June 2026 IFCMeNEWS: Reimagining the Future in Macau in August!

IFCM Online Café: Reimagining the Role of the Conductor, 27 June 2026, at 5PM CEST

What does it mean to be a conductor in today's changing world?

Join this IFCM Online Café as we explore how leadership, artistry, and expectations are evolving in choral music and beyond.

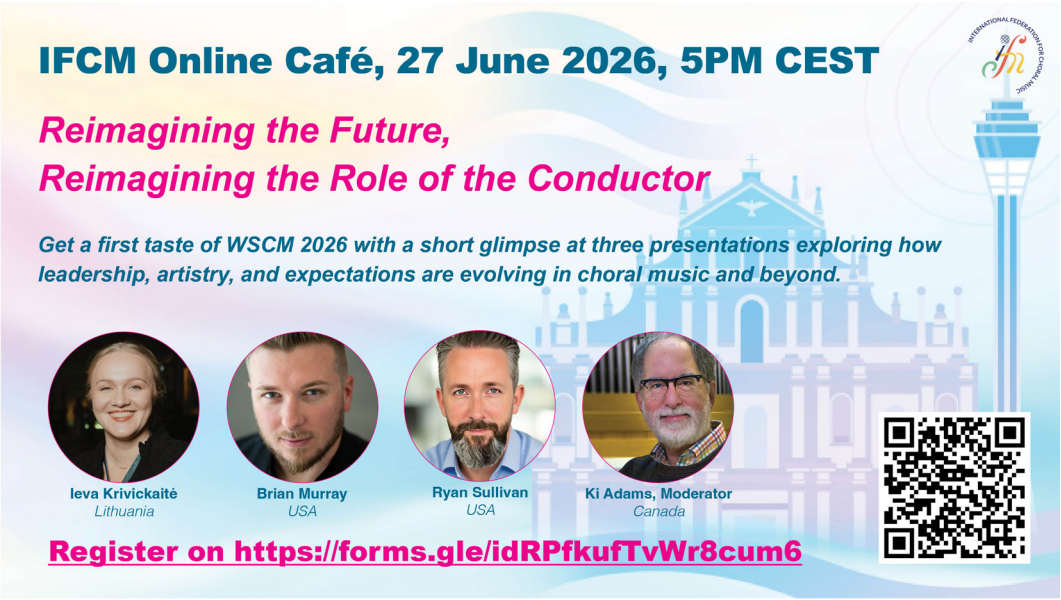
An open exchange of ideas, experiences, and perspectives awaits conductors, singers, educators, and all those interested in the future of choral leadership.

This inspiring discussion will also offer another inspiring glimpse into the **World Symposium on Choral Music 2026 (WSCM 2026)** and some of the voices you will hear in Macau in August 2026.

Join our guests for this engaging Online Café on leadership, artistry, and expectations in a changing world.

- Ieva Krivickaitė (Lithuania): *Choir Communication and Public Relations*
- Brian Murray (USA): *Less is More: Economizing Your Conducting Gesture*
- Ryan Sullivan (USA): *Reimagining Conductor Health*

This IFCM Online Café, moderated by IFCM board member Ki Adams (Canada), is open to anyone. Register **here**.



The video of the IFCM Online Café "Reimagining the Community" is now available!

Held on 2 May 2026 as a preview of the **World Symposium on Choral Music 2026** in Macau, this inspiring session brought together presenters from Belgium (Marleen de Boo and Jeroen Keymeulen), Lebanon (Amir Jaber Chehayeb), the USA (Marques J. Ruff), the Philippines (Robert Delgado), and Slovenia (Karmina Šilec) to explore how choirs can foster belonging, inclusion, heritage, and cross-cultural collaboration.

Discover reflections on community building, Arabic music in harmony, gospel choir creation, musical entrainment, and innovative artistic practices — and enjoy an appetizer of WSCM 2026.

For IFCM members only, **watch** the recording now and reimagine the future of choral music with us!

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IFCM Elections Join the IFCM Voting Committee

If you want to be part of the IFCM voting committee that will be monitoring the results of the online voting, if you are an IFCM member in good standing (or an IFCM honorary member), and if you are not a candidate yourself and your choir/organisation is not supporting any of the candidates, please send a message to **office@ifcm.net**. You will then be invited to an online meeting following the online elections mid-August 2026, before the General Assembly in Macau.

World Voices Program, a Special Addition to the WSCM 2026 for Choirs in Asia

Apply now to this special addition to the World Symposium on Choral Music 2026 in Macau, China, 23-28 August 2026, for a chance to perform within the frame of the symposium.
Participation Fee: US$3,000.00. The fee includes:
One concert in Macau within the frame of WSCM (25 minutes repertoire time)
One workshop with an expert (see list in the PDF attached) or exchange session with a local or international choir according to availability
Complimentary WSCM Registration for the conductor or a representative of the choir
Opportunity to join a tour across three European countries (Portugal, Spain, and France) following a selection by an international jury during WSCM 2026
To apply to the *World Voices Program* as an international choir, please send the following to **office@ifcm.net**: short biography of the choir and the conductor (150 words), CV of the conductor, 25-minute concert program proposal, video of the choir within the last three years, and photographs of the choir and the conductor.
Application deadline: **30 June 2026**.

Meet the WSCM 2026 Composers

As part of the WSCM tradition, six WSCM 2026 invited choirs will be paired with six commissioned composers, culminating in world premieres at their gala concerts at the Macau Cultural Centre. Reflecting the symposium's theme, each choir will perform a newly created work by a composer from a different country, creating a dynamic space for cultural exchange and musical dialogue. Three commissioned composers are highlighted in this issue of the eNEWS and the other three composers will be featured in the July IFCMeNEWS.

Steve Ho (Canada)

Steve Ho is a multi-award-winning composer whose musical language integrates classical, popular, and cultural elements from his birthplace, Hong Kong. His compositions reflect a style deeply rooted in Cantonese expression within a global perspective. It is refined yet accessible, often conveying life-affirming messages. Steve has established a distinguished career in both film scoring and choral composition, receiving Best Original Film Score at the 21st Hong Kong Film Awards and the CASH Golden Sail Award for Most Performed Local Serious Work (2005). Most recently, he was awarded the Artistic Achievement Award at the 2025 World Choral Festival (Hong Kong), hosted by the World Youth and Children Choral Artists' Association (WYCCAA).

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Steve Ho's note on ***Cantare amantis est – To sing is to love***
Cantare amantis est – To sing is to love is a celebratory work that extols the healing and restorative power of singing—a positive force that fosters connection and offers a sense of hope. This a cappella composition explores a wide spectrum of choral textures, from transparent to richly layered, from homophonic to contrapuntal, and from fluid rubato lines to irregular driving meters.

Çiğdem Aytepe (Türkiye)
Çiğdem Aytepe is a choral conductor, composer, and educator who has played a formative role in developing generations of choral singers in Türkiye. Recognized for her impactful projects and collaborative works, she has been a faculty member at Hacettepe University Ankara State Conservatory since 2005. Since 2015, composition has taken on a growing role in Çiğdem's artistic practice. Writing primarily for amateur choirs, she focuses on balancing technical accessibility with musical depth. Works composed within this framework have received recognition in national competitions. Çiğdem also arranges Turkish folk songs, prioritizing the preservation of their natural, traditional structure. She views composition not merely as musical production, but as a space where cultural memory is sustained, bridging communities and traditions through intercultural dialogue.

Çiğdem Aytepe's note on ***Shamans, Stars and Our Hearts***
As I think about the future, I find myself sinking deeper into the world's history filled with immense suffering. If humanity could truly descend to the deepest roots of its life-destroying actions, could these sufferings finally come to an end? As I worked with my images, translating them into music, the words of our time did not resonate with me. I was drawn to ancient word roots and fragments of syllables. And I was drawn to the idea of hiding the meaning, even keeping it pure. In my composition, there are shamans seeking knowledge from the stars, witnessing the agony of humanity. During the great meteor shower they have been waiting for, the knowledge flowing into their hearts says only this:
listen and understand;
the heart of the world
the heart of the other
your own heart

Monika Sokaitė
Monika Sokaitė is a contemporary music composer whose work encompasses instrumental, choral, and interdisciplinary music. Her music has been performed in Lithuania and across Europe by distinguished conductors, soloists, ensembles, choirs, and orchestras. Alongside her compositional activity, Monika is also active as a music critic and publicist. Feminist ideas occupy an important place in her artistic outlook, with her work often addressing questions of identity, corporeality, and women's visibility within contemporary music culture.
"<...>Her musical language is jouissance crystallised into form: fetishistic aureoles as canon, Dantean harmony, and a persistent tension between technical restraint and an obsessive pursuit of text. A miniature for voice and piano or a celestial, architectural strike in the name of the Marquis de Sade – it makes no difference. The structure is the same: a self-perpetuating loop of desire. This loop turns within the sacred acoustics of the choir.<...>" — NIM

Monika Sokaitė's note on ***La Divina Commedia. Paradiso. Canto I*** (based on Dante Alighieri)
Inspired by the opening lines of Dante's *Paradiso*, the work explores light as a metaphor for human perception and the imagining of future realities beyond present understanding. Layered choral textures and fragmented imitation create a shifting acoustic space, recalling Dante's vision of light diffused throughout the universe. As the music unfolds, increasing density and rhythmic energy suggest an ascent beyond human limitations. The concept of *trasumanar*, transcending the human, gradually transforms the text from semantic meaning into sound, gesture, and pure sonic experience. Here, the future is understood not as prediction, but as transformation: a shift in consciousness through which new worlds become imaginable.

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Official Reception Services for WSCM 2026 in Macau, China

Planning your journey to the World Symposium on Choral Music 2026 has never been easier!

The official partner of WSCM 2026, **Multinational Tourism Group**, will provide professional, efficient, and worry-free one-stop reception services in Macau for choirs, guests, artists, and music lovers from around the world.

For an unforgettable choral experience — with comfortable travel, convenient arrangements, and warm hospitality throughout your stay in Macau — enjoy their exclusive hospitality privileges:

Carefully selected premium hotels near the symposium venues with convenient transport links
Full local transportation within Macau
Daily meals included to discover Macau's rich culinary culture
Exclusive participant discount rates available on a first-come, first-served basis
Dedicated local service team helping throughout the entire event
Hotel Discount Booking Deadline: **23 June 2026.**
Contacts: Multinational Tourism Group, Ms. Candy Leng, Ms. Helen Chan
Tel: +853 6666 0110, +853 6376 6832
WeChat: lengleng6884 — WhatsApp: +853 6666 0110
Email: **mtg28703558@hotmail.com**
Hotel rooms are limited and reservations will be confirmed on a first-come, first-served basis. Prices may be subject to change depending on hotel availability

Discounted Fees for Groups at the World Symposium on Choral Music, Macau, China, 23-28 August 2026

While the WSCM Early Bird Discount ended on 15 April 2026, there's still a great way to save! A Group Discount is now available! Register with 5 or more participants and enjoy a 10% discount on your registration. This discount applies to participants within the same HDI Group and registration category (Member or Non-Member).

Read more.

For a quick guide, watch the **tutorial video**.

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WSCM2026 Expo

The WSCM 2026 Expo offers an outstanding platform to showcase your products and services to a highly targeted, international audience. With hundreds of choral leaders, decision-makers, and administrators from around the world in attendance, this is your chance to connect directly with the people who matter most — at one time, in one place.

Position your brand at the heart of the global choral community and present your publications, recordings, services, and innovations to an engaged and influential network. An Expo package includes a fully equipped trade booth along with visibility in the official WSCM 2026 program book, ensuring your presence extends beyond the exhibition space.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to elevate your profile and be part of one of the most important international events in the choral world.

Location of the exhibition: 2nd Floor, Macau Tower Convention and Entertainment Centre, Macau.

Opening hours:

- 22 August: Exhibitors move-in and set-up, 09:00-22:00
- 23-27 August:EXPO open 10:00-17:00

We warmly encourage you to secure your exhibition space and be part of this vibrant global gathering.

Register now and connect your work with the world of choral music!

Important Message to the IFCM Membership

An important message regarding the 2026 IFCM General Assembly and Elections was recently sent to each member of IFCM. It contained important information regarding the Elections of the President, new Board of Directors, and Internal Auditor of IFCM, as well as details on the General Assembly 2026!

If you are a member of IFCM and you haven't received this message, please **contact the IFCM office**. Your vote and presence at the General Assembly are important. Thank you!

Update on the IFCM Young Conductor's Virtual Mentorship Programme

The inaugural IFCM Young Conductors' Virtual Mentorship Programme has officially concluded after six months of artistic exchange, learning, and international collaboration.

Created by the IFCM YOUNG Committee, the programme connected emerging conductors from around the world with experienced choral leaders in a series of online mentorship sessions

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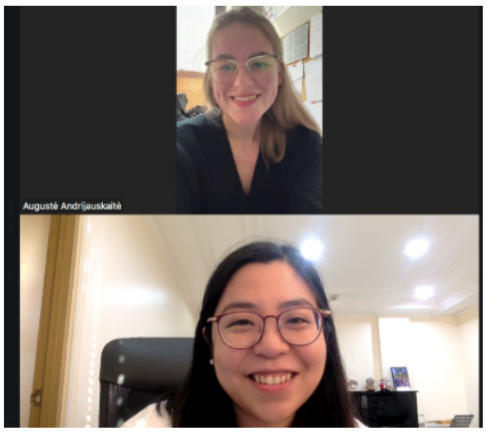
focused on artistic development, leadership, repertoire, and professional growth. The initiative aimed to foster meaningful cross-cultural connections through music while supporting the next generation of choral musicians.

The programme brought together an outstanding international group of mentors: Andrea Angelini (Italy), Beverly Shangkuan-Cheng (Philippines), Burak Onur Erdem (Türkiye), Cameron LaBarr (USA), Camilo Santostefano (Argentina), Jan Schumacher (Germany), John Rosser (New Zealand), Joseph Svendsen (USA), Manuel Suazo Pavez (Chile), Michael Zaugg (Canada/ Switzerland), Rudolf de Beer (Norway/South Africa), and Friederike Stahmer (Germany).

Feedback from participants highlighted the programme's impact. One mentee described the experience as "truly inspiring", while another reflected that "sharing experiences across cultures has been a highlight, proving that both music and mentorship are universal languages that unite and enrich us."

The IFCM YOUNG Committee extends its sincere thanks to all mentors and mentees who helped make this project such a meaningful and successful initiative.



IFCM Welcomes a New Member in the National Organization Category

The Choral Culture Association (Koro Kültürü Dernegi), Istanbul, Türkiye

Founded in 2012, the Choral Culture Association is dedicated to developing, promoting, and sustaining choral culture in Türkiye. Driven by the belief in the unifying power of choral singing, the association builds bridges between choirs, conductors, composers, and singers, both nationally and internationally. Its flagship projects include the annual Choirs Marathon (Korolar Maratonu), held since 2013 to celebrate World Choral Day, and the hosting of the World Choral Music Symposium (WSCM) in Istanbul in 2023. In 2023, it also co-founded the Türkiye Youth Choir (Türkiye Gençlik Korosu) and continues to organize national auditions for the World Youth Choir and EuroChoir.

Obituary: Tomaž Faganel

The IFCM community is deeply saddened by the passing of Tomaž Faganel, renowned Slovenian musicologist, conductor, and music educator.

Tomaž devoted many years of service to the European Choral Association, serving as Board Member and Treasurer for nine years, and later continuing his commitment as Financial Auditor for many more years.

He also played an essential role for the IFCM in the organization of the European Symposium on Choral Music held in Ljubljana in July 1995. The symposium showcased the richness of European choral music, highlighted the diversity of singing traditions across the continent, and promoted Slovenia's cultural and choral heritage, which Tomaž valued so deeply.

From 1996 to 1999, Tomaž served as a member of the IFCM Board. Throughout his life, he remained a dedicated supporter of the international choral community.

Our deepest condolences go to his family, friends, and colleagues.

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Japan Choral Association Now Accepting Applications for the Virtual Female Choral Festival

The Japan Choral Association (JCA) is now accepting applications for the **Virtual Female Choral Festival**. To participate, choirs need to submit a performance video which will be showcased on YouTube as part of this celebration of women's voices. Choirs from around the world are invited to join in the International Category. Application deadline: **30 June 2026**.

Updates on the Japan Choral Association Youth Choir

The 15th **Japan Choral Association** Youth Choir has successfully concluded in Kurashiki. Following four days of intensive rehearsals, the ensemble presented a vibrant final concert under the direction of conductor Avip Priatna. Young singers from Japan, Taiwan, and Indonesia came together to share their voices, creating a rich and memorable artistic experience.

The Japan Choral Association is delighted to announce that the next session will take place in Takamatsu from 10-14 March 2027. Applications will be open from July to August.

JCA looks forward to welcoming the next generation of choral talent!

European Choral Association (ECA): Call for events under ECA label in 2027

Apply now and give your event a head start this summer

Do you organize choral events, workshops, or festivals and want to boost your international

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visibility while connecting it with Europe's largest collective singing network? This is your chance! Apply NOW to have your event recognized "under the label of the European Choral Association" and benefits from:

- Promotion on our website, features in newsletters and social media posts
- Dedicated flyers spread to an international audience at our events
- Connection with our international network of choirs, conductors, educators, composers, and choral lovers

Submit your event before 18 June 2026 to have it promoted at summer events and festivals through our promotional materials.

Choral TIES Online Collection

Cross-border Training on International and European level for professionals in the field of Collective Singing

The **Choral TIES project** is coming soon to an end, but its inspiring content will remain available online: explore the full collection of webinars, lectures and seminars created throughout the project **here**.

Coordinated by the **European Choral Association** (Germany), this project co-funded by the European Union brought together **Carus-Verlag** (Germany), the **Croatian Cultural Association** (Croatia), and the **Estonian Choral Association** (Estonia) with selected activities promoted in cooperation with the International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM).

Mozart Requiem Festival 2026 & 2027 in Vienna

The **Mozart Requiem Festival Vienna** is part of the Singcation Festival series, combining a passion for choral music with the joy of travel.

Singers from around the world come together in Vienna to rehearse and perform Mozart's *Requiem* in a large international festival choir, accompanied by a professional orchestra and led by acclaimed conductors.

Rehearsals and concerts take place in some of Vienna's historic and prestigious venues, while participants enjoy the city's rich musical heritage, culture, and atmosphere.

Open to amateur and semi-professional singers, the festival offers unforgettable musical experiences together with like-minded participants from across the globe.

Next dates:

- 22-25 October 2026
- 21-24 October 2027

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International Choral q̓at̓ᶿaymɪxʷ 2027 - Applications Now Open

Applications are OPEN for the **2027 International Choral q̓at̓ᶿaymɪxʷ (Kathaumixw)**, a world-recognized biennial choir festival taking place **5-10 July 2027** in Powell River, located in the stunning qathet region on British Columbia's Sunshine Coast, Canada.

Founded in 1984 and entering its 21st edition, q̓at̓ᶿaymɪxʷ (Kathaumixw) is internationally acclaimed for its artistic excellence, cultural exchange, and uniquely welcoming spirit. The most recent festival brought together choirs from New Zealand, Taiwan, Slovenia, Costa Rica, the Philippines, and across Canada and the United States.

The 2027 festival will offer:

Concerts in four or more professional venues

Choral and vocal competitions adjudicated by distinguished international musicians, including world-renowned Swedish conductor Fred Sjöberg

Common song singing for adults and children

Conductors' seminars and artistic development opportunities

A rich program of social and cultural events that foster lasting international connections

Apply now: www.kathaumixw.org

Experience the spirit of the festival: https://www.facebook.com/Kathaumixw/

HarbourVOICES! International Festival of Collective Singing Traditions (2-7 July 2027), St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada

HarbourVOICES! is an international festival dedicated to showcasing diverse singing practices while emphasizing collaboration, reciprocal learning, and cultural exchange. The festival places equal value on artistic excellence and cultural connection, inviting participants and audiences alike to engage with musical traditions from across the globe. Over six days, singers, cultural leaders, and audiences from around the world will gather to experience a dynamic celebration of collective singing through performances, workshops, shared experiences, and community events.

Applications are being accepted on a rolling basis through 15 October 2026. Don't delay and risk being disappointed.

Visit Festival Pathways for full details about how participating choirs, groups, individuals can chart their own course!

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We invite you to visit the **Calendar of Choral Activities** published by the European Choral Association — Europa Cantat and the American Choral Directors Association ACDA's Network **ChoralNet** to check on the choral events planned in the coming months.

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