admit that I love music from all over the world; I have a soft





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Michael Barrett, director of choral activities at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. He is the conductor of the University of Pretoria (Tuks) Camerata and a lecturer in choral music studies in the department of music.

spot for music from the Baltic region. But the country that has surprised and impressed me the most is the Philippines. The music from this country is so original, challenging and exciting. Filled with complex rhythms, body percussion and unique tonal and harmonic color. Wonderful people and wonderful music. It is a great combination :-)

HB: *From your point of view, what is the greatest piece of choral literature that has ever been written?*

MB: Without a doubt *Mass in B Minor* by Johann Sebastian Bach. This is my all-time favorite.

Edited by Charlotte Sullivan, UK

By competing, we force ourselves to work harder and be better, and regardless of the end result, my choirs are always better singers and musicians after the journey.

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THE 2017 INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER CHOIR COMPETITION IN MARKTOBERDORF, GERMANY

2-7 June

TIM KOERITZ

music journalist, teacher and singer

THERE WERE UNFAMILIAR HIP-HOP SOUNDS TO BE HEARD AT THIS YEAR'S 15TH INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER CHOIR COMPETITION IN MARKTOBERDORF IN THE SOUTH-WESTERN CORNER OF GERMANY. FOR THE FIRST TIME THE CATEGORY "POPULAR CHORAL MUSIC" WAS ON THE AGENDA.

Even Martin Seiler, conductor of the pop choir "Greg is back" from Augsburg, grabbed a microphone. After all, singing with a microphone is an integral part of the vocal pop sound, and - as Martin Seiler emphasises - "Greg is back" considers itself to be "a pop choir unwilling to compromise: we are a choir that simply strives for the broad brush and the large stage and, fully equipped with microphones, also aims at a huge sound, a pop sound, so that the audience cannot tell whether they are in a concert by Coldplay, Genesis or one of our choir concerts: that is what we are trying to get at, and that's why I say "uncompromising" - and we weren't allowed to put that into practice here. Choir members are not allowed to have a microphone each, but there's just some sort of microphone arrangement for the entire stage, producing a somewhat emptier sound, and we were only permitted four additional microphones - in our case one for a beatboxer, one for the bass and two for soloists. When we make our own concert arrangements, we have, I think, more than forty microphones on stage. They've usually also got their own technician at the mixing desk.

However, in Marktoberdorf, Mecca of classical choral singing, the technical restrictions are likely to stay in place - thus Matthias E Becker, chair of the jury, in his first summing-up: "I believe that the use of individual microphones will not be possible, if only for reasons of time. We'd have to extend the festival by two days in order to allow all choirs their sound checks. I know it takes "Greg is back" five to six hours. I think that, in view of the fact that this was the first time, it all went very well. We had six applications, unfortunately two were not allowed to leave their own countries for political reasons, and therefore we had only four choirs. Next time we are bound to have more participants,

and we will try to be more precise when advertising the conditions." For Jürgen Budday, artistic director of the Marktoberdorf competition, it was important "to introduce a new colour, so as also to appeal to a new audience. I think that in this we are totally up to date. And the thing that matters in Marktoberdorf



Jürgen Budday, artistic director of the Marktoberdorf competition



Consolatio Choir Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

more than anything else is quality. And meanwhile these choirs have achieved such high standards that I simply would like to hear them here”

Nevertheless it is quite difficult to define a pop and jazz choir as such. This was in ample evidence with the ensembles that did appear. Could the offerings of the choir “Los Cantantes de Manila” from the Philippines really still be described as pop music? E g in pieces like “Canta” by Guido Lopez Gavilan the choir, directed by Darwin Vargas, did meet the regulation that the programme had to include at least one item in the Latin style. But the uninhibited virtuoso shaping, the enormous vocal power and the charisma of the choir did not sit comfortably with the choir’s belcanto sound, something that does not belong in pop. Despite this, they ended up sharing first

prize with the Detmold college choir “Pop-up”. Apart from the Latin item, the category “Popular Choral Music” also demanded a rubato ballad and a new own arrangement of the jazz standard “Round (about) Midnight” by the jazz pianist and composer Thelonius Monk, for what the popular category requires is not so much a composer but an arranger of that which already exists. Whereas for the Augsburg choir “Greg is back” it is nearly exclusively the director of the choir himself who supplies the arrangements, Anne Kohler, founder and director of “Pop-up” has them written for her. For her there are clear criteria for what constitutes a good arrangement - “I find that what really matters is that the message of the melody gets across well, meaning that the instrumentations have to be right. Und that means that the bass lines

need to be creative and inventive, and that the vocal percussion needs to be employed with a clearly dedicated aim, that the voicings have to be really singable, rather than lie around clumsily, that the ranges in which the tune is presented need to be well thought out. After all, in a jazz choir this is quite a different matter. If I place a tune with the high soprano, that will sound dreadful, because the sopranos will immediately sound “classical”. Such a melody needs to be written for the high tenor range or for a really “fruity”, rich alto range”. As they were not only vocally stunning but also enormously secure stylistically, “Pop-up” was rightly awarded one of the two first prizes in the competition. Of course vocal quality did also count in Category A, the mixed choirs, for whom this year wasn’t quite the best we’ve ever heard in



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Georgia State University Singers, USA © Modfestivals Marktoberdorf



Choirs of Category B (Popular Choral Music) singing together under the direction of Anne Kohler (Pop-Up, Detmold, Germany)
© Modfestivals Marktoberdorf

Marktoberdorf. Yet again, among the eleven choirs from nine countries, it was a Scandinavian choir, the Chamber Choir NOVA from Oslo, that walked away with one of the two first prizes. It is directed by Yuval Weinberg, an Israeli all of 27 years old, who also received the special prize for the best conducting achievement in the competition. He studied in Berlin and Oslo and has already been involved with several professional choirs as a guest conductor. Yuval Weinberg describes the typically Scandinavian sound of his choir as "placed very directly, 'in front', so to speak, and I find it possesses warmth. I am allowed to say that as a foreigner, as I don't come from Norway. It was something quite new to me - I've only been in Norway for two-and-a-half years." The outstanding non-vibrato quality and the particular homogeneity of the choir came across particularly convincingly in the own choice programme, the second round,

especially in the arrangement of a Norwegian folksong, where the opening soprano unison was quite fascinating. The special blend required for unison is probably the hardest thing for a choir or a section to achieve. "That is our aim"; thus Yuval Weinberg, "that all the singers together sound like one singer, but that nevertheless everybody retains his or her own identity, and that's what we often work at. It's not that we all possess the same colour, but that, using the colours we have, we achieve a joint colour together".

Homogeneity is also a basic requirement for the Romantic repertoire, with long, flowing phrases as another feature of importance - and that is something that the Asian choirs from Indonesia and Singapore just didn't manage. In the case of the Norwegian choir, we additionally enjoyed the detailed dynamic differentiation which for example was to be heard in Rheinberger's

"Kyrie" from his "Cantus missae". For this convincing performance the Chamber Choir NOVA from Oslo deservedly received a special prize for the best interpretation of a Romantic piece within the competition.

The compulsory piece for all choirs was the world première of Wolfram Buchenberg's "The Emigrant"; a setting of a poem, over a century old, by the Irish poet Joseph Campbell. With his compositions for choirs, Buchenberg, himself hailing from the Marktoberdorf area, has enjoyed a long connection with the competition. The old Irish text mirrors the theme of flight and emigration, only all too present in our own day, in all its ambivalence. "The text shows" - says Buchenberg - "what happens within a person forced to leave home within the next five hours". It is a piece that makes considerable rhythmic and vocal demands on the choirs. For Buchenberg, the way the choirs negotiate the "violent

changes of mood composed into the piece, from one second to the next, is of particular importance. That is one of the difficulties of the work. That's where the qualities of a choir are revealed."

In the end, it turned out that Chamber Choir ONE from Singapore, directed by Lim Ai Hooi, delivered this compulsory piece in the most lively way, in a transparent manner and full of expression. Here the bright young voices matched the spirit of the piece particularly well. Within the competition as a whole, this choir was awarded one of - in all - two second prizes. The other second prize went to the choir of Mendoza University from Mendoza. University choirs just about dominated the image of the competition - of the two German choirs which did not meet expectations, OPUS VOCALE and the Chamber Choir of the Collegium Musicum, the latter is attached to the Free University or rather the Technical University of Berlin. Here Donka Miteva, originally from Bulgaria, is in charge of the choir. She particularly liked the character of this competition which encourages togetherness by not only being a competition but also setting up joint concerts and ecumenical services: "We all thought this was great. The entire choir was thrilled by the church service, particularly, as the ecumenical character of the service came across as very inclusive. In addition there were the musical contributions at so high a standard on the one hand from the Chamber Singers from Georgia, USA, and also - fortunately - from us. For us that was a marvellous experience, to perform again but within a different framework."

Bearing in mind solely the comparison of achievements, the final summing-up of Georg Grün, chair of the jury in the category for classical choirs, was this: "This time there was little difference of standard between the contestants



Consolatio Choir Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia © Modfestivals Marktobendorf



Kammerkoret NOVA, Oslo, Norway © Modfestivals Marktobendorf



ONE Chamber Choir, Singapore © Modfestivals Marktobendorf



ONE Chamber Choir, Singapore © Modfestivals Marktobderdorf

who, however, presented totally different characteristics, types and repertoire, and thus it was very difficult - after all the jury is very international, from several continents, supplying very different points of view. Then everything takes a great deal longer. But personally I also feel that it's much more interesting than when it takes about five minutes to agree and decide upon the winner". In the end, even among the winners, two quite different types of choir, even of sound, were represented, for alongside the Norwegian choir that has already been discussed, it was a university choir from the USA, the Georgia State University Singers, that was also awarded a first prize. As opposed to the Norwegians they often go right to the brink, even forcing the sound into vibrato, and that not only when singing gospel music.

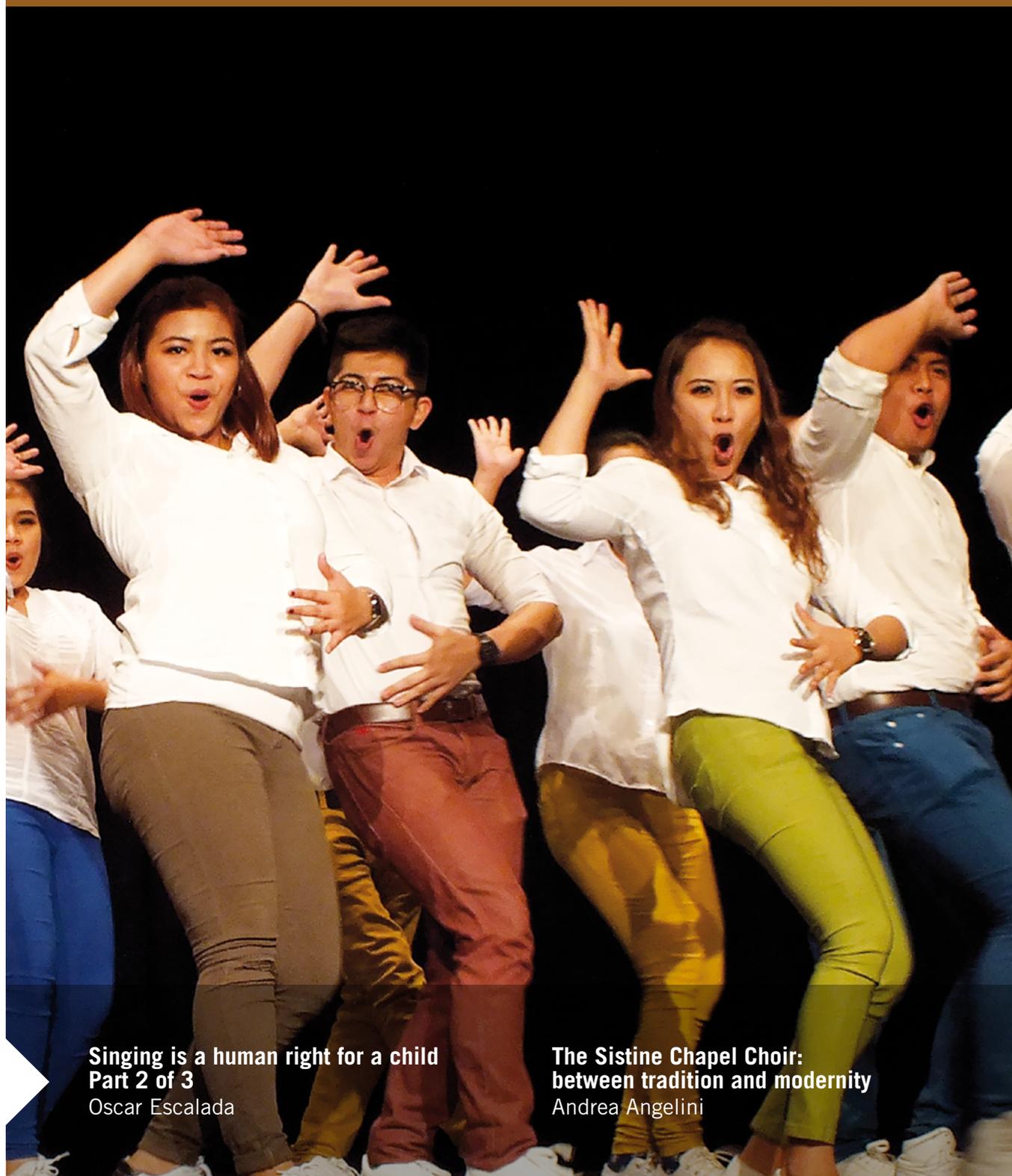
Info at: www.modfestivals.org

Translated from the German by Irene Auerbach, UK/Germany

TIM KOERITZ, born in 1965 in Stade in northern Germany, initially studied to become a teacher of music and history in grammar schools, with piano as a first study, in Hanover and Freiburg on the western edge of the Black Forest. After also completing the pedagogical part of this training in Hildesheim he embarked on a two-year course in radio journalism at the Institute "Lemradio" attached to Karlsruhe Music College and was awarded his diploma in 1998. Since 1998 he has been working and living in Munich, from which base he has worked as a freelance radio journalist for various German stations, among them Deutsche Welle and Deutschlandradio Kultur. His main interests - apart from contemporary music - lie in choral music. Part of his work as a music journalist is the writing of programme notes. Thus e.g. he is currently working for via-nova-chor Munich, the Theatergemeinde Augsburg with its concert series "Philharmonic Matinee" as well as the open-air series run during the summer, "Concerts in the Fronhof, as well as for the concert series of the Cultural Centre k1 of the town of Treunreut. As a music educator, Tim Koeritz has been employed since 2005 at the Munich Institute of Adult Education as a lecturer in music and music appreciation as well as in their department of general studies. There he teaches courses in music theory and music history as well as introductions to the concerts of the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra. Furthermore he is active as a freelance piano teacher in Munich. Since 2005 he has been singing in the via-nova-chor Munich, a choir specialising in contemporary music. For several years he also fulfilled the voluntary role of chair of the Association of Friends of the via-nova-chor, a task involving fundraising, sponsorship, marketing publicity and organising concerts.
Email: tim.koeritz@t-online.de



CHORAL TECHNIQUE



Singing is a human right for a child
Part 2 of 3
Oscar Escalada

The Sistine Chapel Choir:
between tradition and modernity
Andrea Angelini

SINGING IS A HUMAN RIGHT FOR A CHILD

PART 2 OF 3

OSCAR ESCALADA

choral director, composer and professor

EMPATHY

"TAKE THAT BOY ON THE STREET. TEACH HIM TO BLOW A HORN, AND HE'LL NEVER BLOW A SAFE."
FROM THE MUSICAL THE MUSIC MAN, 1958

Aristotle famously believed that *"man is by nature a political animal, that is, social: he lives in families, clans or groups known as villages, towns, cities or nations, and he feels a need to associate with other people similar to himself to live as a social animal."* As every scientific study carried out since then has gone on to prove, he was right.

Science has proved beyond all doubt that human beings are not born good or bad, but rather are born with propensities or tendencies which can lead to an aggressive or exploitative attitude towards others if these are not channelled properly.¹

In the late 1980s Italian neurobiologist Giacomo Rizzolatti from the University of Parma discovered the existence of neurons which specialise in mirroring others, which he called mirror neurons.² He gave them this name as they produce the same neural activity both when an action is performed and when an observer sees the same action being performed, thus mentally representing the behaviour of the other as if the observer were itself acting.

Mirror neurons explain how we can access and understand the minds of others, and they also make possible the intersubjectivity which enables us to behave as social beings.

These neurons are responsible for our social lives and are particularly active during our childhood, as they are heavily involved in the process of learning through imitation. They allow us to reproduce in our brain what another person is doing.

What we are talking about here is a complex form of psychological inference in which observation, memory, knowledge and reasoning combine to allow us to

understand the thoughts and feelings of others. This cognitive, rational and emotional process is what we call empathy.

Mirror neurons are directly connected to human behaviour. Moya-Albiol³ divides empathy into three separate components:

- Cognitive: being aware of the feelings of another person
- Emotional: experiencing the same or similar feelings to another person in the same situation
- Social: responding with compassion to problems another person is facing

"The empathetic response includes the ability to understand the other person and to put ourselves in their position on the basis of what we observe, verbal information we receive or the information we can access from our memory (taking a perspective), and the emotional reaction of sharing their emotional state, which can cause sadness, discomfort or anxiety."

Investigations carried out by Dr Jean Decety from the University of Chicago⁴ have shown that human beings have social traits which begin to develop during childhood. Perception of human relationships begins in the interactions between mother and child, and it is there that the first steps in the development of empathy are taken. An individual will consequently adopt the parameters to which it is exposed in its social

3 Moya-Albiol, Luis; Herrero, Neus; Bernal, M. Consuelo, *"Bases neuronales de la empatía," Revista de Neurología, No. 50, pp 89-100*

4 Decety, J., Ben-Ami Bartal, I., Uzevovsky, F., & Knaf-Noam, A. (2016). *Empathy as a driver of prosocial behavior: Highly conserved neurobehavioral mechanisms across species. Proceedings of the Royal Society London - Biology, 371, 20150077.*

1 Vicente Garrido Genovés, *Universidad de Valencia, Spain*

2 Marco Iacobini, *"Las neuronas espejo," Katz Editores, Madrid 2009*

environment and culture and, by imitating them, will become socialised with its fellow human beings as it adapts its behaviour to theirs. If these relationships are impaired, perhaps as a result of belonging to a dysfunctional family in a deprived social environment, what the individual learns will be what the mirror neurons have received as information. These mirror neurons imitate the actions and behaviour the individual has observed.

Two incidents relevant to this subject, the first in 1993 in Liverpool, England, and the second in 2007 in Maldonado, Uruguay, can help us understand the phenomenon of empathy and mirror neurons as a key element in human relationships given that, as we have just seen, mirror neurons can imitate what we learn from our social environment.

The children involved in these incidents were between 10 and 14 years old, and the cases were similar: there were three children, two of them killed the third, and the first two continued playing as if nothing had happened. The exact details of each case are not relevant here, but what does matter is that the killings were carried out by children of similar ages and that they displayed the same attitude towards the crime they had committed.

In the Liverpool case, the judge concluded that the children were aware of what they had been doing. However, they showed no remorse and merely attempted to pretend that what had happened was an accident involving a train before continuing with their game.

The two cases had one thing in common: the children had had a troubled childhood, coming from dysfunctional families with a history of alcoholism and domestic violence. As a result of their antisocial behaviour they were cast aside by the people around them and were left to fend for themselves, frequently living on the streets from an early age.

Once these facts had been established, and in the light of Dr. Rizzolatti's discovery, the investigators agreed that the reason for the children's lack of remorse and for not recognising that their actions were a crime lay in their undeveloped mirror neurons, a consequence of not experiencing the shared emotions that come from a loving family. This, they said, was behind the children reproducing what they had experienced during their troubled childhood and the lack of affection they felt towards anybody else.

The children were adjudged old enough to be responsible for actions and given life sentences. After a number of years in prison, psychologists who treated the children during their imprisonment eventually managed to make



Representation of the mirror neurons

them appreciate the horror of what they had done, and their behaviour was altered to such an extent that eight years into their sentence they were conditionally released for good behaviour. However, a few years later, one of them returned to prison for distributing child pornography.

It seems that thus far no studies have been carried out on the Uruguayan children.

The importance of the discovery of mirror neurons is clear from these incidents, which serve as a brutal example of the worst depths of human behaviour. Of course, the differing degrees of events which can demonstrate this are a reflection of various behaviours, most of which will not necessarily descend to such criminal depths. But they do show the importance of mirror neurons, and particularly the impact that missing or underdeveloped mirror neurons can have.

Bearing all this in mind, children should be encouraged to take part in choral activities as they can be an effective tool in softening the aggressive traits we often see today. Choral singing provides the necessary environment both for developing empathy and for exhibiting it, even in children with similar backgrounds to the children in the cases described above.

By singing in choirs a child develops a sense of belonging to a group, a community in which all members feel an emotional bond. The public recognises them and shows that it approves of them by applauding at the end of every concert, but this applause comes from an appreciation of the artistic and aesthetic expression, that is, the emotions the singers have expressed. It allows the individual to present him or herself as a human being with thoughts and feelings without making fun of them; on the

contrary, in fact, it is the ability to display such sensitivity which earns them the applause.

In the same way, those who participate in choral activity become socialised through spontaneous events and processes. Every member of the choir has an important role to play and the whole choir works together towards a shared objective.

The characteristics of a team and of a family as described by Mary Alice and Gary Stollak⁵ strongly support this hypothesis (it is worth mentioning that Mary Alice Stollak is a director of children's choirs in East Lansing, Michigan and that Gary Stollak, her husband, is a psychiatrist specialising in families and a professor at Michigan

⁵ Mary Alice and Gary Stollak, *Choral Journal, Choral activity, a team or a family?*



Othello kills Desdemona...

State University). They state that the results of their investigation “suggest that the individual feels more like a member of a family than a member of a team. Of course in every choir, just as in every family, there will be stressful and problematic situations [...] However, these situations can subsequently be beneficial for satisfactory development of the choir.”

This matters, as it introduces the perspective of interpersonal recognition. A choir is characterised by the need for its members to work together much as a team must work together. But teams are usually united by their efforts to defeat an opponent, which is not true of a choir as there is no opponent to defeat. This means that individuals in a choir work together for very different reasons from those involved in a competition between football, rugby, hockey teams, which George Orwell memorably described as “war without the shooting”. A choir is attempting to produce a result which stems from the work all its members have put in as a team, an aesthetic and sensitive result which is expressed through the human capacity for spirituality.

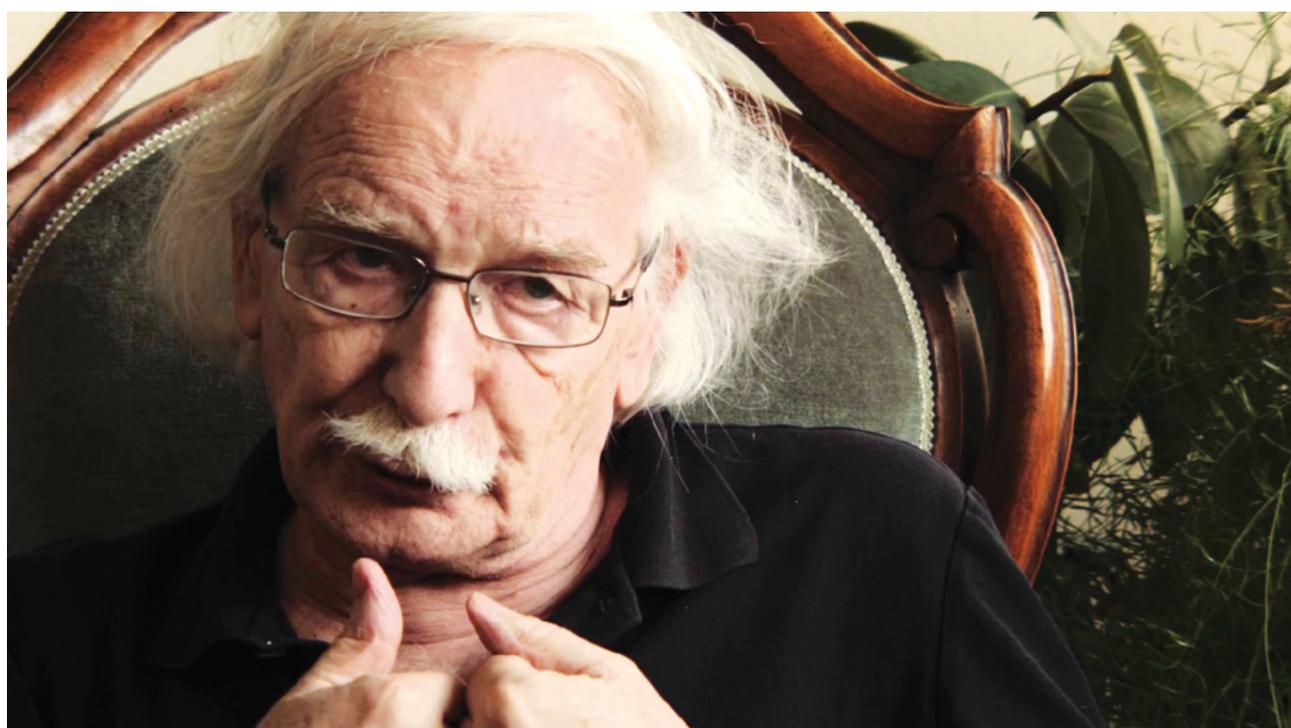
The approval that an audience shows for this activity with its applause is a display of affection and gratitude for the sensitive, heart-rending, moving or stirring experience the choir has communicated to them. For the individual on the receiving end of this applause, the approval shown by the community for what he or she has produced helps reaffirm their self-esteem and they are grateful for it. The idea of the choir as a family

put forward by the Stollak husband-and-wife team is of great importance in this context, as it implies that, despite both choirs and families having to confront “stressful and problematic situations”, their members also receive affection.

All art requires the participation of the viewer, listener or reader, and temporal art such as music, literature or theatre is no exception. The audience may consist of the choristers’ families or other people with whom they have dealings every day. However, putting on a concert is akin to staging a play in which everyone has their assigned role: family members “play” at being an audience and on the stage their children “play” at being artists.

The same applies to any other artistic performance, regardless of whether or not children and their families are involved. A Shakespeare play performed at The Globe Theatre in London by Sir Laurence Olivier and the Royal National Theatre Company⁶, for instance, also requires audience participation, and indeed the

6 The Globe Theatre, in the Bankside area by the River Thames in London, is an exact replica of the theatre where Shakespeare put on his plays. Sir Laurence Olivier is considered one of the greatest actors of the 20th century and was particularly well-known for his performances in Shakespeare plays, and he also directed the Royal National Theatre Company.



Dr. Giacomo Rizzolatti from the University of Parma

performance would not be possible without one. Everyone knows that what they are watching when Othello kills Desdemona is fiction and not a crime, yet although they know what will happen when the play starts they still feel troubled, happy, sad or moved in various ways by something which in reality is not happening.

Whether the artists are children or adults, then, the same audience participation is required. It does not matter that, once the concert is over, the children's parents will find them, take them for something to eat and continue their normal family routine, for in this almost magical moment the child is an artist and his or her mother and father are part of the audience. It is interesting to note that this "play" always follows the same, simple rules: one person sings on the stage while the other listens in the seats. But the person listening is not alone, sitting on their sofa at home, but is instead surrounded by other people in a place they have purposefully travelled to with the aim of enjoying themselves. The enjoyment is a sensation they expect to feel as a result of their children's singing, and they prepare for it in the same way that their children prepare to sing to the best of their ability. The moment of the performance is the reward for both parties, proof of art's capacity to arouse our emotions – those same emotions which the children in Liverpool and Maldonado lacked.

Children living on the street can take part in choral activity without any prior experience, as singing uses the voice, an instrument we all possess. All they need is the opportunity to learn how to use it.

Maud Hickey is a professor at Northwestern University in the United States. She is involved in a programme aimed at young offenders behind bars and has written an interesting report on her findings, from which I have taken the following paragraph:

"Research on the effectiveness of arts education in detention centers is scant but growing. In the recently published Oxford Handbook

*of Social Justice in Music Education, my review of the research literature on music programs in detentions centers found that music programs produced extra-musical psychological outcomes, such as improved confidence and self-esteem, improvement in learning skills, as well as improved behavior and reduced recidivism."*⁷

The use of choral singing as therapy for addiction to drugs and alcohol is not new. In my last book I made reference to the Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge Institute, which has offices in the US cities of Twin Cities, Brainerd, Duluth, Rochester and Buffalo and runs a range of programmes for young people both inside and outside of prison. Their

7 Maud Hickey - <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/author/maud-hickey>



Dr Jean Decety from the University of Chicago

short-term programmes last between 30 and 60 days while their long-term programmes last between 13 and 15 months, and all are open to young people and adults, male and female. A typical day consists of chores, chapel, meals, a study period, choir practice, classes, free time and devotions. In the long-term programmes choir practice is obligatory “whether or not you can sing”; as director Sam Anderson puts it. Although it is a religious institution and the choral programme involves singing in a different church in the local area every week, the scientific basis behind its activities is akin to that of a non-religious school. The advantage of the programme in the churches is that the participants sing every Sunday “whether or not they know the songs”; but this can also occur as part of a programme featuring weekly concerts in clubs, retirement homes, soup kitchens and other intermediary organisations from the very start.

I will conclude by telling you two stories of MA&TCh patients with the aim of giving an insight into the programme from the perspective of those taking part in it. Their testimonies are worth telling from a personal viewpoint, away from the science and theoretical knowledge behind the programmes. I have removed the names but otherwise their testimonies remain as they were originally told.

The first person is 36 years old and has been drinking heavily on a daily basis for 10 years. Despite his addiction he managed to hold down a job, pay his bills and taxes etc., but the addiction was seriously affecting his life.

“I felt that there was no hope and that my life couldn’t prosper any more than it had. I was stuck feeling that this is it, so this is what I’m going to continue to do.”

His family and friends helped him admit that he was an addict and he agreed to start the institute’s programme. That was 10 months ago.

The other is thirty years old and has been an addict for 16 years. He began to take marijuana and consume alcohol when he was 13, and when he turned 18 he started using meth. He has served time in various prisons and has tried various treatments, all without success. He was let out of jail in 2011 but slipped again and began taking meth intravenously, almost dying from a blood infection. Three years later he heard about Teen Challenge, and when he left prison again he ended up there.

“I went through a lot of changes here. I came in not wanting to deal with authority, not wanting to listen to the rules. It was bad. I wanted to fight. Finally it clicked in my head that I need to do this so I don’t get kicked out.”

Both men talk about the experience of singing in similar terms.

“When I signed up I knew about the choir and that I would have to be a part of it. My first concert was just two days after I started the program, and I didn’t know any of the lyrics. However, I had to wear the standard choir uniform, take to the stage and basically try and lip sync my way through the songs. I learned them with time and lost the nervousness I had in those first few days, and I enjoy the spirituals, the gospel music and feeling the affection from my community. We’re reaching out to our people with the songs we sing. If they can help someone, it’s worth it.”

One of them is now one of the conductors of the choir (the institute has eleven choirs in total) and runs the soundboard.

“When we talk about that time we say that we’re a Band of Brothers because of the time we’ve spent together. We help each other and challenge each other. And when we succeed we cheer each other on. It’s pretty cool. The feeling of brotherhood you get is probably the most ministering you’ll get while in the program. The staff are good, the classes are good, but it’s the fellowship that saved my life, I’ll tell you that.”

CHORAL SINGING CAN SAVE LIVES. IT IS A HUMAN RIGHT FOR A CHILD, AND SOCIETY HAS AN OBLIGATION TO MAKE USE OF IT.

Translated by Christopher Lutton, UK
 Edited by Laura Massey, UK



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THE SISTINE CHAPEL CHOIR: BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY

Interview with the choirmaster-conductor, Mons. Massimo Palombella

ANDREA ANGELINI

choral director, composer, ICB director

Andrea Angelini: *Considering our times, I'd like you to tell me about the role of sacred music in culture and liturgy: what thoughts and suggestions do you have about the situation in Italy?*

Massimo Palombella: The relationship between culture and liturgy is very interesting because it is exactly what the Second Vatican Council, the last great liturgical reform carried out by the Catholic Church, imposes upon us as a duty; in asking us to enter into dialogue with modernity, the Church wishes, within the musical sphere, to be receptive to music destined for

liturgical use, inasmuch as today, it is part of our musical heritage and culture; just think of the advances made in music in the 20th Century, after Wagner, after Mahler... To some degree I believe that the Council is asking us two things: first, that music composed for the liturgy must take account of where we are today and not look backwards; on the other hand is the safeguarding of the Church's cultural heritage - the origin of Western music - namely Gregorian chant and polyphony. The Council, in asking us to engage with modernity, reminds us not to underestimate the semiological studies undertaken



The Choir inside the Sistine Chapel, Vatican



The choir in concert

on this subject. Gregorian chant, after the scientific work by Solesmes, which has given us the *Graduale Triplex*¹, we can no longer think of performing it with the *Liber Usualis*². With these semiological studies, with everything that is our cultural heritage come down to us at the level of scientific study, whoever performs Renaissance polyphony in the Liturgy has a duty to translate meaningfully the written sign into sound sign. Here, therefore, are the two great challenges which the Second Vatican Council has handed to us, today. In Italy, the Episcopal Conference, to this end, started work a while ago on a massive and important cultural project, the codification of a national repertoire of chants. Basically, they have embarked on processes which will certainly not be appreciated by some, who will complain “ *Because in the good old days...* ” If we take a look at history, the Council of Trent also put processes in motion and we know of course who was involved in these processes: Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina. At

that time the Sistine Chapel was the first great realizer of the work of the Council of Trent, with intelligibility of the text: however, it was some years before this liturgical reform became part of the ecclesiastical norm. Therefore, as things stand, we are very close to the Second Vatican Council. I have to say that in Italy some excellent processes for the realization of the Council have been set in train, and these will take a long time to come into effect because it means having to think with a living language, and this means entering automatically into a cultural context which needs to be acknowledged, in addition all the great cultural heritage of the Church will need to be ‘interpreted’ for contemporary times. This will be a long, large project which requires study and research and I am convinced that the Italian Church has started something great from this point of view.

AA: *The choral world is often seen as a niche sector, undervalued or criticised. Bearing in the mind Pope Francis’ utterances underlining the need to value the heritage of sacred music and also the attempts to bring it up to date using modern languages, what are your suggestions for educating young people about sacred choral music?*

MP: I think that there is a fundamental principle here when we talk of young people and we talk of education: we need to love what young people love because they love what we love. In my own experience - before becoming Choral Director of the Sistine Chapel, I worked in the University where, other than teaching, I also organised a number of pastoral activities including a choir - I never had any difficulty working with young people at a high cultural level. Because a cultural level must be there, meaning that we need the ability to translate our cultural heritage using comprehensible language; fortunately the equation “*Lower the level and I’ll get more people*” doesn’t work. At the end of the day, the more the teacher or director studies, stays

1 The **Gradual Triplex** is a liturgical text which contains the mass chants of the Gregorian repertoire. It was published in 1979 and has been reprinted continuously by the Abbey of Solesmes under official mandate of the Catholic Church.

2 The **Liber usualis Missae et Officii**, more usually known as the **Liber usualis**, is a liturgical text which contains a collection of Gregorian chants which are not just used by the Roman Catholic Church. The texts and melody of the chants are transcribed in single square notation. The first edition appeared in 1896, published by the monks of the Abbey of Solesmes. A number of editions followed and since the Second Vatican Council no new editions have appeared. The *Liber Usualis* is popular in Latin around the world, even though it has now been supplanted by the more up-to-date *Gradual Triplex* which, as well as the square notation, also includes transcriptions of the St Gall and Laon notations in the repertoire and in which the selection of passages is more considered.

up-to-date, continues their research and makes sure they communicate, the more fascinating the journey will be. When we think “*these things are no longer understood, so we’ll leave them out*” it’s because we don’t study anymore and also because we don’t study for the love of it. Learning to do it for the love of it, creating respect for things, is a study in itself; we need to explore, make judgements, and making judgements is tricky (because you can get it wrong, as in any experiment), because it is a work that requires you to invest energy. I don’t believe that it is difficult to teach young people about sacred music, like the arts, Latin literature, like educating them in any aspect of basic culture, if this is placed in the context of a discussion, and above all if some message is given to young people, if we are able to create a connection; without a connection, nothing will happen. It is important that big cultural values are always mediated through connections aimed at the growth, maturation and the truth for our young people.

AA: *Let’s talk about the Pueri Cantores, who traditionally accompany the liturgy with chant, and also the role of the Schola Cantorum; there are not many of these left. What can be done to retain them, and make them popular above and beyond the church?*

MP: There is an international association for *Pueri Cantores*, we need to be quite clear here however. Why does the Sistine Chapel have *Pueri Cantores* and a related school, from the third grade of primary to the third grade of secondary school? Why are *Pueri Cantores* only boys and why are there no girls? Because effectively the, so-called, pure unbroken voice is that of a boy, which will not remain like that forever, but, before it breaks, acquires a series of ‘ambratures’, a group of changes which occur due to physiology, which give that richness of harmonies which a boy choir possesses and

a girl choir does not. There is an issue of cultural expectation: if we record with a CD label like Deutsche Grammophon, we are duty-bound to create a product which is aesthetically in keeping. Therefore, I have to record either with falsettos or with boys! This is an important, cultural domain. On the other hand I do believe that teaching singing in general to boys and girls is an excellent pastoral activity which will help them in the future, starting a child off on a discipline which requires choral singing, undertaken at a certain level, will give them a scientific and rigorous way of working which will stand them in good stead for their eventual future employment, as well as in life relationships and in their roles as fathers and mothers. This is the reason why I believe that it is important that we invest culturally in boys and girls with regard to music because music has the dual aspect of being beautiful



The beauty of the Sistine Chapel with the frescoes by Michelangelo



Mons. Massimo Palombella and the Cappella Sistina during a rehearsal

but of asking a sacrifice, constant hard work so that it can be beautiful. The whole process therefore has an attraction linked to an intrinsic effort, and this process is extremely educative at an impressionable age where being 'introduced to' a precise methodology can benefit someone for a lifetime.

AA: *Let's talk about the Cappella Musicale Pontificia 'Sistina', which is the world's longest-running choral group. Over the course of the centuries the Sistine Chapel Choir has been, and remains today, an active participant in all reforms of papal liturgy. What are the responsibilities of such an important role, and what have been the most significant moments of the various activities in which the choir has been involved?*

MP: The Sistine Chapel Choir has the same great responsibility of acting in the Church as it did, for example, in the Liturgical Reform of the Council of Trent in the 1600s. This reform was made possible because the Sistine Choir immediately incorporated it into the papal celebrations. To be completely honest, the same cannot be said nowadays of Vatican II, because Domenico Bartolucci - and this year we celebrate the 100th anniversary of his birth - was a man who, as director of the Sistine Choir, categorically opposed the liturgical reform of Vatican II on the grounds of certain unjustified opinions. His cultural closedmindedness unfortunately didn't allow him to be open to all that was happening in music in that same period, including, therefore, the semiological studies of Gregorian chant and Renaissance polyphony, along with everything that happened after Verdi. In Bartolucci's mind, the history of music ended with Verdi. So this has perhaps been a *hapax legomenon*³ in the history of the Sistine Choir, in the sense that this was perhaps the first time that the institution did not follow the course of a reform. And in fact at a certain point it became necessary for the Holy See to provide an alternative, because practically they were dealing with an institution that was ecclesiastically, aesthetically and culturally obstructionist. My predecessor, Liberto, really brought this musical association in line with the liturgical reform of Vatican II, but not without great difficulty, because there were still many people who insisted that things had to be done Bartolucci's way. I had the good fortune to have a predecessor who in some ways was a

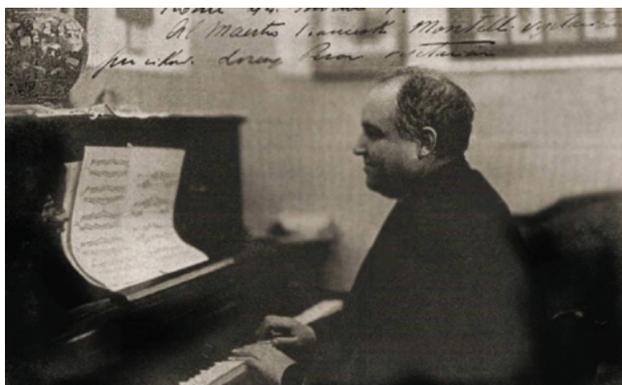
3 In linguistics and philology, a **hapax legomenon** (often called simply a *hapax* or, less commonly, *apax*; plural **hapax legomena** or *hapax legomenoi*), from the Greek ἅπαξ λεγόμενον (*hápax legómenon*, "said only once") refers to a word or expression that is only used once in a text, by an author or in the entire literary sphere of a language

buffer between Bartolucci and the liturgical reform of Vatican II, which for me was an almost 'normal' thing. I am a product of liturgical reform and I am therefore a great believer in it. I believe too that the old music can also benefit from the Vatican II reform; namely, as I said earlier, because of the need to accept the semiological studies and construct an intelligent dialogue with modern thinking. The Sistine Choir therefore has this as its most important task: being responsible first and foremost for implementing the reforms of the Church in the liturgical-musical space. It then, no less importantly, has the responsibility of setting standards for performance practice: our performance of Gregorian Chant or Renaissance polyphony has to be in some way exemplary. That's not because we are better than anyone else, but because the Sistine Choir is an institution which spends three hours a day almost exclusively studying those two subjects, just as the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia rehearses a set choral symphonic repertoire every day or the Teatro dell'Opera studies a certain operatic repertoire every day. Moreover, we have the Sistine Choir's archives at our disposal - the so-called *Fondo Cappella Sistina* in the Vatican Apostolic Library, which is the world's largest collection of 15th, 16th and 17th-century liturgical music. All of the repertoire in the catalogue, like what you will hear at the concert this evening, for example, comes from critical editions produced either from manuscripts or from the earliest printed texts. The director of the Sistine Choir must take on this study and research, because if I don't do it, so much music will go unheard. The responsibility for setting performance practice stems from the fact that the director of the Sistine Choir can draw on the Renaissance arrangements, and can therefore make an interpretation of them

which is semiologically and scientifically correct and relevant. This also means being able to “experiment” without worrying about having to put together a motet in order to perform it immediately. Rather, you can try performing a *color minor*, experiment with how best to interpret a particular rhetorical device... So the Sistine Choir is a sort of ‘laboratory’, if you like! Finally, the Sistine Choir sings at all the celebrations attended by the Pope, but also has a busy concert schedule. Why do we give all these concerts? We don’t travel the world simply for the pleasure of performing a bit of music. We travel so much in order to fulfil an ecclesiastical mandate, that of spreading the Gospel. Each of our concerts is an aesthetic experience, but all of the musical material can be traced back to its original source: the Liturgy. Accordingly, each piece that we perform is always presented, arranged and explained in terms of its historical and liturgical meaning. To attend a Sistine Chapel Choir concert is therefore to participate in an act of faith, an opportunity to experience God. This is why the Sistine Choir agrees to perform concerts.

AA: *The Sistine Choir occasionally goes on international tours. Under your direction, it has started to record exclusively with Deutsche Grammophon and won the Echo Klassik prize for its CD ‘Cantante Domino’ (2015). Could you tell us about this experience?*

MP: I didn’t approach Deutsche Grammophon; they contacted me because they had become aware that the Sistine Chapel Choir had radically changed its mode of singing. By that I mean that it had moved from a decadent operatic tone which dated from the end of the 19th century to a Renaissance tone, coherent phrasing, and an attempt to create an aesthetic relevant to the material we were performing. It’s the oldest choral institution in the world and has a lot behind it, and this is why Deutsche Grammophon took a gamble on us, in a manner of speaking. They say that they had wanted to collaborate with the organisation in the past, but it had never been possible because of our style of singing,



Lorenzo Perosi, maestro of the Cappella Sistina between 1898 and 1956

which was very much removed from the Renaissance practice. The recording process was very interesting. We recorded in the Sistine Chapel because we were perhaps the only choral group in the world that could create this complete aesthetic: music from the papal celebrations being performed in the Sistine Chapel, which gave us that perfect acoustic.

AA: *So the philological discourse is very important for you, down to considering the aesthetic of the venue and the performance practice...*

MP: Yes, absolutely. And this is what lets us record with labels like Deutsche Grammophon. I never considered recording William Byrd because he is stylistically very different to us. For example, when we had to record Allegri’s *Miserere*, I went looking in the Sistine Chapel’s archive and found Codex 205-206, which was Allegri’s original manuscript. I therefore also tried to position the soloists around the performance space more or less as they would have been according to the records of the papal celebrations of that time. Producing a piece for a recording label like that takes a great deal of scientific, philological and aesthetic consideration.

AA: *What comparison would you make with the straight tone used by the English, for example? I’m thinking of the Tallis Scholars, who gave a concert in the Sistine Chapel to celebrate its great restoration and performed Allegri’s ‘Miserere’, amongst other pieces.*

MP: The Tallis Scholars are a little removed from our aesthetic for the simple fact that women’s voices are included as well. I believe that the music written to be sung in the Sistine Chapel requires a Renaissance tone. This vocal technique does not incorporate the third register and therefore requires a very covered, precise tone, but with all that Mediterranean warmth that we Italians have in our tone. I believe, for example - and this is my conviction from having studied the manuscripts - that these scores are full of rhetorical devices that were not well recorded in the Baroque period, because while we know a lot about the Baroque period when it comes to performance practice, we know little about the Renaissance. I believe that Renaissance music is a synthesis of rhetorical devices, tension and release that requires continuous use of the *messa di voce* technique. It is in and of itself a very lively music, and so I believe that to sing it straight is to treat it like 15th-century music. I can understand singing Dufay or Desprez that way, because then the text was often a ‘pretext’ for counterpoint. When we recorded a Dufay piece and a Desprez piece, we sang them as if we were musical instruments, because that was the composers’ intention, rather than giving attention to the text. There is a great shift when we enter the High Renaissance, where at a certain point the text

became the foundation on which the music was based. In parallel to the text, there are the rhetorical devices of tension and release; a great deal of tension is given to words and phrases. I believe that all of this is encoded in the DNA of the music written for the Sistine Chapel, for the papal celebrations. After all, it's enough to admire Michelangelo's paintings to realise that the Renaissance was in no way an uninteresting period of history. All of it must absolutely be filtered by *reason*, by a formidable intelligence: messe di voce, tension, release, *colores minores*, *hocket*⁴... So everything must be filtered through profound *reasoning*, by a

4 Polyphonic device especially diffuse in France between the 11th and 12th centuries. Characterised by rapid alternation of the voices by means of pauses between syllables (and with an attempt at counterpoint between them) so to create a 'sobbing' effect.

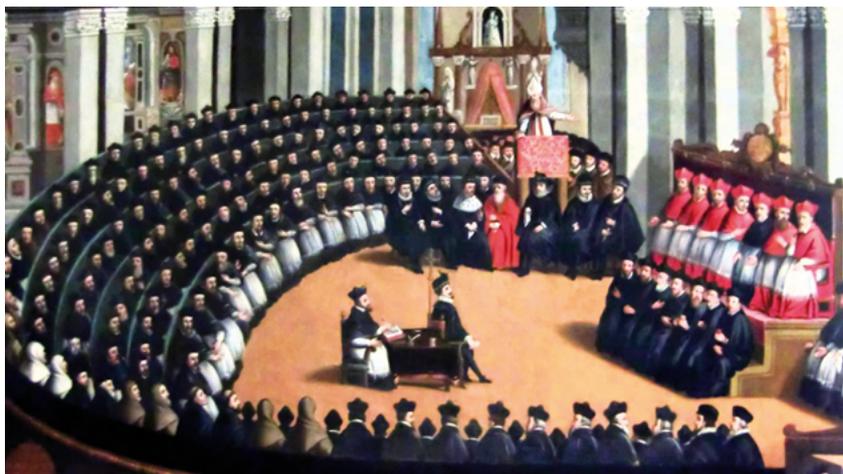
deep, almost 'maniacal' command of everything that was typical and characteristic of the Renaissance.

AA: *Can you accept the proposal of a voce ferma performance with the only purpose being that of experiencing a different aesthetic, aware, however, of not being within the sphere of philological reproduction but a different aesthetic pleasure?*

MP: Yes, absolutely. It can be done, nobody forbids it. However, I believe that is like removing the salt and pepper from this music, in the sense that it is harmonically poor music. If the choir also does not highlight the word... The Renaissance was a characteristic historical period, which gave the same attention to the counterpoint as to the word. So, if the choir does not pay the same attention, the performance becomes incredibly dry.



Mons. Massimo Palombella and Andrea Angelini after the interview



The Council of Trent (1545-1563)

AA: *You could argue that even the music of Arvo Pärt, constructed using the tintinnabuli technique, has a very simple harmony that does not require the type of attention and vocal style that we talked about before. Here maybe there is the pursuit of the pleasure of contemplation in the voce ferma and maybe the English groups are attempting to bring this experimentation to Renaissance music.*

MP: Yes, my belief is that the success for these English bands in the '80s and '90s was basically due to the fact that those who should have done this philological work never did it! The Sistine Chapel didn't really do it. With Deutsche Grammophon we have now recorded the *Missa Papae Marcelli* by Palestrina, which was previously unheard of: there are so many recorded that I told myself 'either we record a version that is truly different or we do not record it at all'. It was a huge philological work because I had to retrieve the 1567 edition, thus deciding not to add the *Agnus Dei II* because it is not by Palestrina. Although although it is in the 18 codex of Santa Maria Maggiore, in the 22 codex of the Sistine Chapel, when Palestrina published the second book of Masses in 1567 it was not included, and in 1599, when a posthumous edition was published, the publisher did not include it and wrote *Agnus Dei secundus dicitur ut supra primus*. The *colores minores*, the problem of too many beats, the problem of rhetorical figures, of the tactus consistent with the writing of the composer ... It was a very demanding job to obtain a correct philological product, at the height of the institution that owns the manuscripts and that really say something new, explaining the reasons in the booklet that accompanies the CD; I agree with the fact that a choral group can have the aesthetic pleasure of implementing what you say, but our job is to perform this kind of music by it giving a plausible, verified, scientific, obviously debatable, but reasoned and profoundly researched interpretation today.

AA: *Music is the language of the spirit. Your secret current vibrates between the heart of those who sing and the soul of the listener; these are the words of Kahlil Gibran. What is the role of the choirmaster in all of this?*

MP: The choirmaster has a very important role in my opinion. His first role is to be a person who studies and researches and then, secondly, he has the role of becoming, little by little, invisible. The music is made to be harmonised and not to be direct. In general, and this is a great tradition, the Renaissance music was not live; everyone read from a central book unless someone took on the task of the directing as we now understand it.

In St Mark's Cathedral there was probably a figure who was at the centre of the apse, behind the altar, to solve the execution problems caused by the double choir ...

The role of the director is create a good harmony. But the real role of choir director, and believe me that the choristers realise this, is to be a person who studies, who researches and who requests of the choristers slightly less than he does himself; you can't ask choral singers things that the director does not, he must be the first to set the example. My choristers spend three hours in personal study and three more hours as a choir. So I have to study at least six hours a day, but I study more, because then there is the research and much more ... This issue in relation to the music to be performed; second problem, in my case, as maestro-director, is that I also have to compose. The maestro-director of this institution, the maestro of the Sistine Chapel, first of all should not be defined, in my opinion, as was done with Bartolucci, as 'just' a composer. The maestro of the Sistine Chapel is 'also' a composer, but he is, as we have seen above, responsible for the cultural heritage of the Church; so he has to be an expert and a scholar of early music and must translated with relevance the written sign into sound. Where composing is concerned, the maestro of the Sistine Chapel must look forward. He must do as Palestrina did, as Lorenzo Perosi did. At the beginning of the 20th century, the latter brought the Sistine Chapel out of where it had relegated by Domenico Mustafà, writing only *Palestrina-style* with counterpoints. Perosi dared not to write *Palestrina-style*, profoundly experiencing his historical moment. So I believe that the maestro of the Sistine Chapel should be a man who, in his compositional gesture, lives in the present and who, after Wagner, after Mahler, lets himself



The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council (1962-1965)

be challenged by everything that has happened in music. The compositional gesture of the maestro of the Sistine Chapel must be a gesture that takes account of where he now lives: he should write for today's audience and not for the Renaissance audience. Those who do my job must pay attention to their time, be passionate about modern music, about contemporary music and experimental music, must think highly of his colleagues and therefore be curious and listen to music composed and performed by others and not simply read Palestrina and his music. This is important because the maestro-director must be able to combine the audibility and intelligibility of music with modernity. I think this is, at the moment, the great challenge that awaits us.

Translated by Laura Massey (UK), Karen Bradberry (Australia) and Mirella Biagi (UK-Italy)



Mons. MASSIMO PALOMBELLA was born in Turin on 25 December 1967. He was ordained a priest of the Salesian Congregation on 7 September 1996. He studied philosophy and theology, receiving his doctorate in dogmatic theology, and he studied music with Luigi Molfino, Valentin Miserachs Grau, Gabriele Arrigo and Alexander Ruo Rui, graduating in choral music and composition. Founder and maestro-director of the Inter-University Choir of Rome, he worked in the university parish of the Diocese of Rome from 1995 to 2010, taking care, as the maestro of music, of all the meetings of the Holy Father with the University culture. He was a lecturer until 2011 at the Pontifical Salesian University, Faculty of theology, music and liturgy and teaches at the Conservatory Guido Cantelli of Novara, to students specialising in sacred music, liturgical composition, Roman polyphony and legislation of sacred music. He was also a professor of musical languages at La Sapienza University in Rome and at the Conservatory of Turin and at the Pontifical Institute of sacred music in Urbe he taught liturgy. From 1998 to 2010 he directed the liturgical music magazine *Armonia di Voci*, by the publisher *ElleDiCi*. On 16 October 2010 he was appointed maestro-director of the Sistine Chapel Pontifical Chorus by Pope Benedict XVI and reconfirmed in 2015 by Pope Francis. He is a member, as an expert, of the National Liturgical Office Council of the Italian Bishops Conference. On 14 January 2017 Pope Francis appointed him Consultor of the Congregation for divine worship and the discipline of the sacraments. With both the University Choir of Rome, which he directed until 2011, and with the Sistine Chapel Pontifical Chorus he has performed many concerts in Italy and in the world and has recorded a large number of CD and DVDs with *ElleDiCi*, *Libreria Editrice Vaticana* and *Deutsche Grammophon*, with whom he won the prestigious *Echo Klassik Award* for the CD 'Cantate Domino'. Email: info@cappellamusicalepontificia.va

COMPOSER'S CORNER



**Composing with the Performer in Mind:
A Conversation with Russian Choral Composer Sergey Yekimov**
Kevin L. Coker

COMPOSING WITH THE PERFORMER IN MIND: A CONVERSATION WITH RUSSIAN CHORAL COMPOSER SERGEY YEKIMOV

KEVIN L. COKER

choral conductor and teacher

Kevin L. Coker: *What are some of your musical influences, and how have they shaped your development as a composer?*

Sergey Yekimov: Probably all of us composers are essentially the disciples of the great Bach anyway... And even those who say that he had no influence on them are either dissembling or mistaken... Bach's talent and caliber was so great that we are all indirectly his followers. However, composers of the Polish school such as Lutosławski and Penderecki and outstanding composers of the former USSR like Schnittke, Shchedrin, Pärt, and Kancheli played a huge role in my compositional development. I also was fond of and researched the creative work of Ligeti, Messiaen and, of course, the composers of our St. Petersburg school, rooted in the outstanding Shostakovich.

As everyone knows, there are only seven notes. In principle, all music already has been written long ago and the composer's technique of writing is constantly replicated. That's when the real composer's talent must take over. By using his own ways of musical expression, he has to attract people's attention and make his music performed and heard. Then it will be his OWN unique and recognizable approach, style and handwriting.

KC: *What are some distinctive characteristics of your choral works? How have these characteristics changed or developed over the years?*

SY: Above all, it is polyphony. Unfortunately, not all the choirs (if we are now talking about choral music) can perform my pieces. I often use pointillism and aleatory techniques. Not often do I use serial techniques. I make sure that melody (no matter how intricate it might be) does not get lost behind modern ways of choral writing. And of course-the text (the word). Although my writing now, probably, has become more transparent and simple in comparison with the opuses of my youth. I have become more selective towards splitting texture or increasing the number of vocal divisi, and more aware of rhythmic and melodic complexity. Perhaps, I have begun to think more about the performers - they all have to sing it! I came to the conclusion long ago that nothing is more effective than instrumental sound of the choir. When the chorus sounds like an orchestra - it's cool! (And, by the way, vice versa!).

KC: *Can you provide some insight on your approach for engaging and writing for the voice?*

SY: Due to the nature of my musical education, most of my music is either choral or chamber vocal. I graduated from college and conservatory and from graduate school as a choir conductor, and only then as a composer. I sang in different choirs and ensembles for more than 20 years. Hence my profound knowledge of the voice as an instrument. I hold vocal and choral music as my dearest and closest thing.

KC: *What are the most challenging and enjoyable aspects to your creative process?*

SY: I'm conservative in the way I write my score. I prefer, as great people did before me, to copy them by hand and not to type or compose on the computer. This does not mean I disrespect computer technologies, but do you agree that Mozart, Brahms, and Tchaikovsky did not have computers yet and they somehow managed without them! Don't you agree? So for me, the most difficult and time-consuming task is rewriting the work to make a final draft. Although this takes time, I still consider rewriting to be an integral part in the creation of any composition. After all, while rewriting, you sing all vertical and horizontal lines, verify each voice movements, and sometimes even make important changes. The most pleasant thing is when the score has just been copied by hand, you show it to someone for the first time, and hear their initial reaction! It is exciting, momentous, but very curious...



Sergey Yekimov at the piano

KC: *How does it feel to hear your music performed for the first time?*

SY: It is always a big worry - the worry about the performers and how will they cope. It is also very important that the immense preparations for the premiere performance weren't in vain. But will audience like it - it is always difficult to predict. Sometimes, compositions are obviously programmed for success, but commonly it is impossible to anticipate the reaction of audience.

And how pleasant when your composition is enthusiastically accepted by audience, but you thought that you hadn't written anything great. It is so pleasant, nothing to hide.

KC: *Of all the pieces you've written, which one is your favorite, and why?*

SY: I love the composing process itself and, frankly speaking, almost every work is like a child. First you hatch an idea, then you start to create it. This process can be quick and easy, or it can be complicated and time-consuming. At the same time, the process is always insanely fascinating and takes a lot of effort, energy, attention, and time. And how glad and happy you are when you finally get everything right! There are times that the tastes of the public, and sometimes of the performers, do not agree with the opinion of the author. Sometimes it happens that the work you wrote, without even attaching much importance to it, becomes the most popular one in the long run and will be your calling card for your whole life. On the contrary, it occurs that a piece you spent a significant amount of time writing and thoughtfully repeating and polishing every note does not attract special attention and is not performed as often as you would prefer. This happened to me as well in 1993, while I was a first-year student of the choral conducting department of the St. Petersburg Conservatory. I composed a chorale that was about one minute forty seconds in length with the amusing title "Kangaroo." The text, which has no connection to the Australian animal, is based on the lyrics of the early 20th-century Russian poet Nikolay Gumilev. For almost a quarter of a century, this has been my most popular and most frequently performed work.

KC: *What are your current compositional projects? Are there any specific genres or works you want to write in the future?*

SY: Currently, I compose a lot in the genre of Russian orthodox sacred music. This is not only because the long-standing prohibition on creating sacred music in Russia was lifted but because I felt a sincere need to compose from my heart. At the end of 2016, a significant event happened in my life. I adopted Orthodoxy in spite of being a Catholic since I was 19 years old. Perhaps, this is why I have composed a lot of music in Latin.

However, throughout my career I have occasionally been drawn to the orthodox sacred texts, psalms and prayers. One of my earliest works was "Bless the Lord, my soul" (1992).

In 2014, the Saint Petersburg Church of the Resurrection gave a beautiful premier performance of my biggest composition to date "The Speech of the Lord." This work for chorus and bells is nearly an hour and a half in length and the Church of the Resurrection was a beautiful acoustic for the premier. I've just completed a large work "From the Akathist to Saint Faithful Prince Alexander Nevsky." For future works and projects, I have an idea to create spiritual concerts for St. Sergius of Radonezh and St. Blessed Xenia of St. Petersburg. In addition, as a tribute to my catholic past, I would like to compose a *Te Deum* and *Requiem*. I would also like to write a large oratorio St. Mark Passion for soloists, several choirs and orchestra, and I even have an idea of creating an opera...

KC: *What role, if any, does the commissioning process currently play in your career?*

SY: The commissioning process is simply necessary for a composer. Firstly, it tests your craftsmanship as many times it is necessary to write quickly enough

for the performers who have commissioned the work. And they are not always the performers who you are accustomed to or who you find convenient! Secondly, commissioned music is a job for which you get paid. And, truth be told, it is also important for any composer! However, I try to be as creative as possible even when working on ordered pieces, and work on such compositions is no less exciting or professional. Subsequently, I even sometimes forget that this or that piece was originally ordered by someone.

KC: *You are also an accomplished conductor. How has your career as a composer prepared you for conducting?*

SY: Rather vice versa! My conducting work and singing activity in chorus led to the desire to compose by myself. I repeatedly performed most of my early opuses as part of the Saint-Petersburg Youth Chamber Choir conducted by talented choirmaster Yulia Hutoretskaya. Thanks to this experience, I was able to hear high quality performances of my new compositions practically instantly. For this I am even now sincerely thankful to her. By the way, I don't like much to interpret my own compositions – there is never enough time to execute perfectly the ideal sounds inside of me.



Sergey Yekimov conducting

KC: *What insights can you offer about conducting and interpreting your music?*

SY: Probably the same as for the performance of any music! I will answer as a conductor, not a composer. For me the criteria (even when I perform my own music) are the same. I look at it as simply a composer's creation. As such, it is necessary to take all of the composer's wishes into account by performing the piece with accurate rhythm, intonation, tempos and in the necessary character indicated by the author. These are the keys to the success of correct and competent interpretation.

KC: *Your choirs have won international competitions and your compositions are performed throughout Russia and abroad. With all of your success, what continues to inspire and motivate you?*

SY: Love.

I should like to extend my most sincere gratitude to Sergey Yekimov for giving so generously of his time. In addition, I would also like to thank Julia Blinova, executive director of the International Choral Competition 'Singing World', for making this interview possible by translating between Sergey and me.



KEVIN L. COKER is the director of the University of Cincinnati Men's Chorus and is completing a DMA in Choral Conducting at UC's College-Conservatory of Music. Kevin has 10 years of public school teaching experience and has taught at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Ensembles under his direction have received invitations to perform at state NAFME and regional ACDA conferences. Most recently, the UC Men's Chorus will perform at the Intercollegiate Men's Chorus National Seminar in Washington, D.C. He holds a Bachelor of Music Education from Belmont University and a Master of Music in Choral Conducting from Florida State University. Kevin lives in Cincinnati, OH with his beautiful wife, Becky and their two golden retrievers, Cody and Abby.

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Камерному хору Московской консерватории
и его художественному руководителю Александру Соловьеву

PATER NOSTER

С. ЕКИМОВ

Maestoso ♩ = 62
ff marcato

S. Pa - ter nos - ter qui es in cae - lis, *curt*

A. Pa - ter nos - ter qui es in cae - lis, *curt*

T. Pa - ter nos - ter qui es in cae - lis, *curt*

B. Pa - ter nos - ter qui es in cae - lis, *curt*

I

S. I *mf* *f* *sf* *pp sub.*
...men Tu - um, san -

S. II *pp secco* *mp* *mf* *f* *sf* *pp sub.*
...fi... no - men Tu - um,

S. III

A. I *pp secco* *mp* *mf* *f* *sf*
...cti - fi - ce - tur no - men Tu - um,

A. II *pp secco* *mp* *mf* *f* *sf*
san - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men Tu - um,

S. *mp* *mf* *f* *sf* *f* ...ni - at
 - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men Tu - um, ...ni...

A. *pp* *mp* *mf* *f* *sf* *f*
 ...cti - fi - ce - tur no - men Tu - um, a - dve...

T. *pp* *mp* *mf* *f* *sf* *f*
 ...fi... no - men Tu - um, a...

B. *f* *sf* *f*
 Tu - um, ...ni - at

2 *pp sub.* *non cresc.*
 re - gnum Tu - um, fi - a - t vo - lu - ntas Tu - a

pp sub. *non cresc.*
 re - gnum Tu - um, fi - a... Tu - a

pp sub. *non cresc.*
 re - gnum Tu - um, fi - a... Tu - a

pp sub. *non cresc.*
 fi - a - t vo - lu - ntas Tu - a

si - cu - t in cae - lo et in ter - ra.

si - cu... et in ter - ra. ...m no - strum

si - cu... et in ter - ra. ...m no...

si - cu... et in ter - ra. ...ne...

si - cu - t in cae - lo et in ter - ra. Pa...

da no - bis ho - gi - e.

da no - bis ho - di...

da no - bis ho - di...

da no - bis ho - di - e.

da no - bis ho - di...

da no - bis ho - di - e.

da no - bis ho - di - e.

4 a tempo

...te no - bis de - bi - ta

Et di - mit - te no - bis

sf *mp* *pp secco* *p sub.*

S. solo

5

S. altri

A.

T. *sf*

B. *sf*

f espr.

pp *p* *p* *p*

e... et no... ...s di... ...mu... ...s di... ...mit - ti... ...mi...

...s de - bi - lo - ri - bus

si - cut

no - stra, si...

Pochissimo più mosso

6 *ff* *sub. molto espr.* *rall.*

S. I *p* *più p* no - stris. Et ne *ff* *sub. molto espr.*

S. II *p* *più p* Et ne *ff* *sub. molto espr.*

S. III *p* *più p* no - stris. E... *ff* *sub. molto espr.*

S. IV *p* *più p* Et ne no... *ff* *sub. molto espr.*

A. I *p* *più p* Et ne nos i... *ff* *molto espr.*

A. II *p* *più p* no - stris. *molto espr.* *ff* *molto espr.* ...n du...

A. III *p* *più p* no - stris. *molto espr.* *ff* *molto espr.* ...n du - ca...

T. I *p* *più p* no - stris. *molto espr.* *ff* *molto espr.* ...n du - cas i...

T. II *p* *più p* no - stris. *molto espr.* *ff* *molto espr.* ...n te...

T. III *p* *più p* no - stris. *molto espr.* *ff* *molto espr.* ...n ten - ta...

B. I *p* *più p* no - stris. *molto espr.* *ff* *molto espr.* ...n ten - ta - ti...

B. II *p* *più p* *molto espr.* *ff* *molto espr.* ...o...

B. III *p* *più p* no - stris. *molto espr.* *ff* *molto espr.* ...o...

B. IV *p* *molto espr.* *ff* *molto espr.* ...o...

mrk 0015 mep ...o - nem.

Tempo I

ff con tutta forza

The musical score consists of four staves, each representing a different voice part. The lyrics are: "sed li - be - ra nos a - ma - lo." The score is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and features a complex, multi-measure rest system. The first staff begins with a 4/4 time signature, which changes to 3/4, then 7/8, and finally 4/4. The second and third staves follow the same time signature sequence. The fourth staff begins with a 4/4 time signature. Each staff contains a melodic line with various rhythmic values and rests, and a bass line with chords and single notes. The dynamic marking *ff con tutta forza* is repeated at the beginning of each staff. The lyrics are placed below the first and third staves.

REPERTOIRE

REPERTOIRE



Homage to Veljo Tormis
Raul Talmar

HOMAGE TO VELJO TORMIS

RAUL TALMAR

choir conductor and teacher, President of Estonian Choral Association

THIS PAPER DOES NOT PRETEND TO BE A PIECE OF MUSICAL SCIENCE, BUT IT IS ONE CHOIR CONDUCTOR'S PERSONAL AND EMOTIONAL HOMAGE TO VELJO TORMIS AND HIS WORK.

My first contact with the works of Veljo Tormis as a choir singer was in the choir *Noorus* (Youth) while performing his cycle *Dialectic aphorisms upon Juhan Liiv's words*. The opening and ending part called 'Dialogue' opened the eyes of a young man with its simplicity and assignment of musical meaning to text. The first part of the song, which speaks of a large nation, is written in *fff*, B major, **and** Andante Grandioso (chauvinistically). The other half, which speaks of a little nation, is written in *p*, b minor, Semplice (nationalistically). Through this clear musical confrontation Tormis arrives to a powerful generalisation, which mocks the idea of one nation thinking their love for their country is better than another nation's love for theirs.

By the beginning of the 1980s Tormis had positioned (or had been positioned thanks to his beliefs) clearly against the ruling regime. His cooperation with the poet Hando Runnel was especially effectual. Both of them separately and together were masters of a special kind of irony and sarcasm, which expressed Estonian aspirations for freedom; the author is convinced that these two mental pillars were playing very important part main in so-called *Singing Revolution*. Works like *Reflections with Hando Runnel* (1981), *Reflections with Lenin* (1982), *Virumaa and Pandivere*, *The Estonian Man and His Kind*, *Secret Woman* (1981), *Step Forward* (1984) gave a strong impulse to the rise of Estonian pride.

I would like to talk separately about the work *Reflections with Lenin*, because it would be easy to get a false impression about the content of the work based on the heading. Firstly, it should be noted that the premiere planned in 1982 was banned by the Soviet Estonian KGB and the music score was confiscated. Tormis had by that time proven himself more than capable of writing between the lines and directly about things which were important for all Estonians and which ridiculed or outright bashed national injustice. Even the text of the second part of the six-part cycle would have given enough reason to confiscate the music:

"We must differentiate between the nationalism of an oppressive nation and the nationalism of the

oppressed, between the nationalism of a large nation and a small nation. For the other type of nationalism, we, the nationalists of a large nation, are almost always historically guilty of endless violence and insults..." (Works of Lenin, vol. 36, page 556, Tallinn 1959).

Imagine, all of this as a choral work for four voices, that everyone can sing (there are a lot of choirs in Estonia). Of course, the author's memories speak of moments when the power of the 'sung word' could be felt at many performances, where the music caused an almost physically tangible resonance between the choir and the public. It was at that period when I really understood that the *power of the word* was more than just a phrase.

I must also mention an earlier work, namely a song celebration cantata named *The Beginning of the Song* (words also by Hando Runnel), written for the jubilee Song Celebration of 1969, which marked 100 years since the first Song Celebration. It is also in that work that through musical references both the want for independence at that time and from one hundred years before are intertwined into one message that rises to the sky.

The world likely does not know much about the Tormis I have just described. However, it seems to me that the same creative sensitivity and deep familiarity with a little nation's soul are what drove Tormis to create and also through his works to directly fight against lies, violence, and immorality and was also the driving force behind the second part of his creative work - rewriting very old Finno-Ugric folk songs.

Tormis graduated from the Moscow conservatory in 1956, where Vissarion Shebalin, his composition professor, urged his students to identify themselves through their nationality and to use national soundscapes in their creations.

In 1958 Tormis and his students stumbled upon a truly ancient wedding on the island of Kihnu. He spent 3 days there as a guest at the wedding (indeed the wedding was that long) and experienced that the whole time



Veljo Tormis with Stephen Layton

variations of one theme were sung to accompany the wedding activities. Experiencing this living tradition awakened a deep interest in both Kihnu folklore and older Estonian folklore in general. (Kihnu is a little island in the Baltic sea where to this day women in traditional clothing ride around on motorcycles.) It was from there that Tormis got the inspiration to write folksongs using authentic patterns. Thus the first four-part cycle *Kihnu Wedding Songs* was born. In that cycle, he still uses runic songs in different pitches and tonalities and in somewhat changed form. But already in his next major work started in 1966, the five-part cyclical *Estonian Calendar Songs* (1966-1967), he uses folk themes in unchanged form and since that time "Tormis does not use folk songs, folk songs use Tormis" (in his own words).

From that point onward, we can list continuous cycles: *Livonian Heritage* (1970 - 5 parts), *Songs of Song and Singer* (1971 - 5 parts), *Votic Wedding Songs* (1971 - 7 parts), *Seven*

Livonian Folk Songs (1972). Votic and Livonian songs also start a new branch in his work - songs of kindred peoples. The conclusion of this monumental task is the collection 'Forgotten Peoples': *Livonian Heritage, Votic Wedding Songs, Izhorian Epic, Ingrian Evenings, Vepsian Paths, Karelian Destiny*. In all of these six cycles Tormis uses folks' songs (or they use him) in unchanged form, meanwhile also giving them a new life with his unique signature.

It is also important to emphasise once more, that these themes and texts come from the 'paganic and shamanistic' time (up until 3000 years B.C.), where the *power of the word* guided peoples lives much more directly than today. (But You never know...)

Somehow, these two branches of Tormis' creation meet in *Curse Upon Iron*. Pure folklore it is not, yet there is definitely something ancient and powerful in this shamanistic work. So powerful in fact, that after first hearing it, the author was left in a trance-like state for a long time after the concert.

The myth of how iron came to be is itself from the Finnish epic *Kalevala*. However, Tormis wished to use it in a much wider and more modern meaning. The thought of such a work started germinating around the year 1966, but even just composing the text took three men, August Annist (main text), Paul-Eerik Rummo and Jaan Kaplinski (additions) around six years.

The main motif of *Curse Upon Iron* is three notes, which all fit into a little third (A,B,C). At first, the shaman drum was not even a part of the plan, until a happy coincidence at the 1970 Moscow IMC congress (VII International Music Congress) gave Tormis the chance to hear the so-called authentic Kalevala drums. From that moment, it was clear to the composer that the work would be written for mixed choir and shamanic drum. Another lucky coincidence revealed that Lennart Meri (the president of Estonia from 1992-2001) had one such drum in his home. By 1972, the composition was ready and cooperation with Tallinn Chamber Choir and the conductor Arvo Ratassepp began. It was a

whole year until the work was ready to be performed. To be honest, most likely none of us really knew how to 'curse'. Tormis probably intuitively knew, but for many singers such a way of singing was a true shock. There was even a letter from an otolaryngologist to Tormis, where the composers insistence on singing as the composition requires is referred to as 'unheard of barbarity'. A few examples from the score: guttural, through the teeth, sharply, accentuated, vulgarly, suggestive, sinisterly, colourless, hollow, trembling, screeching, in fear of death, severely, commanding, the voice "breaks," scream.

I believe *Curse upon Iron* is currently one of the most widely known of Tormis' works and I still admire the uppermost timeliness of the text. I also think that concerts outside of Estonia by non-Estonian speaking collectives to non-Estonian speaking listeners still convey the ancient wisdom: "Everything created by man may turn against man himself if he starts using his creation without attention to ethics. The evil hidden in iron will turn against the man through the man himself; if people will not listen to the voice of reason, iron may destroy everybody. According to folk wisdom, knowledge about the essence and creation of things will give people power over them." (Tiia Järg, Preface to 1991, revised edition of *Curse upon iron*, translated by Urve Läänemets).

To affirm this I shall also add a few translated phrases:

"..New eras, new Gods and heroes, and cannons and airplanes and tanks, and guns. New steel and iron, brand-new, intelligent, precise, powerful killers, equipped with automated guiding devices, armed with nuclear warheads, missiles invulnerable to defensive rocketry.... .. Damn you, bastard! Wretched iron! We are kinsmen, of the same breed, of the same seed we have sprouted, you are earth-

born, I am earth-born, in the black soil we are brethren. For we both live on the same earth and in that earth we two will merge. There will be land enough for both." (literal translation by Eero Vihman).

Did Tormis have role models? In his lectures he has mentioned Vissarion Shebalin, his professor of composition at the Moscow Conservatory, who saw that the German approach to harmony was not suited to runo songs and gave Claude Debussy as an example of using modern harmony ("who was possibly one of those who helped me get on my feet"). Tormis also held in high regard the works and aesthetic of Bela Bartok and Zoltan Kodaly, which were also based on treasuring folk music traditions. Tormis has also mentioned that Modest Mussorgski's principle that melody should be based upon speech intonation and be psychologically justified has been an important creative standpoint.

In any case, a stubborn Estonian man he has always been and he also became a composer out of stubbornness (autobiography *A Composer out of Stubbornness*, Prisma Print Publishing House, 2000.) I will add words from another one of Tormis' songs here in the end (Juhan Viiding, translated by Dave Murphy and Jaak Johanson: *We are given*), which might give an inkling of what a great man Tormis has been, is and will remain.

"We are given the potion, we are taking the portion. Still there is air in proportion, but we sense the distortion. And if we feel the distortion that may kill all that's breathing, why don't we already gather? We need to get together. We cannot be believing, so far apart we are living. Still being pushed together, we'll get it never ever. Room is forever needed, lasting through ages heeded. Still we feel the distortion. Still there is air in proportion. Still we feel the... Still there is air in..."

Edited by Ellen Murnane, USA



RAUL TALMAR (b 1959) graduated from the Tallinn Music Academy as choral conductor in 1982. He sang in mixed choir Noorus since 1977 and was the choir's principal conductor in 1991–2012. At present, he conducts the mixed choir K.O.O.R. and mixed choir of Tallinn University BFM Institute. Earlier, he has worked with the Academic Male Choir of the Tallinn University of Technology, the male choir of the Helsinki Trade University, the female choir of the Klementi Sewing Factory, the Pärnu Mattone Chamber Choir, the national girls' choir Leelo, the Tallinn Russian Choir and Tallinn St. Charles Church Concert Choir. In 2006, he was nominated the Conductor of the Year by the Estonian Choral Association. Since 1993, Raul Talmar has conducted mixed and female choirs at the Youth Song Celebrations and since 2004 at all Estonian Song and Dance Celebrations. In 2011, he was the artistic director of the Estonian programme of the 16th Gaudeamus Students' Song Festival. Raul Talmar is Assistant Professor of choral conducting in Tallinn University since 2008 and from June 2013 he is the President of Estonian Choral Association. Email: talmar.pohi@gmail.com

CHORAL REVIEW



The Learning Conductor
Tobin Sparfeld

THE LEARNING CONDUCTOR

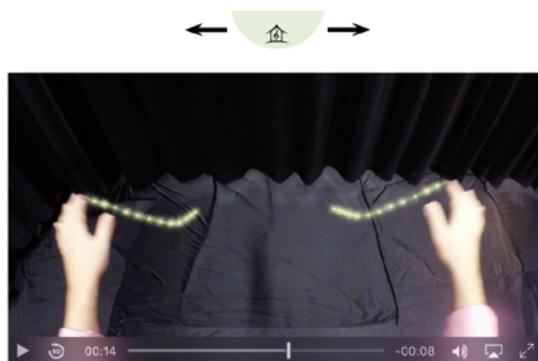
TOBIN SPARFELD

DMA, teacher and conductor

AUTHOR THOMAS CAPLIN IS A PROFESSOR AND CHORAL DIRECTOR IN NORWAY. HE CURRENTLY CONDUCTS THE DEFROST YOUTH CHOIR, LUND ACADEMIC MALE CHOIR, AND IS A PROFESSOR IN CHORAL CONDUCTING AND MANAGEMENT AT THE INLAND NORWAY UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES. IN HIS BOOK, *THE LEARNING CONDUCTOR*, CAPLIN ADDRESSES MANY OF THE MAIN ASPECTS REGARDING THE LEADERSHIP OF A CHORAL ENSEMBLE. WHILE HE ADMITS IT IS FAR FROM A COMPLETE EXAMINATION OF THE SUBJECT, IT IS A BROAD INTRODUCTION TO MANY CONCEPTS OF CHORAL CONDUCTING.

The Learning Conductor was first published in 1995 and has been revised several times. This e-book is the first edition in English and was published in 2015. The book has three main sections; the first deals with the mechanics of conducting techniques, the second covers the psychology and leadership skills necessary and the third examines aspects of choral methods.

The section on conducting mechanics is the strongest section. Caplin begins by describing the ideal hand position with open space between the fingers. From there, he introduces the four main beat patterns. While some conducting textbooks begin with duple metre, Caplin starts with the one-beat pattern, describing the sensation as if bouncing a ball on the



Exercises

Conduct a 4 beat figure while singing notes of different lengths on a single syllable (e.g. "ba" – a semibreve for the first bar, minims for the second bar, crotchets for the third, and so on).

Air resistance: beat a 4-beat figure with your conducting hand alternating between a "light and airy" and a "heavy" feel. "Heavy" is the feeling you would have if conducting underwater, or the feeling that the air is exerting resistance on your hands. Maintain the same pulse all the time (alternate between one light and one heavy bar).

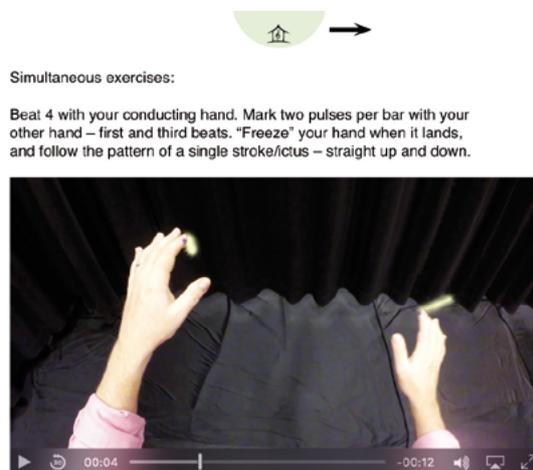
Simultaneous exercise: Sit on a chair. Make circles in air with one hand (either hand). At the same time make a figure of eight with the same leg (e.g. right hand – right leg). Perfection!!

Maintain the circular figure in one hand and make figures of eight with the opposite leg – is this easier or harder? Why is that, do you think?

This was in effect two parts, two difficult parts! If you can additionally move your other leg up and down without making circles or figures of eight, then you have three active parts. Remember to be aware of the feeling of consciously shifting your mental focus from one part to another and to all three together. Perfect this exercise! You can also begin singing a song as a fourth part, as long as you do not forget what or how you are singing.

40

M-H 3646E



Simultaneous exercises:

Beat 4 with your conducting hand. Mark two pulses per bar with your other hand – first and third beats. "Freeze" your hand when it lands, and follow the pattern of a single stroke/iclus – straight up and down.

Now you should try to conduct Ave Verum Corpus by Mozart in the same way – 4 beats in your right hand and two in your left.

Polyrhythms: Beat 4 with both hands. Sing quaver and crotchet triplets on a single syllable ("da") (two quaver triplets and one crotchet triplet per bar).



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ground. Several musical examples are included along with written descriptions about specific feelings and characteristics. The text discusses four different dimensions experienced while conducting—gravity, time/timing, ‘flow’ (horizontal motion of the beat pattern), and space. A mantra repeated throughout the text is: “What you do is what you get!”, a phrase similar to Rod Eichenberger’s “What they see is what you get.”

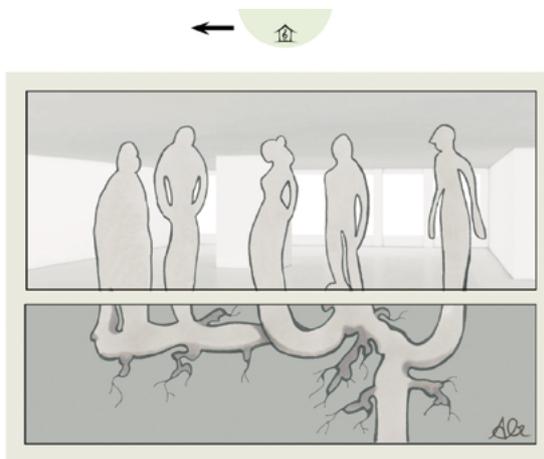
Beats are added to each gesture to create duple, triple, and quadruple meter patterns. Five and six-beat patterns are introduced, while larger compound metres and subdivisions are briefly mentioned. Illustrations and videos are provided in the e-book.

Caplin then reviews preparatory beats, cut-offs/releases, and the

various ways to conduct fermatas (with/without cut-offs, pauses, etc.). While these are touched on, novice conductors may have difficulty learning how to conduct these more advanced gestures from the book alone. The section concludes analysing the causes of a common malady he refers to as “jigging,” where the conductor jerks away from the beat instead of down into the ictus (as if touching a hot stove for each beat).

The second section begins on page 135 and focuses on the psychology of choral conductors and singers. Caplin believes that conductors should empower singers and give them greater responsibility by delegating some of the conductor’s roles to the singers, the choir’s board (if one exists), and by having conversations with the singers about group goals and objectives. Caplin writes that “[m]usic is all about humanity—where the conductor learns to lead the whole person behind the voice.” The following chapters on the Learning Choir, written by Stig Eriksen, consider the mental aspects of conducting, including the importance of kinaesthetic learning, gesture, and overall mindfulness in teaching. While containing well-researched information, it concludes without providing much applicable benefit to the choral conductor.

The third section contains elements traditionally grouped together as choral methods. The rehearsal methodology chapter gives basic tips on how to structure a rehearsal and how to rehearse individual parts while engaging the other singers. Piano playing of vocal parts is given significant attention, as well as warm-ups (though there are no specific warm-ups provided) and the use of amplified sound. Caplin makes a good distinction that when singing with a microphone, singers must learn to focus their auditory perception



The power of the singers' invisible intranet

In a smaller choir – or vocal group – the “intranet” is of significant importance, as the individual singer can’t “hide” behind the chorus effect, both with regards to time/timing, intonation, sound and musical expressions. Discovering and exploring the “intranet” and how the individual singer is incessantly switched on and equally incessantly influences his surroundings. I find highly interesting and important! It’s a matter of conscious or subconscious co-leadership – where the singers’ personal values, competencies and experiences – put together smitten the co-singers around him. The co-leadership’s importance in a choir is maybe bigger than what has previously been documented.

Exercise – projected listening, use of lead

The kind of “neutral” and relatively non-projected listening you often find in a more classic choral setting, would not work well in smaller ensemble, and particularly not when using microphones. Leadership must be clearly defined, even though a smaller ensemble normally has a more flat governing structure than in a bigger choir setting.

In this exercise the ensemble should appoint one of the singers taking the “lead” and he or she should lead with the aid of role modelling breathing, body language, mimic and mouth positioning, thus creating homogeneity in time/timing, balance, sound, phrasing and expression. The others on the group now give this focus person full attention and takes after him/her in anything he/she does. The effect of this is surprisingly big and can quite immediately solve those normal challenges in a small ensemble. How big this effect is can be explored by simply changing the “lead” person.

In a more classic choir this form of “lead”-thinking is an exciting way of thinking. Normally you would of course at the point of departure have a pre-defined lead in the conductor constituting the conditioning authority. It is also here the singers naturally relates to what the conductor explicitly communicates musically and on a human level, and where the individual singer becomes a limited and implicit part of the choir’s total expression – a part of the total chorus effect! Thus, there is a risk that the singer’s own personal luggage of competence, experience and values can easily be forgotten in the big picture – it never becomes explicit.

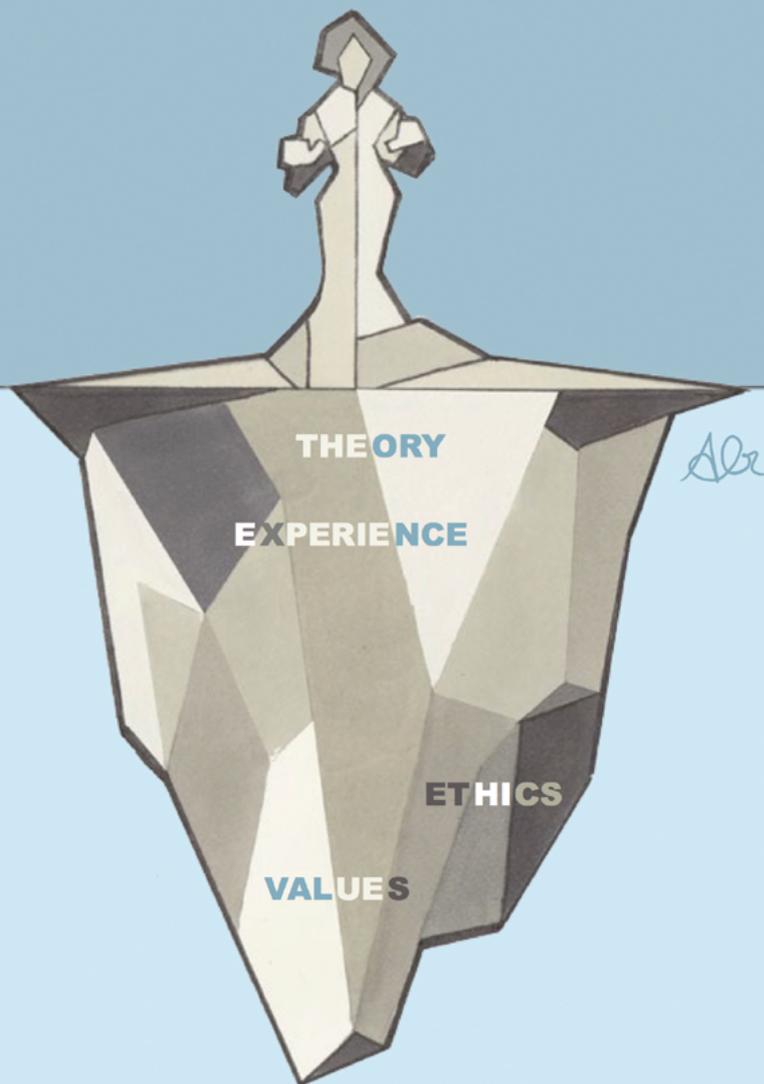
In a group using microphones will these competencies/lack of competencies, experience/lack of experience and values/lack of values be amplified and made very explicit – what you are and what you do is what you get! Even as a singer!

In order to find out how big this influence from one singer really is on his fellow singers, you may define one of the singers a lead. Place him or her in front of his co-singers and ask him to lead a passage in the music. All perception must now be focused on this lead singer – trying to capture everything he does, lip movement, breathing and facial expression. The lead singer may change whatever he feels like changing – e.g. dynamics, phrasing, type of breath (shallow – deep), vibrato – non vibrato, sound, (classical – pop – nasal - twang etc..)... You will quickly register how immediately the co-singers pick up and

Thomas Caplin

THE LEARNING CONDUCTOR

A book about choral leadership



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towards the sound coming out of the loudspeaker, not their own immediate sound.

The textbook also briefly comments on the appreciation of music, fidelity to the score, a brief look at some of the modern techniques of contemporary choral music, and a sizeable section on the arrangement of sections within the choral ensemble. The closing chapters address the perception of choral sound, the importance of partnership in choral music (written by Peder Karlsson), choral intonation, and Latin pronunciation.

At nearly 320 pages, *The Learning Conductor* is not a short book. However, because it tackles so many topics in a brief fashion, it feels much shorter. The writing is concise and clear, which is especially important when describing the motions and sensations of conducting. However, there could be more illustrations of correct posture and movement for conductors and the beat pattern illustrations are more angular than most choral conductors would typically employ. Several subjects are lacking, including score study, repertoire selection, rehearsal pedagogy, diction and the more advanced conducting gesture areas that include prep beats and subdivisions. Also, there is nothing regarding vocal pedagogy or any details regarding the voice.

The Learning Conductor is ideally suited to beginning choral conductors or those with limited experience, especially those who are already singers (and who have previous knowledge of vocal training). With its discussion of piano playing and microphone use and less attention given to score study/repertoire, the book is also more geared towards community choirs rather than academic or church choir settings. Caplin encourages more experienced conductors to begin at the end of the book and work their way to the start, thus getting to the most original sections first. While it can function as a choral conducting textbook for an overview academic course, institutions that divide the conducting and choral methods components will most likely prefer books which are more thorough, regarding either area. *The Learning Conductor* lacks a "textbook feel" due to it not containing exercises, review questions, and fewer illustrations.

Caplin draws on his experience to share his best insights with readers, and uses his words efficiently. While there are many books on conducting gesture out there, this is currently one of the few e-books on choral conducting, making it an attractive digital resource for modern conductors. While not complete, this broad overview of conducting is one that is worthy to be considered.

Edited by Rebeka Angstamann, UK



Thomas Caplin



As a former member of the St. Louis Children's Choirs, TOBIN SPARFELD has toured over the world, from as far west as Vancouver, British Columbia, to as far east as Moscow, Russia. Tobin has also sung with Seraphic Fire and the Santa Fe Desert Chorale. Tobin has worked with choirs of all ages, serving as Assistant Music Director of the Miami Children's Chorus as well as the Associate Director of the St. Louis Children's Choirs. He also taught at Principia College and was the Director of Choral Activities at Millersville University of Pennsylvania. Tobin received a DMA in Conducting from the University of Miami in Coral Gables, studying with Jo-Michael Scheibe and Joshua Habermann. He also received an Artist Teacher Diploma from the CME Institute led by Doreen Rao. He currently directs two choirs and the vocal program at Glendale Community College in Glendale, California.
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【世界好声音】2017 中国（黔东南）国际民歌合唱节暨 国际合唱联盟“世界声音对话”向全球发出邀请

“BEAUTIFUL VOICES OF THE WORLD” AN INVITATION FROM 2017 CHINA (QIANDONGNAN)
INTERNATIONAL FOLK SONG CHORAL FESTIVAL AND IFCM WORLD VOICES CONFERENCE



中国（黔东南）国际民歌合唱节吉祥卡通形象
China (Qiandongnan) International Folk Song Choral Festival Cartoon

由贵州省黔东南州人民政府和国际合唱联盟联合举办的“2017 中国（黔东南）国际民歌合唱节暨国际合唱联盟‘世界声音对话’”将于 2017 年 8 月 8 日至 8 月 12 日在黔东南苗族侗族自治州首府凯里市下司古镇隆重举行，活动旨在加强国际合唱艺术交流、推动合唱教育繁荣发展、弘扬中华优秀传统文化、多视角、全方位展示中国民族文化的魅力。

The upcoming 2017 China (Qiandongnan) International Folk Song Choral Festival and IFCM World Voices Conference will be held in Xiasi Old Town of Kaili City from Aug 8 to 12 in 2017. The Festival is being co-hosted by the People's Government of Qiandongnan in Guizhou Province and IFCM. Its aim is to strengthen the exchanges of international choral arts, promote the development of choral education, and highlight splendid traditional culture in China by way of well-rounded multi-perspectives.

CHORAL CALENDAR



**Festivals, Competitions,
Conferences, Workshops &
Masterclasses, and more...**
Compiled by Nadine Robin

Al Sole della Sardegna International Choral Festival, Sant'Antioco, Italy, 23 Aug-3 Sep 2017. For all choirs of all types. Contact: Prof. Giuliano Rinaldi, Email: office@festivalalsoledellasardegna.eu - Website: www.festivalalsoledellasardegna.eu

Istanbul International Chorus Competition and Festival, Istanbul, Turkey, 24-28 Aug 2017. For children, female, male, mixed choirs and folk groups. Contact: Istanbul Harman Folklor, Email: istanbul@istanbulchorus.com - Website: www.istanbulchorus.com

Norbusang 2017, Os, Norway, 24-28 May 2017. Festivals for children's and youth choirs to create contacts between singers and conductors from the entire Nordic region, with the aim to promote the exchange of repertoire from country to country and the creation of new Nordic repertoire for children's and youth choirs, to communicate knowledge and experiences in order to promote a conscious development, both musically and pedagogically. Contact: Norbusang, Email: info@norbusang.org - Website: <http://norbusang.org/>

Association of British Choral Directors, ABCD 32nd Annual Convention, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, United Kingdom, 25-27 Aug 2017. Inspiration, repertoire and technique for anyone leading choral music, with presenters and choirs from the UK and abroad. This year's themes include repertoire, technique, the voice and diversity and unity. A young conductors' course for anyone aged 18-25 will run parallel with the convention. Contact: Association of British Choral Directors, Rachel Greaves, Email: rachel.greaves@abcd.org.uk - Website: www.abcd.org.uk

International Choral Composition Competition Alberto Grau, Caracas, Venezuela, 25 Aug 2017. Tribute to the trajectory of famous composer, arranger and conductor Alberto Grau who will turn 80 in November 2017. A competition to promote the creation of choral music, to encourage the growth, renewal and diffusion of repertoire written in Spanish for mixed and equal voices in the 21st century. Contact: Aequalis Foundation, Email: info@ciccag.org - Website: www.ciccag.org/en/

2nd Misatango Choir Festival Vienna, Austria, 30 Aug-3 Sep 2017. Under the baton of Mtro Saul Zaks, with composer Martín Palmeri at the piano and international soloists, participating choirs will jointly perform the "Misa a Buenos Aires," a contemporary roman mass in an authentic Argentinean tango style – a perfect symbiosis of music and spirituality. Contact: Pegasus Businesskey & Concerts-Austria, Email: c.bender@businesskey.at - Website: www.misatango.com/

International Festival Chorus Inside Croatia, Rovinj, Croatia, 31 Aug-5 Sep 2017. Mediterranean edition of Chorus Inside Festival, the ultimate atmosphere for singing! Contact: Chorus Inside International, Email: info@chorusinside.com - Website: www.chorusinside.com

Norwich Cathedral Weekend, United Kingdom, 1-3 Sep 2017. Directed by Peter North. This course is for experienced choral singers of all ages. Contact: RunBySingers, Email: info@runbysingers.org - Website: www.runbysingers.org

9th European Academy for Choral Conductors, Fano, Italy, 3-10 Sep 2017. Lecturer: Ragnar Rasmussen (Norway). Theme: Wonder and Reflection in choral music. Programme: Miserere (J. McMillan), Warum ist das Licht (J. Brahms), O sacrum convivium (O. Messiaen), Agnus Dei (S. Barber), Songs of Ariel (F. Martin), And death shall have no dominion (S. Bergh), Miserere (G. Allegri). Contact: FENIARCO, Email: info@feniarco.it - Website: www.feniarco.it

International Choir Festival Corearte Argentina 2017, Córdoba, Argentina, 5-10 Sep 2017. Non-competitive event open to choirs of various backgrounds from all over the world. Workshops with Josep Prats (Catalonia, Spain), Elisenda Carrasco (Catalonia, Spain), Pablo Trinidad (Brazil), Maria Guinand (Venezuela) and Santiago Ruiz (Argentina). Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona, Email: Info@corearte.es - Website: www.corearte.es

18th EUROTREFF 2017, Wolfenbüttel, Germany, 6-10 Sep 2017. Concerts and ateliers for children's, girls' and mixed youth choirs. Possibility of regional meeting with a German choir before or after the festival. Ateliers for children's choirs with Josep Vila Jover (Spain), Robert Göstl and Frank-Steffen Elster (Germany). Ateliers for girls choirs with Aira Birzi a (Latvia) and Merel Martens (Netherlands). Ateliers for mixed youth choirs with Victoria Ely (Australia) and Panda van Proosdij (Netherlands). Contact: Arbeitskreis Musik in der Jugend AMJ, Email: info@amj-musik.de - Website: www.amj-musik.de/eurotreff2017

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Brussels, Belgium, 7-10 Sep 2017. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Brussels your stage during your choir tour. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

IstraMusica, Pore , Croatia, 9 Sep-8 Oct 2017. Opportunity to determine how and when you and your choir make an appearance. Over the course of one month, between 9 September and 8 October 2017, we will arrange all your concerts. We organize

workshops and arrange opportunities to meet with other choirs from around the world. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://www.interkultur.com/events/2017/porec/>

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

International Choir Academy, Saarbrücken, Germany, 11-16 Sep 2017. For Individual top-level singers interested in singing with a professional choir. The University of Music Saar and ChorWerk Saar, in cooperation with two German foundations, offers 24 scholarships to young selected singers to rehearse in a professional choir together with 12 members of famous German radio choir and with Georg Grün. Contact: Chorwerk Saar, Email: info@chorwerksaar.de - Website: <http://chorwerksaar.de>

chor.com Convention for Choral Music, Dortmund, Germany, 14-17 Sep 2017. Biennial convention including more than 150 workshops, masterclasses, symposia on social and political topics, exhibition, concerts. Contact: Deutscher Chorverband e.V., Email: info@deutscher-chorverband.de - Website: <https://www.chor.com/english/>

Barcelona International Chamber Music Festival, Barcelona, Spain, 14-17 Sep 2017. Competition and performance of vocal music for quartets, octets and chamber choirs of up to 16 members. Contact: FIMCB, Email: info@fimcb.org - Website: www.fimcb.org

Jimena de la Frontera Music Week, Spain, 17-22 Sep 2017. Choral music in an Andalusian pueblo blanco directed by Robert Hollingworth. Repertoire: El Siglo de Oro, Spanish music of the 16th Century. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Paris, France, 21-24 Sep 2017. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Paris your stage during your choir tour. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

Rimini International Choral Competition, Rimini, Italy, 21-24 Sep 2017. Competition for Equal Voices, Mixed, Chamber, Youth, Children, Sacred Music, Folk and Spiritual Choirs. Common Sung Service at the Renaissance Rimini Cathedral. Contact: Rimini International Choral Competition, Email: info@riminichoral.it - Website: www.riminichoral.it

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

Sing With Us in Salzburg Cathedral, Austria, 22-24 Sep 2017. For choirs and individual singers, with Prof. Janos Czifra, the Salzburg cathedral choir and orchestra. Repertoire: Jubiläums-Messe (Michael Haydn). Open singing nights in Salzburg churches. Contact: PP Performing and Cultural Tours, Email: ppperforming@gmail.com - Website: www.pp-performing.eu

1st Andrea del Verrocchio International Music Festival, Florence, Italy, 26-29 Sep 2017. Competition and Festival for Choirs. Contact: Florence Choral, Email: chairman@florencechoral.com - Website: www.florencechoral.com

Bratislava Cantat II, Slovak Republic, 5-8 Oct 2017. International Choir and Orchestras Festival. Competition, concerts of choir and orchestral music. The Slovak capital Bratislava opens its gates and invites choirs to its charming centre in autumn. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

9th Choral Singing Contest of South American Folk and Popular Music, La Plata, Argentina, 6-9 Oct 2017. Three categories: mixed choirs, mixed vocal ensembles and equal voices choirs (male or female) with two compulsory works for each category and self-selected works. Contact: Asociación Argentina para la Música Coral, Email: aamcantlp@ciudad.com.ar - Website: www.aamcant.org.ar

14th International Choir Contest of Flanders-Maasmechelen, Belgium, 6-8 Oct 2017. Limited to ensembles from 12 to 40 equal voices and 16 to 40 mixed voices. Contact: International Choir Contest of Flanders, Gert Vanderlee, Email: info@ikv-maasmechelen.be - Website: www.ikv-maasmechelen.be

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

Canta en Andalucía, Sevilla, Spain, 11-15 Oct 2017. Non competitive festival for any kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Ana León and Laura de la

Rosa, Viajes El Corte Inglés S.A., División INNOVA,
Email: info@cantaenandalucia.com - Website:
www.cantaenandalucia.com/

12th International Choral Festival, Nice, France, 12-15 Oct 2017. For all kind of choirs from all over the world. Concerts in prestigious places including a Baroque Cathedral located in the old part of town. Contact: Destinations Chœurs - transglobe, Email: contact@destinations-choeurs.fr - Website: www.destinations-choeurs.fr

12th In Canto sul Garda International Choir Competition, Riva del Garda, Italy, 14-18 Oct 2017. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Categories for senior choirs. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Pirosk Horv th e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Let the Peoples Sing Competition, Helsinki, Finland, 14-15 Oct 2017. Open to amateur vocal ensembles in three choral categories: Children and Youth, Adult and Open (i.e. a specific musical style or genre). LTPS will take place in Helsinki's architecturally stunning Musiikkitalo (Music Centre) Contact: Eur(o)radio Operated by EBU, Email: robineau@ebu.ch - Website: www.ebu.ch/let-the-peoples-sing

International Choir Festival Corearte Barcelona 2017, Spain, 16-22 Oct 2017. Non-competitive event open to choirs of various backgrounds from all over the world. Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona, Email: info@corearte.es - Website: www.corearte.es

1st Mouv'ton Choeur International Choral Festival, Aix-les-Bains, Chambéry, France, 18-22 Oct 2017. For all kind of choirs from all over the world. Festival dedicated to choirs which sing and move on stage with contemporaneous repertoire. Contact: Destinations Chœurs - transglobe, Email: contact@destinations-choeurs.fr - Website: www.destinations-choeurs.fr

4th International Choral Festival Assisi Pax Mundi, Italy, 19-22 Oct 2017. For choral groups. Contact: Glob Festival, Email: info@globfestival.com - Website: www.festivalinternazionale.com

Cantate Barcelona, Spain, 20-24 Oct 2017. Choirs from across the globe participate in this annual festival. Share your music in towns throughout Spain's Costa Brava region. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

13th International Warsaw Choir Festival Varsovia Cantat, Poland, 20-22 Oct 2017. For a cappella choirs. Choirs can compete in one of 5 categories for statuettes of Golden Lyre and Special Romuald Twardowski Prize. Festival takes place in Porczynski & Chopin Halls. Additional concerts in Warsaw churches. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: info@varsoviacantat.pl - Website: www.varsoviacantat.pl

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

City of Derry International Choral Festival, Ireland, 25-29 Oct 2017. Competitive and non-competitive participation for singers across a wide range of styles, ensembles and ages. Performances from Mixed Voice to Equal-Voice choirs, Youth to Chamber choirs and from Church Music to Light, Popular and Jazz. Contact: Fiona Crosbie, festival manager, Email: info@codichoral.com - Website: <http://derrychoirfest.com/>

The Glory of Venice, Italy, 25-29 Oct 2017. Directed by David Ogden. Participants should be experienced choral singers with some sight-reading ability and must be prepared to learn their part beforehand. Music includes Christ has no body now but yours (Ogden), Magnificat (Durante), Sancta et immaculatus est (Gabrieli), If ye love me (Tallis), Ave Maria (Arcadelt), Exultate justi (Viadana), O sing joyfully (Batten). Contact: RunBySingers, Email: info@runbysingers.org - Website: www.runbysingers.org

Fiestalonia International Choral Competition, Tbilisi, Georgia, 25-30 Oct 2017. Competitive and non-competitive event open to all choirs from over the world. Participating choirs will get free master classes with the leading Georgian specialists in polyphony. Also included joint rehearsals, workshops et sightseeing tours. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: info@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

International Choral Festival of Malta 2017, Italy, 1-6 Nov 2017. For choral groups. Contact: Glob Festival, Email: info@globfestival.com - Website: www.festivalinternazionale.com

International Choir Competition of Tolosa, Spain, 1-5 Nov 2017. Its aim is to bring together the best choirs in the world: exchange of styles, interpretation, choral literature, vocal education and ways of each country and information about the musical and cultural traditions of the Basque Country. Contact: Centro de

Iniciativas de Tolosa, Email: cit@cittolosa.com - Website: www.cittolosa.com

Spanish Retreat directed by Peter North, Spain, 1-5

Nov 2017. For experienced choral singers of all ages. Participants should have reasonable sight-reading ability and be prepared to study the music beforehand. Music includes Faure Requiem (Red Novello edition), Plainsong and Anthem for Compline tba. Contact: RunBySingers, Email: info@runbysingers.org - Website: www.runbysingers.org

Cantate Dresden, Germany, 2-5 Nov 2017.

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

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

Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

Musica International Session, Strasbourg, France,

6-11 Nov 2017. Musica workshops are opened for choir conductors, librarians, publishers, composers. A project to include the whole choral repertoire of the world into a single multilingual multimedia database. Contact: Musica International, Email: office@MusicaNet.org - Website: www.MusicaNet.org

Les Choeurs à l'Unisson International Choral Festival, Dakar, Senegal, 8-12 Nov 2017.

Festival including workshops with Dr. Nehemiah Brown (Gospel), Yveline Damas (Songs from Gabon), JB Bakhoum (Songs from Senegal), Juan Pablo de Juan Martin (Songs from Spain), Myguel Santos e Castro (Songs from Portugal). Concerts, meetings, forum, African dance workshop, exhibition. Contact: Mouvement Afrikiyo pour le Chant Choral, Email: lukymendy@gmail.com

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Prague, Czech

Republic, 9-12 Nov 2017. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

Ambassadors of Song, an International Male Chorus Symposium, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA, 10-11 Nov

2017. Apply for choir performances. Submit session proposals. Learn more, apply and register. Featured artists: Joshua Habermann (Santa Fe Desert Chorale), Paulo Vassalo Lourenço (Portugal), Lhente Marie-Pitout (South Africa). Artistic Director: Eugene Rogers. Contact: University of Michigan Men's Glee Club,

Email: ambassadors-of-song@umich.edu - Website: <http://bicentennial.ummgc.org/>

International Choir Festival Corearte Brazil 2017, Caxias do Sul, Brazil, 13-19 Nov 2017.

Non-competitive event open to choirs of various backgrounds from all over the world. Workshops with Pablo Trindade (Brazil) and Fernanda Novoa (Uruguay). Apply before May 30, 2017. Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona, Email: Info@corearte.es - Website: www.corearte.es

Sligo International Choral Festival, Ireland, 17-19 Nov 2017.

Competitive and non-competitive events for mixed choirs, male voice, female voice, youth folksong, madrigals, sacred music, gospel choirs and barbershop. Contact: Sligo International Choral Festival, Email: info@sligochoralfest.com - Website: www.sligochoralfest.com/

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

Vienna welcomes choirs from around the world to share their voices in the music capital of Europe. Exchange with local schools and senior centers and experience the festive pre-holiday atmosphere in this enchanting city with Christmas markets filling the city squares! Contact: Music Contact International, Email: vienna@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Advent in Weimar directed by Colin Durrant, Germany, 30 Nov-4 Dec 2017.

For experienced choral singers of all ages. Participants should be prepared to study the music beforehand. Music includes Matin Responsary (Palestrina), Of the Father's heart begotten (arr. Willcocks), Teach me O Lord (Attwood), Of a Rose, a lovely Rose -from Magnificat (Rutter), Zion hört (J S Bach), The Linden tree carol (arr. Jacques), And the glory of the Lord - from Messiah (Handel), Angelus ad virginem (arr. Willcocks), O Thou the central orb (Wood), Lo! He comes with clouds descending (arr. Willcocks). Contact: RunBySingers, Email: info@runbysingers.org - Website: www.runbysingers.org

27th International Festival of Advent and Christmas Music with Petr Eben Prize, Prague, Czech Republic,

1-2 Dec 2017. Competition open to amateur female, male, youth, mixed and children's choirs. Contact: OR-FEA Festival and Organisational Agency, Email: incoming@orfea.cz - Website: www.orfea.cz

3rd Warsaw Advent and Christmas Choir Festival, Poland, 1-3 Dec 2017.

Competitive and non-competitive event for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Polonia Cantat & Melody,

Email: warsaw@christmasfestival.pl - Website: <http://warsaw.christmasfestival.pl/>

International Festival Chorus Inside Advent, Rome, Italy, 2-7 Dec 2017. Art, culture, history and charm will join your songs, surrounded by a unique atmosphere, that only Rome could give you. Contact: Chorus Inside International, Email: info@chorusinside.com - Website: www.chorusinside.com

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

International Festival/Contest Gran Fiesta, Spain, 3-6 Dec 2017. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

Vocal Competition Voices of Costa Brava, Lloret de Mar, Spain, 3-6 Dec 2017. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

International Festival/Competition Talents de Paris, France, 5-8 Dec 2017. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

8th Krakow Advent and Christmas Choir Festival, Poland, 8-10 Dec 2017. Festival for all amateur choirs from around the world to present their repertoire of advent, christmas and sacred choir music. Contact: Polonia Cantat & Melody, Email: krakow@christmasfestival.pl - Website: <http://krakow.christmasfestival.pl/>

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

Join Simon Carrington to sing in Barcelona in 2017/2018, Barcelona, Spain, 26 Dec 2017-2 Jan 2018. Combined rehearsals and gala concert featuring a musical program of 30-40 minutes duration which will be presented after participating choirs have the option to perform individually as well. Contact: Klconcerts, Email: info@klconcerts.com - Website: www.klconcerts.com

Ambleside Winter School, United Kingdom, 28 Dec 2017-2 Jan 2018. A week of music-making for choral singers led by Will Carslake, in the Lake District town of Ambleside, surrounded by England's grandest scenery. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: lucy@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

International Festival/Contest Gran Fiesta, Spain, 7-10 Jan 2018. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

Vocal Competition Voices of Costa Brava, Lloret de Mar, Spain, 7-10 Jan 2018. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

Sing'n'Pray Kobe, Japan, 25-29 Jan 2018. For choirs from all over the world to celebrate peace through singing in a brand new destination, Kobe, Japan. More than 600 singers will be gathering in Kobe and international choirs are also invited to sing for peace in the world in the beautiful Kobe Bunka Hall. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Singing in Castara, Trinidad and Tobago, 28 Jan-2 Feb 2018. A one week course for choral singers led by Justin Doyle. Repertoire: Thomas Tallis Loquebantur variis linguis, Audi vocem, Mihi autem nimis; Hans Leo Hassler madrigals and canzonets from Lustgarten Neuer Teutscher Gesäng; Will Todd Christus est stella. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: lucy@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

3rd Misatango Choir Festival Vienna, Austria, 31 Jan-4 Feb 2018. Under the baton of Mtro Saul Zaks, with composer Martin Palmeri at the piano and international soloists, participating choirs will jointly perform the "Misa a Buenos Aires," a contemporary roman mass in an authentic Argentinean tango style – a perfect symbiosis of music and spirituality. Contact: Pegasus Businesskey & Concerts-Austria, Email: c.bender@businesskey.at - Website: www.misatango.com/

Roma Music Festival 2018, Italy, 7-11 Mar 2018.

International festival of choirs and orchestras. Apply before 15 Jan 2018. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

ON STAGE in Tel Aviv, Israel, 15-18 Mar 2018.

As one of the cradles of civilization, Israel offers a very high and unparalleled diversity and intensity of experience. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

Discover Puerto Rico and its Choral Music, Ponce,

Puerto Rico, 16-19 Mar 2018. The Catholic University of Ponce, the University of Puerto Rico, and the city of Ponce invite choirs to discover Puerto Rico! Work with the island's most famous composers and directors, and exchange with choirs from the region. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Choir Conducting Competition for Young conductors,

Tampere, Finland, 17-18 Mar 2018. For conductors born in or after 1985. The prize in this competition is a concert with the professional choir Tampere Cappella at the Tampere Vocal Music Festival in 2019. Also cash prizes. Contact: Aino Holma, Press Officer, Email: aino.holma@tampere.fi - Website: www.tamperemusicfestivals.fi/vocal/

Workshop with Colin Touchin, Lloret de Mar,

Spain, 18-22 Mar 2018. Rehearsal planning, concert schedules, maximising time; Rehearsal discipline and organisation; creating areas of responsibility within the choir; Programme planning for audiences; building the choral community; Mixing with other singers – blending choral tones and styles; Adjudication issues – what do adjudicators listen and look for? what gets higher or lower marks? Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: info@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

Young Prague Festival, Prague, Czech Republic, 21-25

Mar 2018. An international panel of directors adjudicate this festival for youth choirs, bands and orchestras. Now in its thirteenth year, the festival joins over one thousand musicians from around the world to perform in Prague's stunning venues. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Dublin International Choral Festival, Ireland, 22-26

Mar 2018. Individual workshop with one of Ireland's highly acclaimed conductors. Friendship Concert with an Irish host choir. Closing Concert Rehearsals with all participating choirs. Closing Concert Performance and

Massed Sing. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: ireland@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Mallorca,

Spain, 22-25 Mar 2018. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

Festival of Peace and Brotherhood, Castelli

Romani, Italy, 22-26 Mar 2018. Sing together with local Italian choirs as well as choirs from around the world. The Festival of Peace and Brotherhood facilitates a deeper sense of respect and understanding between cultures through the common language of music. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@som50fest.org - Website: www.romechoralfestival.org

11th Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition,

Fukushima, Japan, 22-26 Mar 2018. Biggest chorus competition for vocal ensembles (2-16 singers) in Japan. Category Competition, Grand Champion Competition, Friendship Concert, Welcome Party, Workshop. Contact: Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition, Email: bunka@pref.fukushima.lg.jp - Website: www.vocalensemble.jp/en/

15th Concorso Corale Internazionale, Riva del

Garda, Italy, 25-29 Mar 2018. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Meeting Music., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Istra Music Festival 2018, Pore , Croatia, 4-8 Apr 2018.

For choirs and orchestras from around the world. Apply before Feb 15, 2018. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: <https://www.mrf-musicfestivals.com/>

Voices for Peace, Assisi, Italy, 4-8 Apr 2018.

To Compete or not to Compete. Opportunity to participate in both non-competitive and competitive activities. The Friendship Concerts will give choirs the chance to perform together with other international choirs. Whereas the competition includes six categories, among which sacred choral music and folklore. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Verona International Choral Competition,

Verona, Italy, 4-8 Apr 2018. Performances before an international panel of esteemed judges at a friendly choral competition. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Verona, Italy,

5-8 Apr 2018. Contact: Interkultur Foundation,

Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website:

<http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

**4th International Children's & Youth Chorus Festival
'StimmenKlangRaum', Weimar, Germany, 5-8 Apr**

2018. Four day festival full of music, recreation and social interaction in inspiring environment full of parks, historical buildings and modern architecture. All concerts are non-competitive and non-judged. Contact: Schola Cantorum Weimar, Email: sg@schola-cantorum-weimar.de - Website: www.schola-cantorum-weimar.de

**Slovakia Cantat, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 26-29
Apr 2018.** International Choir and Folksong Festival.

Competition, workshop, concerts of sacred and secular music. The Slovak capital Bratislava opens its gates and invites choirs to its charming centre in spring. Apply before Dec 15, 2017. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

**66th European Music Festival for Young People,
Neerpelt, Belgium, 27 Apr-2 May 2018.** Categories:

children's, single-voice youth, mixed-voice youth, pennant series children, pennant series single-voice youth, pennant series mixed-voice youth, free series: vocal and vocal-instrumental ensembles such as close harmony, vocal jazz, folk music, gospel & spiritual. Contact: Europees Muziekfestival voor de Jeugd, Email: info@emj.be - Website: www.emj.be

**16th Venezia in Musica, International Choir
Competition and Festival, Venice and Caorle, Italy,
28 Apr-2 May 2018.** Choirs can register in categories such as Mixed, Male and Female Choirs, with or without requirements, Children and Youth Choirs, Musica Sacra and Folklore. Choirs that choose to participate to the event without competing may take part in other educational festival activities as well: Evaluation Performance, Individual Coaching and 'Meeting in Music' concerts. Apply before: January 30, 2018. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

**World of Choirs, Montecatini Terme, Toscana, Italy, 29
Apr-2 May 2018.** All the participants will demonstrate

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

**64th Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 2-6
May 2018.** For 5 wonderful days Cork City and County will welcome some of the finest amateur Competitive

and Non - Competitive choirs from around the world for a programme of choral concerts, national and international competition, and internationally renowned performers as thousands of participants bring Cork to life. Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

**14th International Choir Competition & Festival
Bad Ischl, Austria, 2-6 May 2018.** Family and relaxed atmosphere for this festival which features competitions gala concerts, friendship concerts and participation in masses. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

**Sea Sun Festival & Competition, Costa Brava,
Spain, 6-11 May, 17-22 June, 8-13 July, 23-28 Sep
2018.** Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

**ON STAGE with Interkultur in Stockholm,
Sweden, 6-9 May 2018.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

**International Choir Festival on the Sea of Galilee,
Israel, 7-14 May 2018.** For any kind of choirs to perform their own repertoire and join voices to perform Rutter's Gloria and Mendelssohn's Psalm 42 with orchestra. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

**11th European Festival of Youth Choirs, Basel,
Switzerland, 8-13 May 2018.** Renowned platform for 18 highest qualified children s and youth choirs (age limit 25) from Europe. During five days the participating choirs give over 40 concerts for an enthusiastic audience of around 25,000 spectators. All singers are accommodated in local host families. They meet other outstanding choirs in workshops, at parties and on a boat trip. Apply before 31 Jan 2017. Contact: Europäisches Jugendchor Festival Basel, Kathrin Renggli, Email: info@ejcf.ch - Website: www.ejcf.ch

**19th International Festival of Choral Singing Nancy
Voix du Monde, Nancy, France, 9-13 May 2018.** Festival for all choir categories. 1600 singers from all over the world. Invited choirs' local costs covered by the festival. Apply before 1 Feb 2018. Contact: Festival International de Chant Choral de Nancy, Email: festival-choral@orange.fr - Website: www.chantchoral.org

Helsingborg International Choir Competition, Sweden, 9-13 May 2018. Sweden's choirs rank among the world's best ensembles and determine the level of international choir competitions in many years. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

CantaRode International Choral Festival & Competition, Kerkrade, The Netherlands, 10-15 May 2018. Open to mixed voices 16-40 singers and equal voices 12-40 singers. Apply before December 15, 2017. Contact: Stichting Kerkrade, Email: info@cantarode.nl - Website: www.cantarode.nl

Musica Sacra International Festival, Marktoberdorf, Germany, 18-23 May 2018. Musica Sacra is a unique festival which brings music and dance from the five major world religions into Allgäu region, organising concerts in which Christians, Jews, Moslems, Buddhists and Hindus meet and perform together. Contact: Musica Sacra International, Email: office@modfestivals.org - Website: www.modfestivals.org

3rd International Choral Celebration and Laurea Mundi Budapest, Hungary, 18-22 May 2018. Choirs may compete in the following well liked categories: Children's and Youth Choirs, Female, Male and Mixed Choirs, Musica Sacra, Pop, Jazz, Gospel, Modern & Folklore, Chamber Choirs & Vocal. Also available: workshops, individual coaching and more. Apply before January 5, 2018. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Florence, Italy, 24-27 May 2018. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

19th Fort Worden Children's Choir Festival, Port Townsend WA, USA, 25-26 May 2018. Open to all treble choirs. Guest Conductor: Dr. Rollo Dilworth. Contact: Stephanie Charbonneau, Email: fortwordenfestival@gmail.com - Website: www.fortwordenfestival.com

Sing'n'Joy Vienna 2018 4th Choir Festival & 31th International Franz Schubert Choir Competition, Austria, 30 May-3 June 2018. For the 31st time, the Franz Schubert Choir Competition and Festival will take place in the European Capital of Music, Vienna. The Sing'n'Joy concept focuses on the traditional Schubert competition but also features intercultural meetings and performances in Friendship Concerts. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Sing Along Concert in Paris - World Festival Singers, France, 1-3 June 2018. The last years have proved, that the Sing Along Concert by the Berlin Radio Choir was not only a good idea, but with constantly 1.300 singers from all over the world a manifested grand in Berlins' musical life. In year 2018 the Rundfunkchor Berlin, Simon Halsey and singers from all over the world are invited to perform Georg Friedrich Händel's "Messiah" in the new Philharmonic of Paris. Contact: Interkultur e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

8th International Robert Schumann Choir Competition, Zwickau, Germany, 6-10 June 2018. Competition and Festival, which in 2018 celebrates its 8th anniversary, revolving around Schumann's compositional works and his contemporaries while focusing not only on the cultivation, but also on a new interpretation of these great 19th century works. Very special event taking place at the same time as the celebration of Schumann's 206th birthday on June 8. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Czech Choir Festival Sborové slavnosti, Hradec Králové, Czech Republic, 7-10 June 2018. For any kind of choirs from all over the world. Contact: Czech Choir Festival Sborové slavnosti, Email: <https://www.facebook.com/CzechChoirFestival/> - Website: www.sboroveslavnosti.cz

Limerick Sings International Choral Festival, Limerick, Ireland, 7-10 June 2018. Non-competitive event for choirs of all traditions and nationalities. Choirs will meet each other through formal and informal concerts and other social events. Addition of a youth concert, a choral workshop and a "Big Sing" choral performance. Apply before December 1, 2017. Contact: Limerick Sings, Email: information@limericksings.com - Website: www.limericksings.com

Grieg International Choir Festival and NINA Solo Competition for Young Singers, Bergen, Norway, 7-10 June 2018. Open to amateur choirs in all choral categories and difficulties. Competition in 3 categories: sacred music, contemporary music and folk music. In parallel, vocal competition for singers between 15 and 24 years old. The contestants will sing pieces from the classical tradition. Apply before Feb 1, 2018. Contact: Annlaug Hus, Email: post@griegfestival.no - Website: www.griegfestival.no

Bratislava Choir Festival, Slovak Republic, 14-17 June 2018. International choral music festival, competition, workshop, concerts in the best venues, sightseeing. Apply before March 1st 2018. Contact: Bratislava

Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

ROMAinCANTO International Choir Festival, Rome, Italy, 15-22 June 2018. Individual concerts and combined festival concerts. Conductor: Fabio Avolio. Contact: Klconcerts, Email: info@klconcerts.com - Website: www.klconcerts.com

Sing Austria with Angela Broeker, Vienna & Salzburg, Austria, 16-23 June 2018. Individual and festival concerts under the direction of Angela Broeker. Contact: Klconcerts, Email: info@klconcerts.com - Website: www.klconcerts.com

International Contest Sun of Italy, Montecatini Terme, Toscana, Italy, 17-20 June, 8-11 July 2018. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

Roma In Canto International Festival of Sacred Music, Rome, Italy, 17-21 June 2018. Perform a stunning repertoire of music by Monteverdi and Palestrina during High Mass at St. Peter's Basilica alongside choirs from across the globe. Additionally, perform your own repertoire as part of the festival concert series at a local church in Rome. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: <http://tuscany.music-contact.com/>

Belgian Summer Sing, Ghent, Belgium, 19-23 July 2018. Europe's largest open-air cultural festival, the Ghent Arts and Music Festival, includes choirs from Europe and North America performing in the stunning St. Michael's Cathedral. Hear music from around the world and join Belgium in celebrating the Arts while performing in Ghent, the capital city of Brussels, and the beautiful and historic city of Bruges. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com/index.php/belgian-summer-sing

9th Rome International Choral Festival, Italy, 21-25 June 2018. Announcing the ninth-annual Festival Corale Internazionale di Roma from June 21-25, 2018 with Z. Randall Stroope! The festival chorus will include mixed-voice singers and choirs that will come together to rehearse and perform in masse under the baton of maestro Z. Randall Stroope. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@romechoralfestival.org - Website: www.romechoralfestival.org

International Children's Choir Festival at Canterbury Cathedral & London, United Kingdom, 21-28 July 2018. Festival centered around three major choral performances: a joining of voices for the ancient service of Evensong in Canterbury Cathedral, a massed full-evening concert in Canterbury Cathedral, and the final festival concert in Westminster Central Hall or Southwark Cathedral in London with the Virtuosi of London Orchestra—all under the direction of Henry Leck and Dr. David Flood. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Salzburg Choral Festival Jubilate Mozart!, Austria, 27 June-8 July 2018. The festival will feature a large chorus consisting of mixed voice choirs. Under the direction of Dr. Eph Ehly, Professor Emeritus at the Conservatory of Music, University of Missouri-Kansas City, the festival chorus will perform outstanding classical works selected by Dr. Ehly. János Czifra, Domkapellmeister of the Dom, will conduct Mozart's Mass in C Major, "Coronation," KV 317, accompanied by the Salzburger Domorchester. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@mozartchoralfestival.org - Website: mozartchoralfestival.org

6th Per Musicam Ad Astra, International Copernicus Choir Festival and Competition, Toru, Poland, 27 June-1 July 2018. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Apply before February 25, 2018. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Fundy Sound: a Choral Festival by the Sea, Saint John New Brunswick, Canada, 27 June-1 July 2018. Singers will enjoy enriching developmental and educational experiences with local and international musicians including the opportunity to work with one of the world's leading choral experts: Z. Randall Stroope. Contact: Fundy Sound, Email: info@fundysound.com - Website: <http://fundysound.com>

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

2018 Podium on the Edge, Singing from Sea to Sea to Sea, St. John's Newfoundland & Labrador, Canada, 29 June-3 July 2018. Festival including 15 concerts that showcase the diversity of choral music in Canada and beyond, school concerts, pop-up performances and sharing concerts. Interest sessions and lecture recital

proposals are invited on a range of topics including conducting technique, choral/vocal music education, choral repertoire, performance, composition, arts administration, and use of technology. Sessions exploring innovation and/or best practice are highly encouraged. Contact: Choral Canada, Email: podium@choralcanada.org - Website: www.podiumconference.ca

IHLOMBE South African Choral Festival, Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg & Game Park, South Africa, 30 June-9 July 2018. Experience African rhythms, dancing and singing. Open to all choirs, each conducted by their own music director. Contact: Jayci Thomas, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: jayci@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/s_af.htm

Join Henry Leck to sing in Reykjavik, Iceland, 1-8 July 2018. Combined rehearsals and gala concert featuring a musical program of 30-40 minutes duration which will be presented after participating choirs have the option to perform individually as well. Possible sightseeing tour extension option. Contact: Klconcerts, Email: info@klconcerts.com - Website: www.klconcerts.com

International Choral Kathaumixw, Powell River, Canada, 3-7 July 2018. Join choirs from around the world in 20 concerts, competitions, common singing, conductor's seminars, and social events on the shores of Canada's magnificent Pacific Coast. Guest Artists and International Jury. Contact: Powell River Academy of Music, Email: info@kathaumixw.org - Website: www.kathaumixw.org

10th World Choir Games, Tshwane, South Africa, 4-14 July 2018. Large competition for choirs from all around the world. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com/events/world-choir-games/tshwane-2018/

IFAS 2018 – 25th International Festival of Academic Choirs, Pardubice, Czech Republic, 4-9 July 2018. Competition with possible Grand Prix for university and college choirs or youth choirs (age 18-30). Free Bohuslav Martinu Award competition for all kind of choirs (except children's choirs) Contact: IFAS - Alena Mejstřiková, Email: ifas.pardubice@seznam.cz - Website: www.ifas.cz

Sing Berlin!, Germany, 4-8 July 2018. Event in cooperation with Georg-Friedrich-Händel Gymnasium for choirs from all over the world. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

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

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

International Youth Music Festival I & Slovakia Folk, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 5-8 July 2018. International Festival for Youth and Children Choirs and Orchestras. Competition, workshop, concerts of sacred and secular music, bringing together talented young musicians from around the world. Apply before 15 April 2018. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

12th Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, Vienna, Austria, 6-11 July 2018. Cross-cultural and musical exchange event including workshops, lectures, seminars, concerts in and around Vienna, competition with an international and highly renowned jury. Contact: Summa Cum Laude Youth Music Festival, Email: office@scfestival.org - Website: www.scfestival.org

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

9th Musica Eterna Roma International Choir Festival and Competition, Italy, 10-15 July 2018. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

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

International Youth Music Festival II and Bratislava Cantat I, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 23-26 July 2018. International Festival for Youth and Children Choirs and Orchestras. Competition, workshop, concerts of sacred and secular music, bringing together talented young musicians from around the world. Apply before Apr 15, 2018. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

World Peace Choral Festival Vienna 2018, Austria, 25-28 July 2018. Together with the famous Vienna Boys choir, children's and youth choirs as well as adult choirs from around the world will do concerts, workshops, celebrations and competitions for the world peace. Contact: Stefanie Rauscher, Email: info@wpcf.at - Website: www.wpcf.at

Europa Cantat Festival 2018, Tallinn, Estonia, 27 July-5 Aug 2018. Spectacular vocal festival with participants from Europe and beyond. Workshops by international conductors in all vocal genres. Open singing, concerts: sing & listen, international contacts. Contact: European Choral Association – Europa Cantat, Email: info@ecpecs2015.hu - Website: www.ecpecs2015.hu

International Choral Festival The Singing World, St. Petersburg, Russia, 3-8 Aug 2018. For choirs and vocal ensembles of various styles, levels and origins from all over the world. Event promoting long-term contacts among choirs. Contact: International Choral Festival and Competition, Email: Singingworld@mail.ru - Website: <http://singingworld.spb.ru/en/>

San Juan Canta International Choir Competition and Festival, Argentina, 16-21 Aug 2018. Festival and Competition, available in three categories (mixed choirs and male and female ensembles), including an international jury, singing in the Auditorium Juan Victoria (a stage highly regarded by its privileged acoustics) as main venue of the event, exchanges with foreign choirs, concerts and workshops. Contact: María Elina Mayorga, Email: sanjuancoral@gmail.com - Website: www.sanjuancoral.com.ar

IstraMusica, Pore , Croatia, 8 Sep-7 Oct 2018. Over the course of one month, we will arrange all your concerts. We organize workshops and arrange opportunities to meet with other choirs from around the world. We provide support for your rehearsals from distinguished world-class guest conductors and provide a stage for the talented people from your own ranks. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://www.interkultur.com/>

2nd Corfu International Festival and Choir Competition, Greece, 12-16 Sep 2018. Supported by the Corfu Choir Union, the "2nd Corfu International Festival & Choir Competition" will bring choral singers from all over the world to the capital of the Ionian Islands in 2018 again. A very special highlight will be offered to participating choirs that would like to extend their stay for another day in Athens: The world famous Athens Concert Hall "Mégaron Mousikis" will open its doors and gives interested choirs a stage in the Greece capital. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Lisbon, Portugal, 13-16 Sep 2018. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

9th International Choir Festival & Competition "Isola del Sole", Grado, Italy, 26-30 Sep 2018. Apart from participating in the competitions all choirs can dare to take part in the exciting experiment to swap conductors for a Friendship Concert and perform under the direction of another international conductor. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

3rd Beira Interior International Choir Festival and Competition, Fundão, Portugal, 3-7 Oct 2018. Register in categories for Mixed, Male, Female and Chamber Choirs, Children & Youth Choirs, performing in Sacred Choral Music, Folklore, Gospel, Pop & Modern categories. Choirs have the opportunity to participate in the event without competing in Evaluation Performance, Individual Coaching, Voice Training and Friendship Concerts. The non-competitive participation is also open to choirs, who want to take part in the competition as well. Apply before: April 30, 2018. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Bratislava Cantat II, Slovak Republic, 4-7 Oct 2018. International Choir and Orchestras Festival. Competition, concerts of choir and orchestral music. The Slovak capital Bratislava opens its gates and invites choirs to its charming centre in autumn. Apply before August 1, 2018. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Cantate Barcelona, Spain, 19-23 Oct 2018. Choirs from across the globe participate in this annual festival. Share your music in towns throughout Spain's Costa Brava region. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Canta al mar 2018 International Choral Festival, Calella, Barcelona, Spain, 25-29 Oct 2018. Festival for choirs to meet, sing together in Friendship Concerts and get to know other nations and their individual traditions. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

17th Venezia in Musica, International Choir Competition and Festival, Venice and Caorle, Italy, 25-28 Oct 2018. Choirs can register in categories such as Mixed, Male and Female Choirs, with or without requirements, Children and Youth Choirs, Musica Sacra and Folklore. Choirs that choose to participate to the event without competing may take part in other educational festival activities as well: Evaluation Performance, Individual Coaching and 'Meeting in Music' concerts. Apply before: January 30, 2018. Contact: Meeting Music., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

International Choir Competition of Tolosa, Spain, 31 Oct-4 Nov 2018. Its aim is to bring together the best choirs in the world: exchange of styles, interpretation, choral literature, vocal education and ways of each country and information about the musical and cultural traditions of the Basque Country. Contact: Centro de Iniciativas de Tolosa, Email: cit@cittolosa.com - Website: www.cittolosa.com

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

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Prague, Czech Republic, 8-11 Nov 2018. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

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

Vocal Competition Voices of Costa Brava, Lloret de Mar, Spain, 2-5 Dec 2018. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

Misatango Festival La Habana, Cuba, 4-9 Dec 2018. Singers and musicians from all over the world come

together in La Habana to bring an evening full of tango rhythms and melodies to the stage. Under the baton of Mtro Saul Zaks, with composer Martín Palmeri at the piano and international soloists, participating choirs will jointly perform the "Misa a Buenos Aires"; a contemporary roman mass in an authentic Argentinean tango style – a perfect symbiosis of music and spirituality. Contact: Pegasus Businesskey & Concerts-Austria, Email: c.bender@businesskey.at - Website: www.misatango.com/

International Festival of Advent and Christmas Music, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 6-9 Dec 2018. Competition, workshop, concerts in churches and on the Christmas markets stage. Your songs and performances will contribute to a truly heart-warming atmosphere of Christmas. Apply before October 1, 2018. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

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

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Birmingham, United Kingdom, 13-16 Dec 2018. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

Vocal Competition Voices of Costa Brava, Lloret de Mar, Spain, 6-9 Jan 2019. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

America Cantat 9, Panama, 12-21 Apr 2019. America Cantat is the premier cultural music festival of the Americas, and is the only non-competitive choir festival to unite singers, clinicians, and festival choirs from North, Central, and South America in a ten-day cultural and musical immersion program. Over ten days, singers of all ages and abilities are invited to participate in overlapping five-day-long workshops. Contact: America Cantat, Email: info@america-cantat9.org

World of Choirs, Montecatini Terme, Toscana, Italy, 28 Apr-1 May 2019. All the participants will demonstrate their skills on one of the best stages of the Adriatic coast. Invites all amateur choirs! Italy will not leave you indifferent. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

65th Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 1-5 May 2019. For 5 wonderful days Cork City and County will welcome some of the finest amateur Competitive and Non - Competitive choirs from around the world for a programme of choral concerts, national and international competition, and internationally renowned performers as thousands of participants bring Cork to life. Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

D-Day Memorial Concert Series, Paris and Normandy, France, 4-10 June 2019. Opportunity for overseas choirs to visit France, perform memorial concerts for its citizens, and commemorate those men and women who fought so valiantly there during the Allied Invasion in 1944. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@musiccelebrations.com - Website: <http://ddayconcerts.org/2019-paris-choral-festival/>

Tampere Vocal Music Festival, Tampere, Finland, 5-9 June 2019. This versatile international festival includes a chorus review, a contest for vocal ensembles, concerts and workshops among other things, and gathers approx. 2,000 singers to Tampere. Contact: Tampere Sävel, Tampere Vocal Music Festival, Email: music@tampere.fi - Website: www.tamperemusicfestivals.fi/vocal/en

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

13th Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, Vienna, Austria, 5-10 July 2019. Cross-cultural and musical exchange event including workshops, lectures, seminars, concerts in and around Vienna, competition with an international and highly renowned jury. Contact: Summa Cum Laude Youth Music Festival, Email: office@scfestival.org - Website: www.scfestival.org

Vocal Competition Voices of Costa Brava, Lloret de Mar, Spain, 1-4 Dec 2019. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

66th Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 29 Apr-3 May 2020. For 5 wonderful days Cork City and County will welcome some of the finest amateur Competitive and Non - Competitive choirs from around the world for a programme of choral concerts, national

and international competition, and internationally renowned performers as thousands of participants bring Cork to life. Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

68th European Music Festival for Young People, Neerpelt, Belgium, 30 Apr-4 May 2020. Categories: children's, single-voice youth, mixed-voice youth, pennant series children, pennant series single-voice youth, pennant series mixed-voice youth, free series: vocal and vocal-instrumental ensembles such as close harmony, vocal jazz, folk music, gospel & spiritual. Contact: Europees Muziekfestival voor de Jeugd, Email: info@emj.be - Website: www.emj.be

12th World Symposium on Choral Music, Auckland, New Zealand, 11-18 July 2020. Contact: International Federation for Choral Music, Email: office@ifcm.net - Website: <http://wscm2020.com/> or <http://www.nzcf.org.nz/>

67th Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 28 Apr-2 May 2021. For 5 wonderful days Cork City and County will welcome some of the finest amateur Competitive and Non - Competitive choirs from around the world for a programme of choral concerts, national and international competition, and internationally renowned performers as thousands of participants bring Cork to life. Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie



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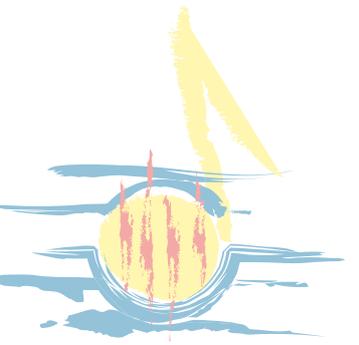
Welcome to Fukushima, "Kingdom of Choirs", which has a big population of music fans and award-winning choirs. It has only 100min by express train from Tokyo. We are looking forward to meeting you and singing with you in Fukushima!

ALL DETAILS: www.vocalensemble.jp/en/



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