

Magazine

COUNCIL TALK

THE CHORAL WORLD IN EXCHANGE



INTERKULTUR WORLD TOUR

WHAT DO SOME OF OUR COUNCIL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS
HAVE ON THEIR CHORAL BUCKET LISTS?

ONE WORLD – ONE PEACE – WORLD PEACE SINGERS NEW YEAR'S CONCERT

INTERVIEW WITH PROF. ZHENG XIAOYING (CHINA)

SINGING
TOGETHER
BRINGS NATIONS
TOGETHER



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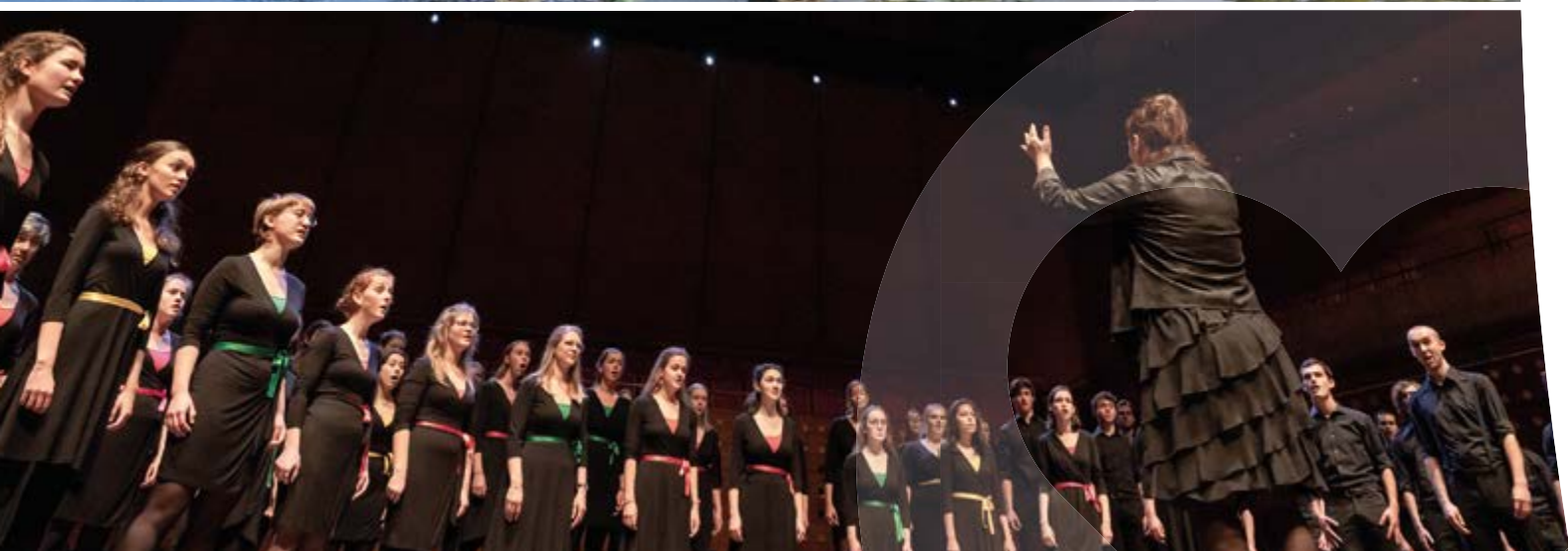


Norrköping

SWEDEN 2023



OCTOBER 28 - NOVEMBER 5, 2023





Dear colleagues, dear friends,

We have started into a new year, full of anticipation for the events and projects ahead of us and, looking at current world events, above all full of hope for peace for the world. Especially in these difficult times, it is clear how important our work and our exchange are. I would like to thank you all once again for this! This network, your support and your commitment are truly helpful and essential supports for us and the choral world in these times. You are all not only experts in choral music, but also important ambassadors of international cultural exchange.

Together we are working to bring the world closer together and have been able to do this successfully in the last year with our numerous projects and actions: we have held two regional meetings, implemented a total of six editions of the talk format Hello Council and two jointly arranged peace concerts were published and sent out into the world with this important mission: Singing together brings nations together.

We have accomplished many projects and used the chance to talk to each other and again this year many great new opportunities are waiting for us. I am especially looking forward to personal meetings at the General Conference in July at the World Choir Games in Gangneung, Republic of Korea, or at the Regional Meeting at the European Choir Games & Grand Prix of Nations in Norrköping in autumn.

I am also pleased that we were able to welcome many new colleagues into our circle. Meanwhile, the Council unites 147 members and representatives from 96 nations - a truly global network!

The current already 5th issue of the magazine Council Talk again includes many interesting contributions and I thank all colleagues and WCC members who have contributed to it. Thanks to your cooperation, we are very pleased to be able to offer the choral world another added value and a platform for exchange with this magazine. In order to further connect the choral world, we will also offer you, as World Choir Council members, the opportunity to place advertisements for educational offers or interesting events in your region, starting with the next issue. I would be pleased if you would take advantage of this opportunity and if we could further expand the exchange and networking among each other in this way.

I wish you all the best and look forward to meeting you in person soon!

Yours sincerely,

Günter Titsch

President INTERKULTUR, World Choir Games & World Choir Council

WHERE WORDS FAIL MUSIC SPEAKS

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN



At the end of this year let us look back on the major and minor things that have happened. There were many moments of joy and, fortunately, of fellowship again; there was again singing, laughing and celebrating together.

For this, we are grateful!

However, the events of the last months have also highlighted the importance of striving for peace, for peaceful exchange of nations. And we thank you for supporting us in this mission!

Because, as the Danish poet and writer Hans Christian Andersen said:

“WHERE WORDS FAIL MUSIC SPEAKS.”

So, let us fill 2023 with music that unites people and nations,
and look forward to the coming year with confidence!

We wish you a happy holiday season as well as health, joy and strength for the new year!

Günter Titsch
President
INTERKULTUR &
World Choir Council

Qin Wang
First Vice-President
INTERKULTUR &
World Choir Council

Fred Sjöberg
Senior Artistic Director
of INTERKULTUR &
Vice President of World
Choir Council

Steen Lindholm
Senior Advisor of the
World Choir Council

Hans-Robert Dapprich
Director Communications,
Marketing and Sales of
INTERKULTUR &
World Choir Council

One World

A New Year's Concert



One People

for Peace 2023

ONE WORLD – ONE PEACE – WORLD PEACE SINGERS NEW YEAR'S CONCERT

Looking back at 2022 we're happy that we were able to come together again, to sing together and to celebrate with singers from all over the world! We met in Italy, Latvia, Greece, Germany, Spain and also Portugal and enjoyed many delighting moments of joy and happiness and listened to fabulous choral music. We're grateful that in the passing year we were finally able again to bring huge parts of the international choral community together again.

But the events of 2022 have also reminded us again that there is no higher good than peace in the world and peace among nations. We were often reminded of Hans Christian Andersen's true words, who said:

"Where words fail, music speaks."

That's why we decided to gift a special New Year's Concert to the international choral world, reminding all of us of the power of music to bring peace in the world. So, let us fill 2023 with music that unites people and nations, and look forward to the coming year with confidence!

For our New Year's Concert we have asked choirs from around the world to contribute to our concert sharing with us a song that means a lot to them and spreads a positive message of peace and harmony.

World Premiere of *"One World, One People"*

The concert's final song is even a world premiere: Composed by Randall Johnson the song "One World, One People" was recorded for the first time by the Daegu Jazz Singers in an arrangement by INTERKULTUR Artistic Director Johan Rooze. The song is a simple, upbeat song to spread the message of peace in the world and among nations to everyone. It was published for the first time in this New Year's Concert on January 1, 2023.

Enjoy the concert and sing along!

CONCERT PROGRAM:

VOCES CORDIS (South Africa)
Conductor: André van der Merwe
"Sing Gently" by Eric Whitacre

DEEP SPACE CHOIR (China)
Conductor: Meng Dapeng
"世界的约定- The Promise of the World"
by Yumi Kimura/ Lyrics: Shuntaro Tanigawa/ Arr.: Yasushi Imamura, adapted by Sun Yue, Bi Minglei

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA CAMERATA & BARNESLEY YOUTH CHOIR (South Africa & Great Britain)
Conductors: Michael Barrett & Mat Wright
"Let the River Run" by Carly Simon,
Arr. Craig Hella Johnson

ST. MARY'S VARSITY MALE ENSEMBLE - ST. MARY'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL (Japan)
Conductor: Randy Stenson
"Twa Tanbou" by Sydney Guillaume

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHORUS OF NEW YORK CITY (USA)
Conductor: Francisco J. Núñez
"Let there be Peace on Earth" by Sy Miller & Jill Jackson, Arr. Irwin Fisch

DAEGU JAZZ SINGERS (Republic of Korea)
Conductor: Johan Rooze
"One World, One People" by Randall Johnson,
Arr. Johan Rooze

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4IVEo7_uaXQ



JOHAN ROOZE (Netherlands)

Artistic Director of the New Years Concert 2023
Artistic Director of INTERKULTUR & World Choir Council Member
Conductor: DAEGUE JAZZ SINGERS



ANDRE VAN DER MERWE (South Africa)

Honorary Member of the World Choir Council
Conductor: VOCES CORDIS



MENG DAPENG (China)

Honorary Member of the World Choir Council & Member of the Advisory Board of the World Choir Council
Conductor: DEEP SPACE CHOIR



MICHAEL BARRETT (South Africa)

**Member of the Advisory Board
of the World Choir Council**

Conductor: UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA CAMERATA



FRANCISCO J. NUNEZ (USA)

Conductor:

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHORUS OF NEW YORK CITY



MAT WRIGHT (Great Britain)

Member of the World Choir Council

Conductor: BARNESLEY YOUTH CHOIR



RANDY STENSON (USA/Japan)

Conductor:

ST. MARY'S VARSITY MALE ENSEMBLE -
ST. MARY'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL





HONORING AND CONGRATULATING ON A ROUND BIRTHDAY

In this section we are honored to congratulate some of our friends and colleagues on celebrating special jubilee birthdays in the past months! These friends have made great contributions to the choral world and to INTERKULTUR, and have accompanied INTERKULTUR events with their experience and commitment. We are very proud and happy to celebrate the special milestones of 80 and 70 years with Mr. Steen Lindholm, Prof. Dr. Morten Lauridsen, Prof. Dr. Ralf Eisenbeiß and Mr. Emeka Nwokedi! Happy Birthday and thank you for your friendship!

CONGRATULATIONS FROM INTERKULTUR AND THE WORLD CHOIR COUNCIL, ALL THE BEST TO YOU, GOOD HEALTH AND HAPPINESS!

STEEN LINDHOLM (Denmark)
Senior Advisor & Board member of the World Choir Council
DECEMBER 08, 2022



PROF. DR. RALF EISENBEISS (Germany)

Honorary Artistic President INTERKULTUR, World Choir Council & World Choir Games

DECEMBER 24, 2022



PROF. DR. MORTEN LAURIDSEN (USA)

Honorary Artistic President INTERKULTUR, WORLD CHOIR COUNCIL & WORLD CHOIR GAMES

FEBRUARY 27, 2023



EMEKA NWOKEDI (Nigeria)

World Choir Council Member

MARCH 26, 2023



INTERKULTUR WORLD TOUR

INTERKULTUR events include the opportunity to travel and discover interesting new places. In addition to to our established established events, we are are proud to take you on a on a world tour in the next few years.

Get on board and enjoy to our World Tour Stops spread out within this magazine!

2025



DENMARK

AARHUS



2023



SWEDEN

NORRKÖPING



2023



**GANGNEUNG/
GANGWON**

**REPUBLIC
OF KOREA**



AUCKLAND

**NEW
ZEALAND**



2024

WELCOME TO THE WORLD CHOIR COUNCIL

NEW FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

THE WORLD CHOIR COUNCIL EXPANDS AND DEVELOPS:

The World Choir Council, as an important member in the INTERKULTUR family, is a well-known and very important part of the choral world. The World Choir Council is also the highest voluntary international advisory body of INTERKULTUR.

INTERKULTUR and the World Choir Council are very proud to present two new members from two different countries for the World Choir Council. These new members will represent their countries and will contribute with their expertise and experience to make the World Choir Council even more successful. In the following we would like to introduce the 2 new members to you:

SONIA NADYA SIMANJUNTAK INDONESIA – ASIA

Sonia is one of Indonesia's internationally experienced and dedicated choir directors, conductors and choreographers. Her musical journey began in 1992 as a long-standing member of the Indonesian Children and Youth Choir - Cordana, under the mentorship of Aida Swenson Simanjuntak. As one of the choir's lead singers, she soon became the Assistant Choir Director and helped bring the choir to international recognition with performances including the ACDA Miami (2007), IFCM Copenhagen (2008), Musica Sacra Marktoberdorf (2010), Festival 500 St. John New Foundland (2011), Polifolia France (2011), Musica Sacra Argentina (2012), World Youth Choir Switzerland (2016). Further, Sonia was honoured with conducting the collaborative choir performances "Podium on The Edge-Singing from Sea to Sea" in New Foundland-Canada 2018, and "World Choral Expo" in Lisbon-Portugal 2019.

Upon earning her Bachelor's Degree in 2004 from The London School of Public Relations, Sonia was awarded a full-ride scholarship from HSBC Jakarta in 2006 to attend the University of Oregon, USA majoring Music and Dance. As a member of the National Foundation for the Development of Choral Music in Indonesia (LPPN), Sonia's contribution helped establish various choirs and conductors to international standards. Since 2013, Sonia is also appointed as Head of Choir Consultant for Music Education in Biak-Papua. Currently, Sonia is the Director of Indonesian Children and Youth Choir - Cordana, and several choirs across different age groups in Indonesia. She is also member of World Choir Council - Interkultur.

Sonia received international recognition as "Best Inspirational Conductor" at Llangollen Musical Eisteddfod, Wales-UK (2016), "Excellent Conductor" at Bali International Choir Festival (2016), "Outstanding Teacher Award" at World Choir Festival Hong Kong (2021) and others.

SONIA NADYA SIMANJUNTAK



HELENE STUREBORG



**HELENE STUREBORG
SWEDEN – EUROPE**

Helene Stureborg is since more than 30 years, working as a choral conductor and pedagogue at the Stockholms Musikgymnasium/Kungsholmens gymnasium. The school is the leading choir school for students 16-19 in Sweden. She is also the conductor of the Stockholms Musikgymnasium Chamber choir since 2002. The choir has won several prizes at competitions abroad and is highly respected. They were invited as one of the 24 invited choirs at WSCM2020 in Auckland.

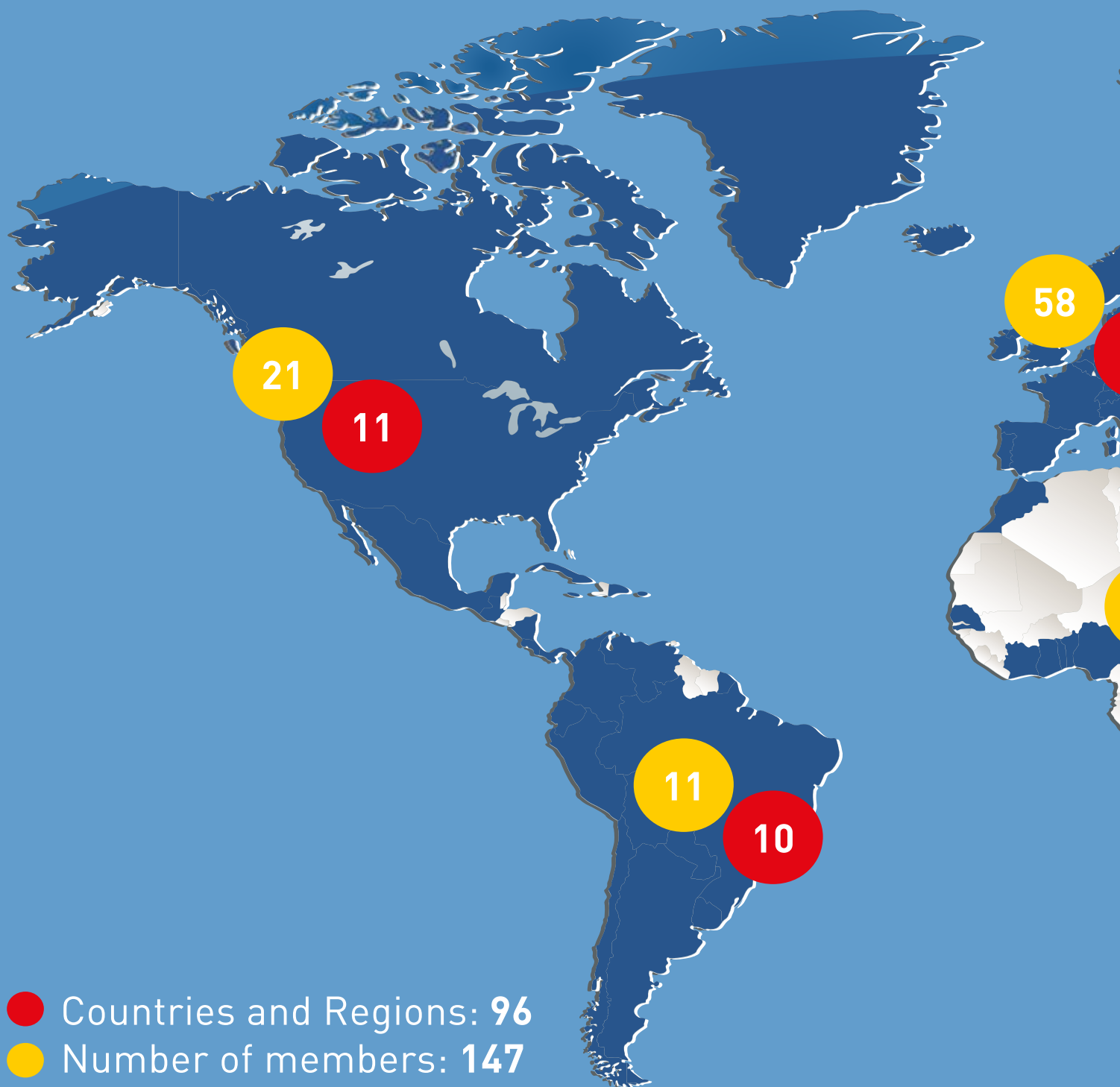
After receiving a Master in Fine Arts in Church music and a Postgraduate Diploma In Choral Conducting at the Royal University of Music, she started as a church musician in a Stockholm parish and became the conductor of Kongl Teknologkören at the Royal Institute of Technology (1994-2002). The choir kept a high level and won several competitions.

In 2011 she started her own ensemble Helene Stureborgs chamber choir which has won Grand Prix in both Cork choral competition in Ireland and in the Grieg choral competition in Norway.

For many years Helene Stureborg was also a teacher in choral conducting at the Royal University College of Music in Stockholm and also at varying courses in Sweden and abroad, and frequently engaged as a juror at various competitions. She was a member of the Artistic Council of Statens Musikverk in 2014-2016 and in 2017 she received the Choir conductor of the year prize in Sweden and was one of two conductors to lead the World Youth Choir2018 during their summer session in Inner Mongolia and China.

From January 2023 she will start her new position as Musical and administrative planning manager of the Swedish Radio Choir.

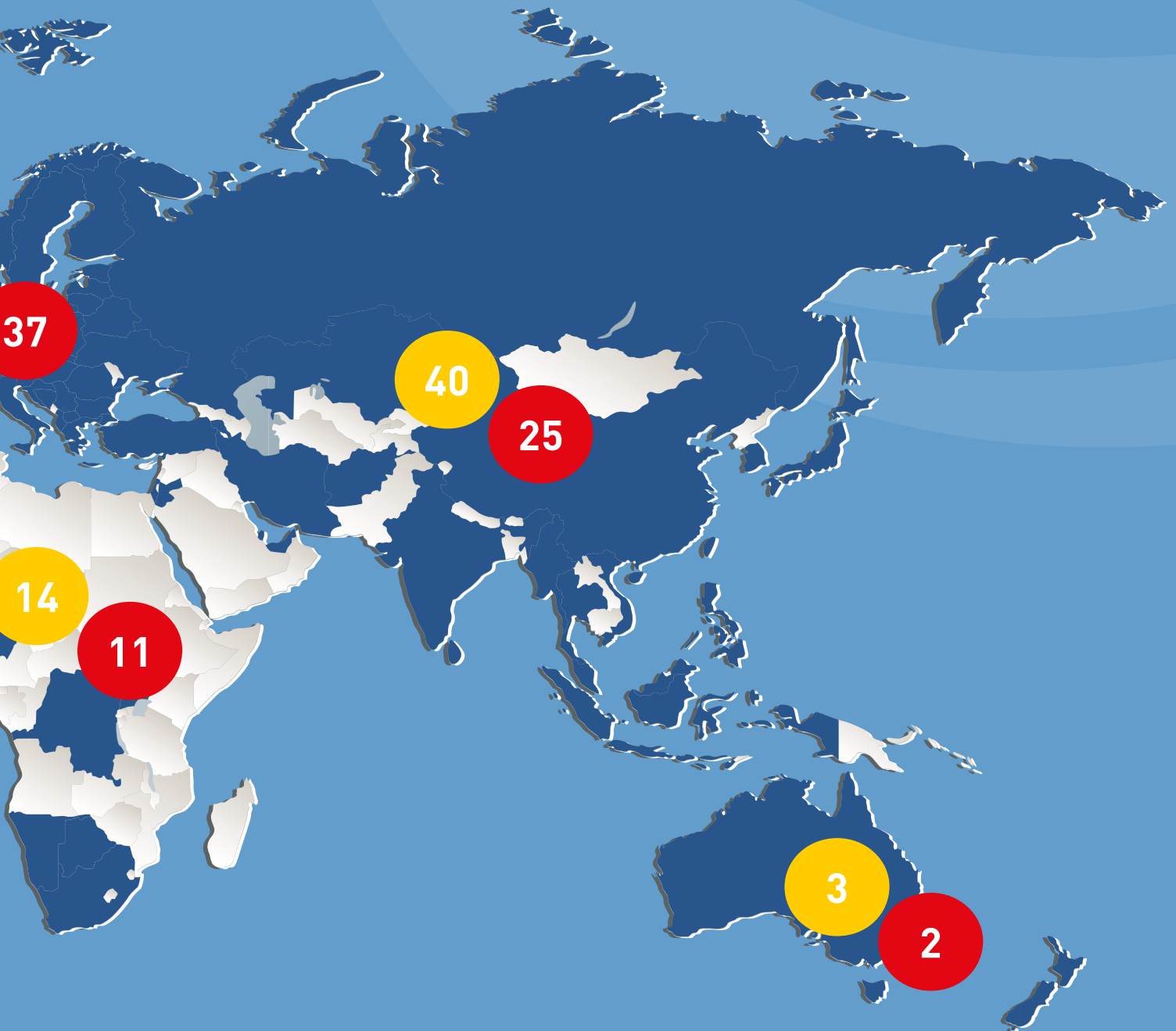
WORLD CHOIR COUNCIL MEMBERS AROUND THE WORLD



● Countries and Regions: **96**
● Number of members: **147**
Number of Continents: **6**



World Choir Council



Statistics as of April 03, 2023

WORLD TOUR STOP 1

WORLD CHOIR GAMES 2023 – GANGNEUNG, REPUBLIC OF KOREA

by Nicolas-Constantin Gliese (Germany)



CAN YOU HEAR THE EXCITEMENT?

Less than 100 days to go, then it's time. On July 03, 2023, the World Choir Games will start their 12th edition in Gangneung, Republic of Korea. The whole city is already prepared for the choirs: flags and banners can be seen everywhere, cabs have been branded and drive the official logos of the World Choir Games through the city. You can feel the excitement and anticipation of what is to come and you can almost already hear some of the most talented voices in the world coming together to represent their countries and cultures in a way that only music can. This all takes place in the beautiful Olympic coastal city of Gangneung, in the east of the Republic of Korea.

All participating choirs can look forward to a very professional planning, the Olympic flair and spirit that is present in this city, as well as interesting venues and breathtaking stages. A total of 7 different venues for the official events such as Opening and Closing Ceremony, the competitions, gala and friendship concerts as well as for workshops are available to all participants and will soon be filled with the sound of choir music.

Gangneung is located in the heart of an incredible scenery between the ocean and the mountains, with an interesting culture where everyone will be able to discover and appreciate many sights, sounds and good smells.

The organizers of INTERKULTUR and the local partners in the Republic of Korea are discussing many artistic and organizational details every day to make the upcoming World Choir Games an unforgettable event for everyone involved.

INTERKULTUR is very happy to welcome back a familiar face in the ranks of the artistic management: Maarten Van Ingelgem (Belgium) was the artistic director of the 2021 World Choir Games in Flanders and he will support the artistic team for the official events at this year's Games in Gangneung as deputy artistic director. We are just under 100 days away from the opening ceremony. We are excited and counting down the days until the opening show on July 03, 2023. Are you too?





PROJECTS 2023



MAGAZINE – COUNCIL TALK

THE DIGITAL MAGAZINE WITH DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE WORK OF THE WORLD CHOIR COUNCIL, ITS MEMBERS AND CURRENT NEWS FROM THE CHORAL WORLD.

Issue 2/2023: Publishing: September 30, 2023 (Closing date for articles: June 30, 2023)

Issue 1/2024: Publishing: February 29, 2024 (Closing date for articles: December 31, 2023)

WORLD CHOIR COUNCIL – GENERAL CONFERENCE LIVE IN GANGNEUNG (REPUBLIC OF KOREA) DURING 12TH WORLD CHOIR GAMES 2023 AND VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

JULY 08 & 09, 2023

The next General Conference of the World Choir Council including workshops and much more will take place live in Gangneung (Republic of Korea) in 2023 during the 12th World Choir Games.

For those who cannot travel to Korea, we will also offer a ZOOM meeting and will welcome you live from the meeting room in Gangneung.

We are looking forward to welcoming you in Gangneung.

INVITATION
ONLINE EVENT &
LIVE EVENT

WORLD CHOIR COUNCIL – REGIONAL MEETINGS

DISCUSSION ROUNDS WITH THE WORLD CHOIR COUNCIL MEMBERS
YOUR REGION ON CURRENT TOPICS EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE AND INFORMATION.

**MEETING 2023 LIVE FROM NORRKÖPING (SWEDEN) AT THE
EUROPEAN CHOIR GAMES & GRAND PRIX OF NATIONS: PRELIMINARY**

Meetings will be held during the time period of October 28, 2023 through November 05, 2023.

Stay tuned for what's coming up for you.

MUSICA MUNDI ACADEMY SPECIAL

HELLO COUNCIL – CHINA | PACIFIC

VIRTUAL LIVE TALKS – CONNECTING THE CHORAL WORLD

China: June 16, 2023 | September 22, 2023 | December 08, 2023 | 2024: TBA

Pacific: First edition: TBA (in the 2nd half of 2023)

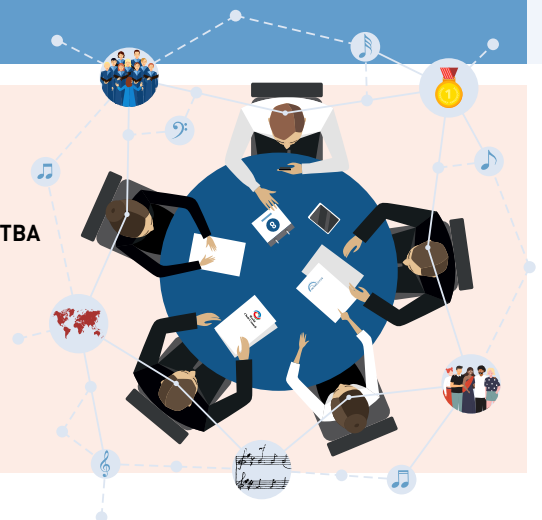
WORLD PEACE SINGERS – NEW YEAR & PEACE CONCERT 2024

Conducted by Johan Rooze (Netherlands)

January 01, 2024

WORLD PEACE SINGERS – PEACE CONCERT 2023

during 12th World Choir Games 2023 in Gangneung (Republic of Korea)



*Dates might subject to change.

World Choir Council c/o INTERKULTUR
Ruhberg 1, 35463 Fernwald (Frankfurt/Main) Germany, worldchoircouncil@interkultur.com

interkultur.com

HELLO COUNCIL IS BACK!

Mastering the aural and visual magic of chorus performance

“Hello Council” is the Musica Mundi Academy Special series of live talk and online pedagogical workshop organized by INTERKULTUR China under the support of INTERKULTUR and World Choir Council. The 12th “Hello Council” came on live on March 24 with guest speakers Prof. Yan Baolin, a Chinese national first-class conductor, Ms. Hu Manxue, Art Director and Conductor of Shenzhen Senior High School Lily Girls Choir and Ms. Lu Lubin, a young Chinese conductor. This live focuses on the topic of “Visual Aesthetics in Chorus Performance”. Nearly 200 Chinese audience participated in the live broadcast, and more than 10,000 people watched the review video.

Chorus is not only an auditory art, but also a visual enjoyment for the audience. “In terms of visual design, it is necessary to consider the hardware conditions such as the venue, and then design different formations and movements based on the specific acoustic requirements of the chorus works. Special attention should be paid to the use of the sound field. Sometimes the venue conditions are not ideal, and stage design can actually make up for the shortcomings of the existing sound field.” Prof. Yan Baolin shared. His Eight Seconds Choir won the champion in 7th World Choir Games, and its rich and varied stage design and unique clothing have formed a beautiful Chinese style on the world chorus stage.

As one of the best female choral conductors in China, Ms. Hu Manxue has unique insights into the visual aesthetics of choral performance: “Action design is like a “rapier” that can enhance the effectiveness of choral performance if used properly, but it can also have destructive effects if not. I don’t agree that many choirs directly use the lyrics of their works to design actions, which still needs to be designed based on the trend of music and the needs of artistic processing.”

During the interactive session, one of the scenic statements posed by Ms. Lu Lubin caused a discussion: “Does clothing belong to the special logo of the choir, or does it need to vary depending on the style of the work?” Yan believed that clothing design should highlight the overall characteristics of the choir, like Eight Seconds Choir, which has its unique visual style. Hu expressed a more open concept that the choir can choose different clothing based on the needs of different works with funding permitting, but it is also important to pay attention not to dominate, as the basic art of choral singing is still auditory art.

At the end of this live, Ms. Li Qixuan, the project manager, introduced to the audience the 2023 INTERKULTUR events and the new year’s “Hello Council” show plan: “In order to better meet the viewing needs of Chinese audiences, Hello Council will launch a series of Chinese version. It is a great honor to be the MC today. The topic selection of the Chinese version is closer to the current situation of the Chinese choirs, and has strong affinity.

The poster features the World Choir Council logo at the top left and the text '中文版 In Chinese' at the top right. The main title is 'HELLO COUNCIL' in large blue letters, followed by the date and time '2023年3月24日 20:00'. Below this is the topic '【本期话题 TOPIC】 合唱表演中的视觉美学' and the English translation 'Visual Aesthetics in Chorus Performance'. The central image shows two speakers: Ms. Hu Manxue on the left and Prof. Yan Baolin on the right. A circular inset shows Ms. Lu Lubin. At the bottom left, there is a QR code and the text '公益网络教育资源 扫码关注参与直播'. At the bottom center is the INTERKULTUR logo.



WHAT DO SOME OF OUR COUNCIL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS HAVE ON THEIR CHORAL BUCKET LISTS?

by Flannery Ryan (Germany/USA)

The ACDA National Conference is one of the biggest choral conferences in the world and a 'must-attend' event for a lot of our Council members! It is also a very important place for us at INTERKULTUR to connect to friends, colleagues, other organizers, conductors and singers.

This year at the conference in Cincinnati, our team, consisting of Francesco Leonardi, Flannery Ryan and as big support Mr Christopher Ryan was on a mission: They were very curious to find out what the US Choir-Scene has on their Choral Bucket List. Which dreams and adventures does everyone have for the coming years? Which projects would they like to fulfill with their choirs and how could INTERKULTUR help to bring these goals to the next level? This is what some of the conductors and singers present, as well as our Council Members and Friends answered:

THE WORLD CHOIR GAMES 2023 IN GANGNEUNG, SOUTH KOREA

Some of the friends we met have a Bucket List item that really isn't far away in the future at all: The 12th World Choir Games in Gangneung, South Korea (July 3-13, 2023)! The excitement for the upcoming Games and the anticipation for what is about to come was definitely noticeable from several of the singers, conductors and organizers present!

We were especially happy to meet our National Artistic Director of the 12th World Choir Games, Mr. Eui-Joong Yoon and the National Chorus of Korea in Cincinnati. They were accompanied by our Council member Mr. Ryan Goessel and one of our jury members and one of the best known composers of Korea, Hyowon Woo. The choir music they presented together shows the exceptional quality we will be able to expect from our hosts during the Games and we can't wait to hear more!

THE WORLD CHOIR GAMES 2024 IN AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

But also the next World Choir Games 2024 in Auckland, New Zealand were a big topic at the booth and a big bucket list item for a lot of choirs and conductors. This also includes many of our Council members, for instance our Council member from Jordan, Shireen Abu-Khader.





TRAVELING THE WORLD WITH YOUR CHOIR

When we approached our audience and asked about their Choral Bucket List goals, the most common first reaction was: "Oh, I hadn't thought about that yet!" But the question (and maybe also the design of our booth) also opened up so many possibilities for people to dream of far away destinations. We were surprised by the many answers of places to visit during a choir tour, as they expanded from destinations in Europe to the Antarctica, South-East Asia and Africa, just to name a few general areas. This gave us a lot of good ideas for future destinations that INTERKULTUR could pursue. But we were also happy that we were able to help other visitors discover their personal bucket list destinations, such as Italy, Sweden, Denmark or Japan, as these destinations are already highlights in our calendar.

CHORAL BUCKET LIST PERFORMANCE GOALS

Many choir conductors and singers that we talked to had specific performance goals. These often included specific venues, such as the Metropolitan Opera, a Roman Amphitheatre or the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, the home of J.S. Bach. But this could also include conducting or performing certain masterpieces of choral work, such as Carl Orff's Carmina Burana or, as in the case of our Council Member Tristan Meister (Germany), the 8th Symphony of Gustav Mahler.

For other participants in our Choral Bucket List survey great performances also means a chance to both share music from other countries with each other, as well as represent and showcase the own countries and traditions. Our friends Indra Kurniawan Salama and Frederich Henoch Samalang (Indonesia) for instance would like to help promote Indonesian choral music and our representative Irvinne Redor (Philippines) dreams of seeing thousands of singers from all over the world singing Filipino choral works.



FALLING IN LOVE WITH GREAT MULTICULTURAL CHORAL EXPERIENCES

But performing incredible music in impressive venues is not just a breathtaking endeavor but also a chance to educate the next generation and further cultural exchange, as our Council member Elena Sharkova (USA) pointed out. She would like to give her students the possibility to work with the best conductors, sing in the best concert halls and experience intercultural exchange during events, to create an experience that they will never forget. And our Council member Maria Guinand has similar goals, both for others and for herself, as making friends for a life-time is high on her Choral Bucket List!

BUCKET LIST ITEMS FOR THE FUTURE

And what about Bucket List Items that are a bit more out of the Box? Yes, we had those as well! Our Council member Michael Dawson for instance would love to perform on Mars together with Elon Musk one day but also his friends and fellow conductors from Ireland Kevin and Steven have high goals in producing TV shows and teaching people to sing in Gaelic.

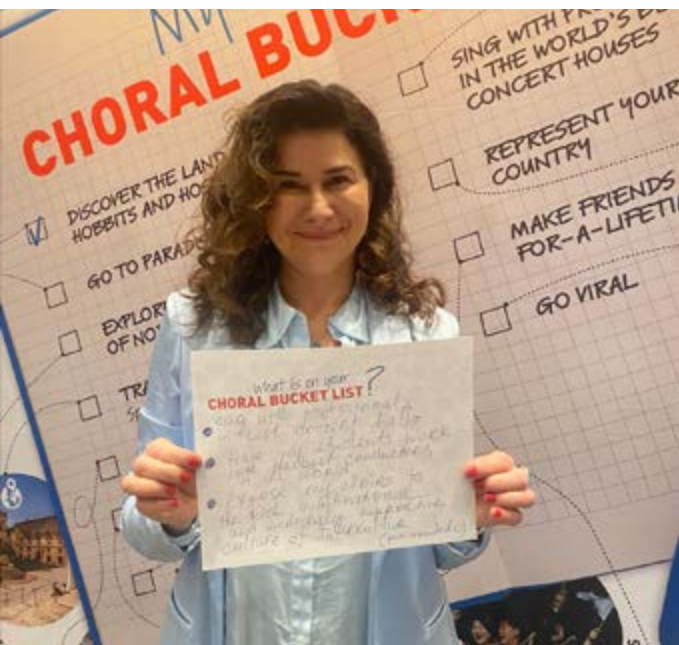
NOW IT IS YOUR TURN!

Maybe reading about the Bucket List items of some of your Council colleagues got you thinking of your dreams and goals as well? Then we would love to encourage you to share your thoughts with us through one or both of these two ways:

- If you would like to discuss your ideas directly with your fellow Council members, then we would like to invite you to join us for the WCC Forum on April 6, 14:00 CEST. All information should have already been sent to you. If you have any questions or haven't received an invitation yet, please contact Nicolas Gliese directly.
- After the Forum, we will prepare a survey for you that talks about future goals in general and also about goals that we might be able to achieve collectively within the council. Please feel free to participate!

Let us shape the future of our collective Choir scene together and dream big about the Goals we still have on our Choral Bucket List!





WORLD TOUR STOP 2 EUROPEAN CHOIR GAMES 2023 – NORRKÖPING, SWEDEN

by Viveca Valgren (Sweden)



Norrköping
SWEDEN 2023



LET'S GO TO THE NORTH OF EUROPE - NORRKÖPING IS CALLING

Wow, Norrköping is really great! This is a common saying from visitors in the city. With a mix of impressive, historic industrial environments that have been given new life, good shopping and a large selection of restaurants, Norrköping has everything you could wish for a successful holiday. Add to that high-quality art and cultural experiences – it's not strange at all that visitors get that wow-feeling.

In the heart of the city, the beautiful buildings are reflected in the waters of the river and the waterfalls roar. Here you will find several of Norrköping's main tourist attractions, but just strolling through the Industrial Landscape is an experience in itself.

The river's swirling waters follow the city like a life-giving artery, bringing peace and movement – you can even fish in the middle of the city! Salmon are plentiful and if you are lucky you can see them playing in the salmon ladder in Strömparken.

Norrköping's surroundings offer wonderful nature experiences. Just outside the city, you will find the largest zoo in the Nordic region, Kolmården, and a variety of beautiful hiking trails and quaint farm shops. Marmorbruket with its green marble is a classic excursion destination that offers both nature and culture with adorable views of the water of Bråviken. Wherever you are, you can take a break and enjoy good food, nice coffee breaks or shopping for all tastes.

Arkösund – Norrköping's very own archipelago - with its charming pier walk and the bathing islets is an obvious excursion destination in the summer. Good food and ice cream on the pier, a kayak trip or swimming from the sandy beach in Sköldvik – sounds lovely, right?





INTERVIEW

with Prof. Zheng Xiaoying (China)

PART I: PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC

QUESTION:

I've heard of your reference of the "beauty of music" and how important it is to cultivate an appreciation for music. What does music mean to you?

Do you believe that music has a purpose beyond just to create beauty? Is there an element of positive social impact that comes intrinsically with the arts?

ANSWER:

Music is an auditory art. Whoever is able to appreciate music enjoys its beautiful serenity, a sense of compassion and consolation, or a spirit of encouragement and enterprise, even inspirations, insights, and imagination, which in turn forge a great view of the human life.

I believe that a musician with a special talent ought to add a bit more justice, happiness, kindness, intelligence, and beauty to the public than to show off our own talent, differentiate ourselves by novelties, regardless of anything else.

QUESTION:

Most recently, I understand that you have recorded a course titled "Make the Ears Smarter"; and you also put your "Zheng Xiaoying Mode" online. You are an inspiration to keep working as hard as you do. What motivates you to do so?

ANSWER:

I cannot rest, because from the moment I became a musician, I was primed to believe in the motto that "the purpose of music is to serve the people."

My grandfather was a rural pastor. My father took the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship to study in the United States. Both of my parents preferred to educate their daughter in the Western style, so they placed me at the piano when I was 6. My piano lessons were interrupted by Japan-China invasion, but thanks to my education at an American missionary school, I had been able to play the works of Beethoven and Chopin by the age of 19. At which point, I was drawn out of my family, at the dawn of a new era, into the great

waves of national liberation. With no formal training, I taught myself to conduct the choruses and orchestras to sing and play revolutionary songs. That was a transformative moment for my worldview.

In recent years, encouraged by my friends, I started a series of online lectures entitled, "Make Your Ears Smarter," after 4 decades of guiding the public to navigate the world of music. My first step is to do away with the general public's tendency to demur from music as something distant, aloft, and inaccessible. Then, in an everyday language, I introduce the greatest works of the Classical, Romantic, Impressionistic, and Modernist styles, up to the orchestral works composed in modern China. Thus far, I have done 50 lectures, about half way through what I have in mind.

QUESTION:

I admire the way which you have lectured before concerts in China in order to better prepare audiences for what they will hear. I think perhaps, we western audiences could use some of this technique to better appreciate Chinese traditional works. Can you elaborate on it?

ANSWER:

Actually, I learnt the practice of giving pre-concert talks from the West—first the Soviet Union, then the Americans who were pretty much doing the same thing. By and large, they invited experts to lecture in the lounge, during intermissions; or in the music hall, before concerts. Whereas in our tradition, the talks precede each concert or even each individual piece, and they are almost always given by the conductors themselves, which gives a sense of credibility and intimacy to the audience.

And here let me share with you my own experience: when I emerged from ten years of turmoil and chaos as the Principle Conductor of China National Opera in 1978, I came to realise that our task was to train from scratch not only singers and orchestras, but the audience itself!

PART 2: WESTERN TRADITION

QUESTIONS:

I'm sure we have some artists here with us who would like to learn from you. Please tell us, how do you approach a score for the first time?

ANSWER:

By the time the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, there had existed an entire generation of excellent musicians immersed in and devoted to western music. Then, with the help of Soviet experts, China built a system of music education that synthesised Russian & Euro-American traditions. That historical moment urged us to study western music theories & composition techniques, in order to create more and better works of Chinese music through the language of the world, so that they could be understood by the world. That is why, in 1952, I was nominated by my Art Troupe to study composition at the Central Conservatory.

The first ever professional conducting program in China was a seminar series in 1955, led by choral conductor Mr. Dumashev, then Soviet advisor to the Central Song & Dance Ensemble. Though it lasted for only a year and a half, the course groomed 19 junior conductors, all of whom would go on to lead choruses all around China. I was the only woman in that course—Dumashev handpicked me from the Central Conservatory. He asked each one of us to organise a chorus—that is how I became the choral conductor at the Beijing Youth Palace & Beijing Women College Students' Chorus.

Upon my return, I finished all music theory courses at the Conservatory with distinction. I also took part in establishing the first department of conducting, modelled in parts after Soviet curricula. I was selected and sent to study opera & orchestral conducting at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, under the tutelage of the medalled Soviet conductor Anosov. In the second year of my stay in Moscow, I conducted the first orchestral concert of my life at the Kremlin Palace Theater. In my third year, I successfully conducted Puccini's *Tosca* at the Moscow national Musical Theatre. In this way, I became the first Chinese conductor to appear on a foreign opera conducting stage—men and women included!

Properly speaking, my professional career in conducting only began when I assumed the role of the conductor at the China National Opera at the age of 49. For years, I was also Professor & Chair of the Department of Conducting at the Central Conservatory of Music. After my retirement, I was invited to Xiamen and started the first outside the system symphony orchestra in China.

I was lucky! I believe during my formative years, I did not encounter much gender discrimination. Only then was I able to grow and gain the trust of the public, and eventually, to share what I have learnt with them.



PROF. ZHENG XIAOYING (CHINA)

**Honorary Artistic President
INTERKULTUR, World Choir Council &
World Choir Games**

Professor Zheng Xiaoying, first ever female orchestra conductor in China. She was the former artistic director and chief conductor of Xiamen philharmonic orchestra, chief conductor of China National Opera House, dean of China Central Conservatory of Music conducting department and music director of 'philharmonic female' orchestra. She was also the artistic director of the 4th and 6th World Choir Games in the year of 2006 and 2010 respectively.

Zheng Xiaoying graduated from China Central Conservatory of Music, attended further education in National Moscow Conservatory of Music in Soviet Union for opera and symphony orchestra conducting. She was honored by the National Culture Department a first prize as excellent conductor, as well as French Literature Art Medal of Honor, China-Russia Friendship Medal twice and etc. As a conductor, she participated often in national important events. She is not only one of the most experienced conducting professors in China, but also an enthusiastic music social activist.

Zheng Xiaoying was recently honored Special Contribution Award for Chinese opera career, Lifetime Achievement Award by Chinese Musicians Association, the title of 'Chinese Culture Figure' in 2012 and 'Lifetime Honorary Conductor' by China National Opera House in 2014.

QUESTION:

I would like to talk about your experience with the opera Carmen. As I understand it, you translated this opera into Mandarin, and I have personally seen first hand how much this particular opera is appreciated in China. Why do you think that this story of such a strong woman has so much universal appeal?

ANSWER:

I wouldn't say that we interpret Carmen through the prism of a "strong woman." But let me begin with the staging of Carmen in Beijing in 1982, which I count as a fruit of Sino-French cultural exchange. According to our agreements, Bizet's Carmen was to be staged at the China National Opera around New Year's Day in 1982, with Chinese and French artists joining force to make it happen. The French government sent us a director, a conductor, as well as vocal, choreographic, costume, props and sets & lighting design experts—there were a total of 7 or 8 of them. After a year of unflinching effort, French and Chinese artists finally brought this world-renowned opera—now translated into Chinese—onto China's opera stage. French conductor Périssin (1924-2019) conducted the first 6 performances and me conduct the next 19 in consecutive evenings. Yet, news spread by word of mouth. Eventually, the music hall large enough for 2,000 was fully packed for all 25 performances.

The record of the first night went on to win a 1983 international record award in France. The French media lavished praise on our performance, calling it "a Triumph in the Forbidden city," and "a miracle rarely seen even on Western stages." Director Terrasson even suggested that the "Carmen as interpreted by the Chinese surpasses all Carmens outside France. It is stunning. Their accomplishment has won the acclaim and respect of the international community." In the 1980s, China National Opera went on a tour, appearing at art festivals in Hong Kong and Finland. There, the world took a fresh look at China's achievement in opera, which was just being revived in the midst of ruins.

What I often say is, if all nations on earth sing foreign operas in their mother tongue, why should the Chinese alone refrain from rendering Western operas in the Chinese language? Our popular slogan is to "let operas come to the public, and let the public enter the operas."

PART 3: CHINESE TRADITION

QUESTION:

Finally, I would like to talk about the tradition of Chinese classical composers who have incorporated traditional elements into their classical works. What do you think about this?

ANSWER:

About 22 years ago, Liu Yuan and I launched a large-scale symphonic poem about the Hakka people. (Hakka-recent arrivals refugees from the central plain) We performed the symphonic suites Echoes of the Earth Building 77 times in 12 countries. I would like to think that in this way, we have projected the voice of the rural, mountain-bound folks of China around the globe, and the composition broke the record as the most performed grand symphony in Chinese history.

Confident in our ethnic cultures, we also brought Echoes, which embodies the principle, "adapt foreign resources for Chinese purposes," to 11 nations: Japan, France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Canada, the United States, Malaysia, Singapore, Russia, and Australia. In this way, the rest of the world has gotten a chance to experience Chinese culture through the art form with which it is most familiar. Peoples of different skin colours, nation-states, and languages are impressed by a sensible picture of China and moved by our voice of peace and friendship.

Something else happened in 2021 that really touched my heart. When, after conducting Echoes, I returned to the stage at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing to thank the audience and their applause, more than 200 singers thrice chanted "We love you, teacher Zheng!" They were soon joined by the audience, as well. At the age of 92, I was moved to tears. It has been more than 20 years since I conducted most of my performances in Xiamen, but people in Beijing remembered me. What a happy reward it is, for a life of sharing music with others!

Watch the full interview here:

https://www.bilibili.com/video/BV1x54y1T799/?spm_id_from=333.337.search-card.all.click&code=071ARLfa1av33F0nHAHa1isMNI1ARLFC&state=&wxfid=o70mF0dGR5Ktnw51-yQhJeMSB5ak





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by John Rosser (New Zealand)



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PEOPLE AND THE LAND

TĀMAKI MAKAURAU - MEANS A PLACE DESIRED BY MANY.

Aotearoa New Zealand is young. The indigenous Māori arrived just 750 years ago, at the very end of the great Polynesian migration across the Pacific, while Europeans did not settle in significant numbers until the mid-19th century. But of course the land itself is, and feels, old and New Zealanders quickly developed a close connection with its soaring mountains, unspoilt rivers and deep, brooding ‘bush’ (forests), a connection that in later times has developed into more active guardianship. This bond, which has shaped our identity and our music, inspired the theme chosen for our hosting of the World Symposium on Choral Music 2020: “People and the Land | He tangata, he whenua”.

Aotearoa New Zealand is bicultural. Although many races now live together in our land, the country was founded by a treaty in 1840 between Māori and the British Crown (on behalf of its settlers) that purported to establish an equal partnership between the two peoples. Our 183-year struggle to honour that agreement has been challenging and sometimes very painful, but the fact that more and more Kiwis are now willing to embrace it is cause for cautious celebration. In his article, Peter Walls shows how colonial New Zealand tried to preserve its old choral identity in a new country and finishes with an environmental twist; in the August edition Karen Grylls discusses efforts to build a bridge between two musical worlds.

Aotearoa New Zealand is small. With fewer than five million people in an area the size of the UK or Japan we have plenty of room, and our choral music reflects this, painting broad-brush, etherial landscapes – more keenly perhaps than portraits of the busy cities where most of us live. Being little, however, we strive to see the big picture (because it’s not so big) and are able to organise ourselves more easily on a national scale. Prime examples in the NZ performing arts scene are Te Matatini – the biennial and hugely popular Māori ‘kapa haka’ festival, described here by Keriata Royal-Taeao – and our renowned secondary schools’ choral phenomenon, The Big Sing. Aotearoa New Zealand is attractive. Well, we think so, and the 400 international choirs and presenters who applied to perform at WSCM2020 and its fringe festival must have wanted to find out what all the fuss was about. Now we look forward to welcoming to our land the many people taking part in the World Choir Games 2024, and to sharing with them its unique, diverse beauty and rich culture.

See you in Auckland!





'WITH VERDURE CLAD': THE CREATION IN COLONIAL NEW ZEALAND

Dr Peter Walls Officers (ONZM) - The New Zealand Order of Merit - (New Zealand)

Haydn's *Creation* marks the end of the 18th century, the end of the Enlightenment. The first public performance (following a private hearing at the Schwarzenberg Palace a year earlier) took place on 19 March 1799 at Vienna's Burgtheater. Immediately it was recognised as heralding a new era in music – capturing a Romantic ethos that set it apart from what came to be called the Classical period. In 1800, Carl Friedrich Zelter wrote

The overture ['Chaos'] bespeaks a master of the first rank . . . With almost all possible instruments available as raw materials, a gigantic, almost incalculable web of artistic splendour is woven and formed. The objection that Chaos cannot be depicted by means of harmony, melody and rhythm now falls to the ground . . .

Almost all discords that occur are deliberately treated with complete freedom. The unusual combination of figures and note values, which include semibreves, minims, crotchets, quavers and semiquavers, triplets, roulades, trills and grace-notes, gives the score a peculiar and mysterious look. One is astonished at the multitude of small, playful figures that swarm around huge, dark masses, like clouds of insects against the great horizon. All these things in combination, in the dark imagery of Chaos, make up an endlessly harmonious fabric, in which the succession of modulations is indescribably beautiful and in many places so sublime and lofty as to evoke awe.¹

Note those words 'sublime' and 'awe'. They resonate with E. T. A. Hoffman's celebrated summation of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 as the herald of the Romantic era, a work that he said set in motion 'the lever of fear, of awe, of horror, suffering'.² Haydn was pleased with Zelter's analysis. As a harbinger of the Romantic period, *The Creation* also reflects a heightened responsiveness to nature. Janus-like, it both sums up the achievement of the Classical era and sets the agenda for the Romantic age. It is also a work that participates in an intertextual dialogue with Handel oratorio and with *Messiah* in particular. The sense of *The Creation* simultaneously revisiting *Messiah* and announcing Romantic ideals are both central to understanding the special place that Haydn's work held in 19th-century New Zealand colonial society.

The history of *The Creation* is well known – but we should revisit it briefly here in order to understand why audiences in an English colonial society should regard it as somehow their cultural property. Thanks largely to Baron Gottfried van Swieten (who sponsored performances of Handel oratorio in Vienna and who commissioned Mozart's re-orchestration of *Messiah*), Haydn was already very familiar with Handel oratorio before his first visit to England in 1791. Once there, he experienced at first hand the centrality of these works in the English imagination. He attended a performance of *Messiah* in Westminster Abbey on 1 June 1791 (part of the annual Handel commemoration that year). The oratorio was delivered by massive forces – a forerunner of so many large-choir choral society *Messiahs* (and a far cry from any performances that Handel himself had presided over).³

1 Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung IV (1801-2), pp. 390ff. Quoted in Heinrich Schenker, *The Masterwork in Music: A Yearbook*, vol. 2 (1926), ed. William Drabkin (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), p. 103.

2 E. T. A. Hoffmann, 'Beethoven's Instrumental Music' (1813); translation from *Source Readings in Music History* ed. Oliver Strunk, rev. Leo Treitler (New York & London: Norton, 1998) p. 1195

3 John A. Rice, 'Did Haydn attend the Handel Commemoration in Westminster Abbey?', *Early Music* 40 (2012) 73- 80 debunks some of the myths surrounding Haydn's attendance at the 1791 commemoration (including the claim, first advanced by Carl Ferdinand Pohl, that, on hearing the 'Hallelujah' Chorus, Haydn wept and exclaimed 'He is the master of us all.')

In August 1795 Haydn returned from his second visit to England with a libretto based on Milton's *Paradise Lost* and purportedly written for Handel. This he gave to van Swieten who translated it into German for Haydn to set, providing copious notes to the composer on how he thought it should be treated. (Haydn ignored most of these.) In June 1799, Haydn announced that "the success which my oratorio *The Creation* has been fortunate enough to enjoy has induced me to arrange for its dissemination myself."⁴ He published an edition with German and English texts. For this Van Swieten shoe-horned the original English libretto into the musical setting. Two competing English-language performances of *The Creation* were mounted within weeks of the bi-lingual score reaching London. This English version is thus linked both to the pre-history of Haydn's oratorio and its early performances. Considering that it is a sometimes bizarre manipulation of an 18th-century English text by a Germanspeaking intellectual, it has a charm of its own.

The parallels between *Messiah* and *The Creation* extend beyond the general concept. The overall structure of *The Creation* mirrors that of *Messiah*. Both are in three parts, with the third of these just half the length each of Parts I and II. Part II of *The Creation* ends with a Hallelujah chorus ('Achieved is the Glorious Work . . . Alleluia'). The textual echoes are striking. *Messiah*'s 'For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth . . . forever and ever' is answered by Van Swieten's ungainly 'Glory to his name forever/ He sole on high exalted reigns'.⁵ It is hardly surprising that *The Creation* came to be regarded as a companion piece to *Messiah*. Numerous 19th-century concert reviews in New Zealand reflect on the parallels between these two works (sometimes at length).

The Creation enjoyed enormous popularity in New Zealand during the 19th century. Part of this was undoubtedly because it was regarded almost as an English work. Alongside *Messiah* and *The Creation*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* was also embraced by colonial society in New Zealand. Like *The Creation*, *Elijah* entered the world (at its premiere in Birmingham in 1846) with an English version of its German libretto. Like *The Creation*, too, it derives from a Handelian model of the oratorio. *Elijah* was first performed in New Zealand in Auckland in 1859.⁶ From the foundation of New Zealand as a British colony through to 1950, newspapers disclose well over 10,000 references to *Messiah*, just over 5000 for *Elijah* and nearly 4000 for *The Creation*. Most, though not all, relate to performances either of the complete works or of excerpts. To put this in perspective, references to the Bach St Matthew Passion across this period number fewer than 500.⁷

In the early years of the colony, excerpts from *The Creation* featured strongly in concert programmes. The scene is set by a concert 'before a numerous audience' late in 1853 in a schoolroom in Lyttleton (the busy port suburb of Christchurch). The programme followed what was then a standard template: a first half of sacred music (dominated by numbers from *Messiah*, *The Creation* and *Elijah*) followed by a selection of secular items. *The Lyttleton Times* reported:

The Concert commenced with the solo and recitative from Handel, beginning 'There were Shepherds,' sung by Miss King; the chorus being spiritedly taken up by the whole body. This was followed by Mr. Packer playing on the Cornet the air 'With Verdure clad,' from Haydn's *Creation* in a style of intonation enabling the hearers to follow the words of the air throughout. The chorus from the *Messiah*, 'Their sound is gone out' succeeded this, and was rendered with great accuracy. An alto solo from Mendelssohn's [sic.] 'Elijah' was then sung by Mr. McCardell after which the chorus, 'The last day,' composed by Whitaker, was given in full choir. . . Mr. Smeaton's solo on the violin, from Mozart, followed - then a trio from the 'Elijah,' which from the unequal voices of the singers appeared one of the least successful efforts of the evening. The 'Hallelujah' chorus completed the arrangement of the sacred pieces.

The secular portion of the music commenced with a piece on the piano-forte by Mr. Bilton . . . The concluding piece, 'God save the Queen,' was joined in most heartily by the greater part of the audience.⁸

4 Feder, Georg, and James Webster. "Haydn, (Franz) Joseph." Grove Music Online. 2001; Accessed 14 Dec. 2019. <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000044593>.

5 The German text is 'Denn er allein ist hoch erhaben'.

6 *New Zealander* XV (issue 1411) 26 October 1859; this, and all other quotations from 19th-century New Zealand newspapers, have been sourced from Papers Past (<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/>).

7 These statistics are based on a survey of references to these works in Papers Past. [see footnote 6].

8 *The Lyttleton Times* III (issue 156), 31 December 1853; sourced from Papers Past (<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/>).

The audience participation in a closing 'God Save the Queen' makes it startlingly clear that this was an English expatriate event. Tracking such concerts through the nineteenth century reinforces the sense of a community determined to hang on to a culture that they had grown up with on the other side of the world.

The fourth and last concert for 1856 presented by the Auckland Choral Society was in three parts: first, excerpts from *Elijah*, then excerpts from Mendelssohn's *St Paul*, and finally excerpts from *The Creation*. A review in the *Daily Southern Cross* was critical not just of performance standards, but of the work itself. This repeated the all-too-familiar complaints about Haydn's animal imitations (for which Handel's *Israel in Egypt* must take some responsibility) but went beyond this to compare *The Creation* unfavourably with *Messiah*:

At the risk of being charged with musical heresy, we must confess that it is not one of those compositions over the score of which we most delight to linger. It is a great work, beyond a doubt; nothing less could be expected from its author; but if tried after the severely beautiful 'Messiah', it falls by contrast, into a second class place among oratorios. Haydn himself was of too playful a temperament to rise to the level of such a subject. This is only too clearly shewn by one of the recitatives, in which he descends to imitative trivialities.⁹

The writer appeals here to a stereotype – the 'playful Haydn' – that is at odds with the sublimity and awe detected by Zelter. But it accords with a 19th-century narrative that sees Haydn as personifying an 18th-century detachment from serious matters. E. T. A. Hoffmann, in the article on 'Beethoven's Instrumental Music' referred to earlier, writes of Haydn's 'serene and childlike personality' whose symphonies evoke 'laughing children, peering out from behind the trees' who 'pelt one another playfully with flowers.'¹⁰ Not deterred, a year later, the Auckland Choral Society was again rehearsing the first two parts of *The Creation* (with the programme rounded out with sections of *Resurrection and Ascension* by George Elvey.¹¹) Orchestral parts had been ordered for this performance — but they failed to arrive in time. (The Society was gifted a set of parts in 1869 by Sir George Arney.¹²) These reviews, incidentally, are rich in information about the standard of choral singing in New Zealand at this time, much of it judged wanting in comparison to what the writers had left behind. A reviewer for the *Daily Southern Cross*, commenting in 1857 on the deficiencies in the Auckland Choral Society, wrote of 'Our anxiety to see grand compositions produced near to the style of the old country.'¹³

Performances of the entire work seem to have begun in the 1860s. In March 1864 the Dunedin Philharmonic Society announced that it would follow up a successful performance of *Messiah* with one of *The Creation*. A month or so later, the Auckland Philharmonic Society was busy rehearsing the oratorio. And in August of that year, the work was presented complete by the Nelson Harmonic Society. A review of this performance began with a complaint about van Swieten's translation:

In 1798 Haydn gave the world his oratorio 'The Creation,' the noblest of his works, although composed in his sixty-fifth year, and which ranks with the greatest musical works of our age. It is a pity that the text, which was originally written in German, is so badly translated. That at present in use is the first translation undertaken by Baron von Sweeten [sic.], and it is surprising that to this day no improvement has been attempted . . .

9 The Daily Southern Cross XIII (issue 974) 28 October 1856; sourced from Papers Past (<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/>).

10 Op. cit, p. 1194. It is Mozart, Hoffmann continues, who 'leads us into the heart of the spirit realm.'

11 Nicholas Temperley writes in The New Grove, 'Elvey's anthems, services and oratorios are long since forgotten; even when they were written they were half a century out of date, using an inflexibly Handelian style.' Temperley, Nicholas, and Bruce Carr. 'Elvey, Sir George.' Grove Music Online. 2001. Oxford University Press. Date of access 8 Dec. 2019, <<https://www-oxfordmusiconlinecom.helicon.vuw.ac.nz/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000008757>>

12 Daily Southern Cross XV (issue 3817) 12 November 1869;

13 Daily Southern Cross XIV (issue 1067), 18 September 1857; sourced from Papers Past (<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/>).

That was just the first of the reviewer's complaints (though, typically for the time, these are couched in patronising language):

The Harmonic Society is at present the only institute in Nelson whose aim is to cultivate the fine arts. A sharp critique of last night's performance of the 'Creation' must therefore not be expected from us. Taking into consideration the very limited means at the command of the Society, we do not hesitate to call this concert a successful one, although it has fully convinced us that the Harmonic Society over-estimates its powers by choosing such a difficult masterpiece as the 'Creation' for their concert. It is impossible that seven or eight instruments can do justice to Haydn's splendid orchestral music, in which the greatest beauties lie in the particularly nice balancing of the instrumental powers. This instrumental deficiency we chiefly observed in the strikingly beautiful recitative which serves as an introduction to the first part, and in the Hallelujah finale of the second part. The deficiency was unfortunately increased by one of the violins being out of tune. The choruses, without exception, were rendered very effectively; but we regret we cannot say the same of the solos. The gentleman in whose hands chiefly the bass parts were placed is gifted with a fine melodious voice, but, unfortunately, he spoils it by choking the notes to such a degree that it becomes painful to the audience . . .

The review concludes by more or less dismissing altogether the Society's brave venture: 'The audience was very large and fashionable, and we believe would have been better satisfied had the Society been less ambitious and made up its programme of popular glees and judicious operatic selections.'¹⁴ We should perhaps be alert to the fact that a 'fashionable' audience was unlikely to be a diverse audience. These performances existed for the colonial elite. At this distance, it would be difficult to document, but it would be surprising if Māori or even working-class Irish immigrants were anywhere to be seen.

Perhaps the taste of Christchurch audiences was more sophisticated. In August 1869, *The Press* reported:

The Town Hall was not only crowded last night, but densely packed, indeed hundreds had to go away unable to obtain admission to hear the performance by the Christchurch Musical Society of Haydn's magnificent oratorio, 'The Creation', which was rendered most creditably. In consequence of the large number of persons unable to gain admission the oratorio will be repeated on Monday evening.¹⁵

A year later, *The Auckland Star*, apparently oblivious to what was happening elsewhere in the country, wrote:

It is gratifying to all lovers of music in the city to learn that preparations are in progress for the rendering of this magnificent creation [sic.] of Haydn by the Choral Society. This is the first time that this has been attempted in Auckland, and if we do not mistake the first time in the Australasian colonies.¹⁶

The transition from miscellany programmes featuring numbers from *The Creation* alongside others from *Elijah* and *Messiah* to full performances of the work coincides with the first debates about Charles Darwin's *Origin of the Species* (1859) in New Zealand. The Anglican Bishop of Wellington, C. J. Abraham denounced Darwin in terms that indicate that he had completely failed to understand the principles of natural selection: 'Were it not for their supposed effect upon religion, no-one would waste his time in reading about the possibility of polar bears swimming about and catching flies so long that they at last get the fins they wish for.'¹⁷ Could the enthusiasm for Haydn's *Creation* in the mid-19th century related

14 This and the preceding quotations from *The Colonist* VII (issue 709), 12 August 1864; sourced from Papers Past (<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/>).

15 *The Press* XV (1987) 28 August 1869.

16 *The Auckland Star* I. 27 September 1870.

17 Quoted by Ronald L. Numbers and John Stenhouse, 'Antievolutionism in the Antipodes: From Protesting Evolution to Promoting Creationism in New Zealand', *The British Journal for the History of Science* 33 (2000), 336.

to its apparent endorsement of a creationist perspective? There is no evidence for this. Interestingly, however, the apparent rise in interest in *The Creation* — against the trend — in the 1920s coincides with a period of vigorous debate between evolutionists and creationists.¹⁸

More interesting is the coexistence of enthusiasm for *The Creation* with activities that seem diametrically opposed to the profound respect for nature at the heart of the oratorio. Whaling in New Zealand pre-dates by some decades the signing in 1840 of the Treaty of Waitangi (the founding document of New Zealand as a British colony) (see illus. 1). Māori, who were typically skilled seamen, became heavily involved in the industry. (Queequeg in Melville's *Moby Dick* is Polynesian.) In the first half of the nineteenth century nearly 100 whaling stations were established in New Zealand. How, one wonders, did audience members reconcile this very visible and cruel industry with the warmth (even, dare I say, the loving attitude) conveyed in Raphael's beautiful accompanied recitative:

And God created great whales
And every living creature that moveth
And God blessed them, saying
'Be fruitful all, and multiply!
Ye winged tribes be multiplied and sing on every tree!
Multiply, ye finny tribes, and fill each wat'ry deep!
Be fruitful, grow and multiply!
And in your God and Lord rejoice!¹⁹

Worse even than the ravages of whaling, a land completely 'clad with verdure' was stripped to create farmland or sometimes simply to make it more straightforward to extract timber being felled further inland. The first full performances of *The Creation* in the late 1860s took place against a backdrop of accelerating deforestation. As Catherine Knight points out, 'In the decades following 1870, a renewed assault on the forest began. Settlers pressed into uncolonised regions further inland, which were at that time largely forested. For these settlers, the priority was the clearing of land for conversion to pasture, and they did this not by milling, but by fire.'²⁰ The audience that overflowed the Christchurch Town Hall in 1869 could not have been unaware of this brutal devastation of the landscape. According to Thomas Potts MP (speaking in 1868), Banks Peninsula (just to the South of the city) had been 'covered, for weeks together, with thick and lurid smoke'.²¹

This observation was made during the first of two significant parliamentary debates about this destruction. Potts had presented a motion 'That it is desirable Government should take steps to ascertain the present condition of the forests of the Colony, with a view to their better conservation.' In introducing this, he pointed to the ecological damage inflicted by deforestation in other countries:

The mischievous results from the cutting down of forests in a wholesale manner had called for the attention of the Legislature of Victoria; and in America, where the settlers had been exceedingly wasteful of the wood, it had been suggested to the Government that they should make some reserves in perpetuity. Marsh, an American writer on physical geography as modified by human action, citing the effects of disforestation [sic.] on the French slopes of the Alps, and other localities, carefully points out the varied influence of the forests, as shelter, on temperature, on humidity, on floods, on the flow of springs and his arrangement of facts proves the removal of forests to be the primary cause of excessive inundations.²²

18 See Numbers and Stenhouse, 'Antievolutionism in the Antipodes', 341ff.

19 English text for No. 17 Recitative (Raphael).

20 Catherine Knight, 'The Paradox of Discourse Concerning Deforestation in New Zealand: A Historical Survey', *Environment and History* 15 (2009), 325.

21 Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) IV, p. 189 (7 October 1868); available through Historical Hansard <https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/hansard-debates/historical-hansard/#1854>. See also Paul Star, 'Potts, Thomas Henry', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, first published in 1993, updated November 2010, Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/2p27/potts-thomas-henry> (accessed 11 December 2019).

22 Ibid.

This seems prophetic. It is not about the Amazon; it is prompted by the treatment of New Zealand indigenous forests. The debate in Parliament, like climate change debates today, was turbulent, with one member threatening to move an amendment that would have replaced 'with a view to their better conservation' with 'with a view to their better destruction'.

Potts also quoted the Austrian geologist Ferdinand von Hochstetter (1829-1884), who had visited New Zealand from 1858 to 1860 on a research expedition:

... extensive districts within that range which formerly had been covered with Kauri woods, are now totally destitute of such; and the extermination of that noble tree progresses from year to year at such a rate that its final extinction is as certain as that of the natives of New Zealand. The European colonisation t[h]reatens the existence of both, and with the last of the Maoris the last of the Kauris will also disappear from the earth.²³

Parliament picked up the debate in 1873 again when the member for Thames, Charles O'Neill pleaded with his colleagues to act 'so that history might not be able to relate that they received a fertile country, but, by a criminal want of foresight, transmitted to posterity a desert.'²⁴

In 21st-century Aotearoa New Zealand, *Messiah* still gets at least annual performances in most major towns and cities ('For we like sheep'), *Elijah* has virtually fallen from view and presentations of *The Creation* are intermittent. The ideals embedded in this work seem to align beautifully with the ethos of contemporary New Zealand society, something that may be summed up in the Māori phrase 'He tangata/He whenua' ('People and the Land'). For that matter, *The Creation* is a work that speaks directly to those around the world who are aware of our obligations to protect and nurture the land. It is, of course, a celebration of the natural world that implicitly underlines humanity's responsibility for the natural world. In the concluding recitative Uriel voices a caution that our wellbeing will be threatened if Adam and Eve (us!) 'misled by false conceits . . . strive at more than granted is'. As performers and audience members we know that that is precisely what happened. And we also understand the urgency of remedial action, action that includes reforestation in New Zealand but that has implications for every community sending singers to the World Choir Games in Auckland. The text of the United Nations' Paris Agreement (2015) describes climate change as 'a common concern of mankind'. Haydn's *Creation* is an excellent way to reflect on the gap between a prelapsarian (pre-colonial, pre-industrial) world and the one in which we live, struggling to control and reverse anthropogenic climate change.

Peter Walls is an orchestral and choral conductor. As a musicologist, he has published widely on historical performance practice. He is Emeritus Professor of Music at Victoria University of Wellington.

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23 Ferdinand Hochstetter, *New Zealand: its physical geography, geology, and natural history* trans Edward Sauter (1867) p. 141 <http://www.enzb.auckland.ac.nz/document/?wid=441>

24 Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) XV, p. 188 (7 October 1873).

WORLD TOUR STOP 4 EUROPEAN CHOIR GAMES 2025 – AARHUS, DENMARK

by Henriette Brockmann (Germany)



SECOND STOP IN THE NORTH OF EUROPE - WELCOME TO DENMARK

Aarhus, located 190 km west of Denmark's capital city Copenhagen, is the second largest city in Denmark. Through its urban strategy focusing on accessibility and sustainability, Aarhus was named the third most sustainable city in the world. The European Choir Games & Grand Prix of Nations Aarhus 2025 perfectly fit into the city's calendar of cultural events.

Jacob Bundsgaard, Mayor of Aarhus says: "In Aarhus, we're proud of our international reputation as a great venue for major cultural events – so we're delighted to be able to welcome choral singers from all over the world. Music has a special magic: it brings us together and creates communities across cultures and across national borders. And we're already looking forward to enjoying the magic music brings to our own community right here in Aarhus."

Günter Titsch, President of INTERKULTUR, World Choir Games and World Choir Council is more than happy about this new perspective for choirs in Europe and beyond: "I'm sure that the announcement of the two next host cities of the European Choir Games & Grand Prix of Nations will give a great and much needed boost to the European and international choral scene. New motivation, new goals and a real planning security are important aspects that many choirs need at the moment, and that's exactly what the European Choir Games 2023 and 2025 will offer them. I cordially thank our partners in Norrköping and Aarhus for these opportunities and I'm already looking forward to a great cooperation and unforgettable choral events in 2023 and 2025."

"The European Choir Games along with the Concert Hall of Aarhus are going to create a unique union. Aarhus is a music city and this year it has the official title 'Music City Aarhus 2022'. I would like to reinforce the music, since it is part of the city's DNA. Besides, we know singing together is good for physical as well as mental wellbeing and the festival will unite Aarhus in singing. Therefore, I am looking very much forward to the European Choir Games in 2025," adds the Cultural Mayor of Aarhus Rabih Azad-Ahmad.

The Musikhuset, with its attached conservatory, will be the core of the event with many concerts, competitions, workshops and opportunities to meet and exchange with other choirs from around the world. It's an optimal venue in many respects with several stages, modern equipment and located right in the middle of the city.







April 9-13, 2022
**VOX LUCENSIS -
 CONCORSO CORALE
 INTERNAZIONALE**
 Lucca, Italy

September 22-26, 2022
**4TH KALAMATA
 INTERNATIONAL
 CHOIR COMPETITION
 AND FESTIVAL**
 Kalamata, Greece

INTERKULTUR EVENTS

APRIL

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

August 17-21, 2022
**2ND RIGA SINGS -
 INTERNATIONAL CHOIR
 COMPETITION &
 IMANTS KOKARS
 CHORAL AWARD**
 Riga, Latvia

September 1-4, 2022
**SING ALONG CONCERT
 BARCELONA**
 | Barcelona, Spain





October 5-9, 2022
**INTERNATIONALES
 CHORFEST MAGDEBURG**
 Magdeburg, Germany

October 21-23, 2022
**DEUTSCHE
 CHORMEISTERSCHAFT 2022**
 Koblenz, Germany

REVIEW 2022

OKTOBER

NOVEMBER

October 12-16, 2022
**SING FOR GOLD –
 THE WORLD CHORAL CUP**
 Calella & Barcelona,
 Catalonia (Spain)

Nov. 10-14, 2022 &
 Nov. 11-14, 2022
**LISBON SINGS &
 ON STAGE IN LISBON**
 Lisbon, Portugal

September 25-29, 2022
10TH ISOLA DEL SOLE
 Grado, Italy





EVENTS 2023

Choir Competitions, Festivals and Sing-Along Projects



04

7TH VIETNAM INTERNATIONAL CHOIR COMPETITION
April 2-6, 2023 | Hoi An, Vietnam



04

HULL INTERNATIONAL CHOIR COMPETITION
April 27 - May 1, 2023 | Hull, United Kingdom



05

VOX LUCENSIS
May 17-21, 2023 | Lucca, Italy



06

SOUND WAVES LINZ
June 7-11, 2023 | Linz, Austria



07

6TH INTERNATIONAL CONDUCTOR'S SEMINAR WERNIGERODE
July 1-4, 2023 | Wernigerode, Germany



07

12TH INTERNATIONAL JOHANNES BRAHMS CHOIR FESTIVAL AND COMPETITION
July 5-9, 2023 | Wernigerode, Germany



07

12TH WORLD CHOIR GAMES
July 3-13, 2023 | Gangneung/Gangwon, Republic of Korea



09

SING ALONG CONCERT BARCELONA
September 14-17, 2023 | Barcelona, Spain

FOR INDIVIDUAL SINGERS



09

4TH VOICES FOR PEACE
September 27 - October 1, 2023 | Perugia/Assisi, Italy



10

10TH CANTA AL MAR - FESTIVAL CORAL INTERNACIONAL
October 19-23, 2023 | Calella/Barcelona, Spain



10

5TH EUROPEAN CHOIR GAMES & GRAND PRIX OF NATIONS NORRKÖPING 2023
October 28 - November 5, 2023 | Norrköping, Sweden



11

LISBON SINGS
November 9-13, 2023 | Lisbon, Portugal



ON STAGE Festivals

BILBAO, SPAIN | June 22-25, 2023

LISBON, PORTUGAL | September 15-18, 2023

PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC | November 9-12, 2023

ON STAGE





EVENTS 2024

Choir Competitions, Festivals and Sing-Along Projects



01

3RD SING'N'PRAY KOBE – INTERNATIONAL CHOIR FESTIVAL & COMPETITION
January 25-29, 2024 | Kobe, Japan



03

ON STAGE IN ISRAEL
March 13-17, 2024 | Tel Aviv, Israel



03

VOX LUCENSIS
March 23-27, 2024 | Lucca, Italy



04

15TH INTERNATIONAL CHOIR COMPETITION AND FESTIVAL BAD ISCHL
April 27 - May 1, 2024 | Bad Ischl, Austria



07

13TH WORLD CHOIR GAMES
July 10-20, 2024 | Auckland, New Zealand



09

INTERNATIONALES CHORFEST MAGDEBURG
September 11-15, 2024 | Magdeburg, Germany



10

5TH KALAMATA INTERNATIONAL CHOIR COMPETITION AND FESTIVAL
October 10-14, 2024 | Kalamata, Greece



10

SING FOR GOLD – THE WORLD CHORAL CUP
October 24-28, 2024 | Calella & Barcelona, Catalonia (Spain)



11

3RD LISBON SINGS
November 7-11, 2024 | Lisbon, Portugal

MORE TO COME ...



OBITUARIES

ABEL GONZALES VALENZUELA (PERU)

*MEMBER OF THE
WORLD CHOIR COUNCIL
PASSED AWAY*

INTERKULTUR is mourning for Mr. Abel Gonzales Valenzuela, representative of Peru in the World Choir Council. He passed away in December 2021.

As a member of the INTERKULTUR World Choir Council, Abel Gonzales Valenzuela always supported the Choral Olympic movement and shared the idea of the World Choir Games in the choral communities throughout South America.





**World
Choir
Games**

**AUCKLAND 20
LAND 24**
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

**JULY 10-20, 2024
AUCKLAND,
NEW ZEALAND**

**Early Bird Registration:
September 20, 2023**

WCG2024.COM



JUNE 28 - JULY 6, 2025



AARHUS DENMARK

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INTERKULTUR - THE WORLD OF VOICES





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