

# Magazine

# COUNCIL TALK

THE CHORAL WORLD IN EXCHANGE

Welcome  
NEW members of  
the World Choir  
Council



THE CULTURAL PURITY AND INHERITED METAMORPHOSIS OF ETHNIC CHORUS  
THE EUROPEAN CHOIR GAMES & GRAND PRIX OF NATIONS ARE BACK!  
THE COUNTDOWN TO THE WORLD CHOIR GAMES 2023 HAS STARTED

SINGING  
TOGETHER  
BRINGS NATIONS  
TOGETHER



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**World  
Choir  
Games**

**AUCKLAND 20  
LAND 24**  
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

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



**European  
Choir Games**

**GRAND  
PRIX  
of Nations**

**JUNE 28 - JULY 6, 2025**



**AARHUS DENMARK**

**ECG2025.EU**

AN INTERKULTUR EVENT



**GÜNTER TITSCH, GERMANY**

**Dear colleagues, dear friends,**

The last few months have been marked by confidence and hope that the choral scenes of the world can return to normal after difficult months of restrictions.

The choirs of the world have returned to the stages and we could hear choirs singing again after months of silence and watch people following their passion.

We are very happy that the events of INTERKULTUR 2022 took place and we are very excited about what the events at the end of 2022 and especially our two big events in 2023, the World Choir Games 2023 in Gangneung, Republic of Korea and the European Choir Games and Grand Prix of Nations 2023 in Norrköping, Sweden have in store for us and the choirs.

Furthermore, I am extremely happy that we can welcome new members to the World Choir Council this year. I would like to express my gratitude to all new members, also on behalf of the World Choir Council Board, for accepting our invitation to become part of the World Choir Council. I am confident that through your expertise, the World Choir Council will keep growing and all members will be able to benefit from it.

The challenges of the world unfortunately remain with us in the coming months, but together we will all work with passion and energy to ensure that the challenges of the world are mastered, that choirs reclaim the stages of the world, and that our motto „Singing together brings nations together“ resounds around the globe.

In this context I wish you all the best, much strength and especially good health.

Yours sincerely,

**Günter Titsch**

President INTERKULTUR, World Choir Games & World Choir Council

# THE CULTURAL PURITY AND INHERITED METAMORPHOSIS OF ETHNIC CHORUS

by Prof. Yan Baolin

## HOW CAN WE DEFINE “FOLK CHORAL MUSIC”?

The so-called “folk choral music” refers to the choral compositions of professionals and amateur writers with national characteristics, through the corresponding ethical customs and languages, slowly developing and forming the group singing.

The smooth exchange of information in our modern society has made the exchange between the different choirs in the world more and more frequent, and the process of exchange will inevitably have mutual influence when spreading the culture.

Therefore, there will definitely be a contradiction between preserving the cultural purity and the development and transformation of the cultural heritage.

On 31 March 2022, I was invited to participate in the conference of the World Choir Council on the topic of current international choir exchange and cooperation. The keynote speaker, Professor Karen L. Grylls, as well as the other experts from different countries had a lively discussion on this topic. The purpose of this article is to find and analyse the contradictions and give suggestions on how to solve these contradictions in order to communicate, share and learn from them without friends in the conducting positions in different countries.

“National culture” is the amount of material and spiritual wealth with national characteristics that a particular nation has received in the course of history.

The folk choral music is based on the national culture, the choir is used as a carrier to reflect the level of life, history and development of the nation. The course of history has unconsciously influenced the position of each ethnic group in the social fabric by other ethnic groups. The advanced substitute of backwardness in human society seems to be the progress of civilization, but this unintentionally influences

and confuses the cultural purity of the so-called underdeveloped people. No matter if advanced or backwards, the so-called “pure”, first statement is spotless; the second is plain; the third really embodies the essence of things; and the fourth indicates the indisputable judgement.

Cultural purity usually refers to the third. Specific to the purity of folk choral music the most direct reflections and examples are the performances of folk choral music in the tourist attractions, as they can often be seen to have lost the cultural purity of the region.

The main goal of these performances is to attract tourists, so they must be shown at the level of the tourist’s preference and excitement. To truly understand the folk choirs of the nation, we must eliminate the elements of artificiality and performance and go deep into its folk life.

In the three years 2018 to 2021, I visited Yunnan Honghe Hani Autonomous County of the Yi, Guizhou Qiandongnan Autonomous County of the Miao and Dong and Sichuan Daliangshan Autonomous County of the Yi. Some of the tribes have no roads, blend in the middle of the mountains and receive board and lodging in villages of different ethnic minorities. The whole experience was very impressive.

For example I had the chance to discover, the details of daily life, labour production, heritage formation of different branches of Yi people such as: black Yi, white Yi, flower waist Yi, red Yi, Gan Yi, Micah, Axi Yi and so on, and to discover the differences from each other. Moreover, in the later sample of “Ajielu”, “AXie Jumping Moon”, “Kagubo” and other Yi works, there is a relatively accurate direction according to language, sound type, musicality, accompanying instruments and even the performance actions. When the purity of culture is reflected in the detail, it is not difficult to find that it is so concrete and real.



The reasons for the influence on the purity of folk choral music as viewed in the ethnological research of Chinese folk choral music are mainly:

- 1.The influences of social factors in different historical periods have led to a rupture in the heritage of national culture, resulting in the incompleteness of the heritage of folk choral music.
- 2.The changes in aesthetic orientation and development-concepts have greatly reduced the objective practicability of folk choral music.
3. The minority culture has been influenced by "Sinicization" (a process whereby non-Han Chinese societies come under the influence of dominant Han Chinese state and society), as the heritage of folk choral music has added the elements of Han nationality and the purity has also been affected.
- 4.The lack of folk art successors makes it difficult to have the characteristic of folk chorus music again.
- 5.the development of folk chorus music has been stranded for lack of finance, while the original ecology has been lost.
- 6.with the development of media, folk choral heritage has been greatly influenced by foreign cultures, gradually losing its characteristic.
- 7.The participating creators rewrite with subjective ideas, which influenced the purity of the original performance.
- 8.The ease of transportation, frequent communication and blind pursuit of fashion have affected the quality of folk choral music.

In China, no matter in Jingning area of Zhejiang province of Yi where I am ,or far away from our Yunnan ,Guizhou, Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Tibet and so on, in many direct or indirect exchanges, there will always be the problem of the relentless influence of modern civilization on traditional culture, young people do not want to learn the traditional chant of their own people and want to engage in modern society. As the memory and physical strength of the elderly deteriorated, many customs such as marriage, funeral, sacrifice and work gradually disappeared. Even the traditional culture of Han nationality has the urgent problem of how to protect it. Therefore, how to preserve it is a much more urgent issue than the mere problem of folk choral music. Recently, the traditional art in Jiashan area of Zhejiang province lost its last heir of Xuanjuan. We set up appointments for an interview several times, unfortunately, he finally died of old age. In fact, the departure of a folk artist is not only the end of life, but also the disappearance of culture and art. The whole world has the same dilemmas, including Māori music which Professor Karen talked about, This is the next topic I would like to talk about.



## THE HERITAGE AND TRANSFORMATION OF FOLK CHORAL MUSIC.

In the conference, the participant Mr. Kymin Kim, the Korean guest, said that the heritage of folk choral music is not a simple imitation. I find this is true, many heritages of folk choral music are represented by external imitations, as if the loss of formal imitation becomes the pure disappearance, but the purity of folk choral music is to reflect the essence of things. Imitation is not the development of inheritance. Traditional folk choral music has originality and development. The former pays attention to the pure protection in development, and the latter pays attention to the breakthrough of inheritance and transformation. The so-called development inheritance is the change process of things from small to large, from simple to complex, from low to high, from old to new.

The development inheritance of folk choral music is to be improved and perfected on the basis of accepting traditions. The transformation in inheritance is a qualitative leap, it is not the true disappearance. Just like the metamorphosis butterfly, it gives a new meaning to ontology both in form and content and then has a wider field of vision and popularity.

Reality tells us, the contradiction between the cultural protection of folk choral music and the transformation of heritage has become the manipulated interests check and balance; maintaining the purity of folk choral music and cultural innovation, which are two very different value orientations, has led to controversies over protection measures; the protection of so-called advanced cultures and the protection of cultural diversity, the two currents of thought have created a difference between the objects of protection, and disputes over cultural value orientations. The distribution of income between organizers and local ethnic groups is very unbalanced, leading to a distorted inheritance of traditional culture. The above problems are the focus of balance and consideration, in the cultural protection of folk choral music, It is also the focus to rescue the legal protection of intangible cultural heritage from its predicament today. As a result, on June 1st 2011 the Law of the People's Republic of China on Intangible Cultural Heritage Article 2 of Chapter I was implemented and states:

Intangible cultural heritage refers to the various traditional cultural expressions that have been passed down from generation to generation of peoples, as well as objects and places related to traditional cultural expressions. The contents on folk choral music are:

1. traditional oral literature and the language that serves as a vehicle;
2. traditional art, calligraphy, music, dance, theatre, music and acrobatics;
3. traditional rituals, festivals and folk customs.

Whether the national cultural protection consciousness is formed by law, theory or social consensus, the ultimate value of its meaning should be implemented in behavior. Through unremitting efforts, Chinese choral colleagues have made great progress and the overall improvement of choral ecology in recent decades. The heritage of folk choral music is based on respect. It is difficult to get the accurate information without in-depth civil research; without forward-looking awareness and international training and exchanges, there can be no open and fair communication; without full devotion to rehearsals, there is no folk choral music that shows full cultural self-awareness. I have been to villages those of different ethnic groups to collect materials and have also argued with many composers and discussed the combination of national consciousness and advanced knowledge.

Additionally I have participated in many exchanges in France (2000), Italy (2007), Spain (2012/2017), USA (2012-2015) and other countries, have learned the advanced choral creation and rehearsal techniques.

The choir "Eight Seconds" which I founded in 2009 won the highest prizes at the 8<sup>th</sup> Gold Award Chinese Music Festival and the champion of Youth Mixed Choirs Group of 7<sup>th</sup> World Choir Games (Cincinnati) and the second gold medal of Folk Song Group and Women's Vocal Group. Winning a competition is not the meaning of "Eight Seconds" from singing the outstanding works of the world to that of the a cappella choir of different ethnic groups from China, about absorbing the advanced creative techniques and rehearsal techniques of the world, developing





and inheriting Chinese folk choral music, so that more people around the world can understand and realize the culture and meaning of different ethnic groups in China. Therefore, after completing the heavy teaching tasks, the „Eight Seconds“ Choir held a large number of public welfare concerts, In 2016 alone, 24 a cappella concerts for Chinese national choral tours were held all over the country. According to the needs of the work, the bel canto, ethnic, popular, original ecology, opera and other singing methods will try to combine. By combining the Chinese national musical instruments of bamboo flute, erhu and choral music, combining the flower cave technique of bel canto, various original singing techniques and the fugue and songless songs breaking the traditional recognition of folk choral music. The Vice President of China Musicians Association Mr. Lu Zaiyi, a famous composer known for his rigour, After watching choral concerts of 'Eight Seconds' four times, he wrote: "In terms of musical works, 'national' must also be combined with advanced ideas and scientific writing techniques to become truly 'international'. In this sense, 'Eight Seconds' has done very well." 'Eight Seconds' is an innovation that has emerged from the fast-growing choral career in China; 'Eight Seconds' is a brand that many people have worked hard and committed to; 'Eight Seconds' is a miracle, with constant changes of members, it can always maintain a high singing level and constantly add new songs, how many secrets and experiences are worth exploring.

"Mr. Meng Weidong, President of CHORUS-CHINA and composer, said, "Singing 'Eight Seconds' makes every work appear national self-confidence and national spirit. No matter the creative method or expression form, the international forward-looking consciousness of 'Eight Seconds' has been realized in the multi-ethnic choir of "make foreign things serve China" with time." On November 2018 Mr. Günter Titsch the President INTERKLTUR and Ms. Wang Qin the first Vice President INTERKLTUR said excitedly after watching the special performance of "Eight Seconds" in Yuxi again: "You are a top group not only in China but also in the whole world, congratulations! I still remember the

situation when the World Champions Trophy 2012 was awarded to Mr. Yan Baolin, I am very proud of our team, although the students are constantly changing, they are still in a very good condition, thank you Mr. Yan, thank you! "The compliment of experts and its importance, the inheritance and development of folk choral music needs encouragement and support, and it is also important to take and realize social responsibility. This is a great project of global cultural sharing, both hard and happy, whether I am rehearsing special works of a certain nation or making research monographs and writing and publishing more than a million words, it is always fun because of love.

#### **EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES AND SUGGESTIONS**

Only through the process of protecting, inheriting and innovating the infiltration of national culture in the chorus, can we truly appreciate the significance and value of its confusion and perseverance. My experience is only a reference:

##### **1. THE CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF FOLK CHORAL MUSIC IS BASED ON THE PROTECTION OF TRADITIONAL CULTURE.**

What is touched is deeply carried out, Only when we love the traditional culture of the nation from the bottom of our hearts, can we protect the heritage of innovation. Research institutions observe in detail, and the measures are implemented. No mere imitation, but a promotion of the spirit. The national culture is diverse, choose a suitable form for choral performance, observe and discuss the selected quintessence, for the quintessence of culture on the verge of extinction, stand to suppress the strong and support the weak.

##### **2. THE INFILTRATION OF NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN HARMONY**

When we found the longitudinal and lateral connections from different chords, using the acoustic dynamics for harmony training in folk choral music, it is the best record of different harmonic thinking trajectories. There are many types of modern music which are from the



twentieth century, the corresponding creative method of chorus is even more ingenious. When rehearsing the contemporary choral works, especially works with distinct national characteristics the training is carried out in long-distance transposition, polytonal, atonal and pentatonic sequence music in harmonic connection. Touching on modern choral concepts and expanding the different singing range of folk choral music the chorus members have a positive meaning. While the conductor grasps this key link, often needs to create a practice song that suits the abilities of his team and the national harmony that has targeted improvement value, it is even possible to directly reduce, expand or cut out the harmonic connections in the national choral works to be rehearsed to improve the double effectiveness of singing practice and rehearsal. For length reasons, it will not be further detailed.

### 3. THE LINGUISTIC PERSONALITY OF FOLK CHORAL MUSIC.

Language plays a great role in shaping the style in choral music. When the choir „Eight Seconds“ sings choral works from different regions and nationalities, it always tries to sing in the mother tongue or local dialect of that ethnic group. In the inheritance, the strong implementation and innovative ideas are summarized. Respect to culture involves cultural restoration, some people may only live under the influence of their own national culture and do not really understand the core and social value of their own culture. The growth experience will arouse its awareness of culture protection and propaganda force, refining the essence of a national culture is a direct embodiment of respect for the national culture. Actively interpret and convey the cultural spirit in the form of a group chorus in the nation’s mother tongue and drive the whole society to protect and publicize the national culture of the region.

### 4. NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS RUNS THROUGH THE CHOIR REHEARSALS.

The main ethnic of Han in China is most imitated by the intervals of pure four, pure five and pure eight; the folk choral music is imitated on the various tones of the homotaurine system. When rehearsing, pay attention to the pitch of the first tone when each imitation part goes in. In the singing exercises, the choir “Eight Seconds” imitates the theme materials of various works in 24 major and minor keys to solve this problem. Specific steps:

- (1) Pentatonic preliminary exercise.
- (2) Pentatonic vertical and harmonic chord exercises.
- (3) Longitudinal exercise of pentatonic chords
  1. Additional tone change
  2. Chord compound type, it has laid a good foundation for the interpretation and dissemination of various ethnic choral works.

### 5. THE INFILTRATION OF FOLK CHORAL MUSIC IN TEACHING.

The choral conducting students, whether they are in their bachelor or master studies need to fulfill the following requirements on the mid-term or final concerts: the first half consists of classical repertoire of early, renaissance, baroque, classical, romantic and modern songs, the second half of the repertoire must be based on the ancient and modern ,Chinese and foreign folk choral music, present the various styles and forms in folk choral music and in the composing, reworking, performing of which the conductor has participated, show the overall creation, extension ability and learning results in the learning process. Seizing education in the heritage of folk choral music seizes the future of development.

### 6. INNOVATION IN THE HERITAGE OF FOLK MUSIC

(1) A new method to disseminate the cultural folk choral music. Based on the new media situation, we explore new ways of inheriting the folk choral music, it is conducive to the inheritance of folk choral music. For example, live broadcasting, artificial intelligence and so on to show the cultural essence of folk choral music, through the experience and interaction of new technologies, we can realize the dissemination of national culture and choir through new media.

(2) To protect and preserve the ancient traditional folk choral music, digital technologies such as digital collection, processing and storage are used to:

- transform and restore the cultural heritage into renewable, searchable and shareable digital forms,
- preserve and interpret in new perspectives, the original form of folk choral music. “Digitalization” helps to achieve the purpose of high timeliness, temporal and spatial convenience and the purity and accuracy of regional cultural transmission in protecting the choral heritage.



- let contemporary scientific research and new technologies play a role in the cultural protection and inheritance of folk choral music, improve the sense of reality and controllability, can greatly reduce the probability of inheritance errors while improving efficiency.

## 7. THE EXCHANGE OF DIFFERENT FOLK CHORUS MUSIC.

(1) Sending out your country's folk choral music: with 56 ethnic groups, Chinese folk choral music has abundant repertoire, in the important international art festival, through exquisite order and rational layout, the choral style and characteristics of different parts of China are displayed on the international stage in the form of Special Folk Music Concerts, Competitions, Symposiums, Academic Lectures, Workshops, etc.

(2) Bringing the folk choral music to other Countries in its pure form: The folk choral music of all nationalities in the five continents of the world has distinct personalities, through different singing techniques and language knowledge from other countries. By learning them, you can experience different choral cultures. In the process of exchange, the historical context of international development and cultural integration is expanded and sorted out, and this international connection makes the folk choral music of an extended expansion and deeper exploration value. The final performance and appearance of the research must be achieved by the choir team. Adapting to multi-ethnic cultures and multidimensional ethnic styles is a new ability that conductors of different countries should have in the new situation for the choir members, it is also a new instruction that time has given to the choir performance. The scholar should take social responsibility, the society needs a fair evaluation agency, In every historical moment, there are always two ways: „to go forward for growth and to stay back for safety“. For the folk music, no matter composing or singing, only when the pioneers are based on local diversification and multidimensionality, can they truly realize the sharing of resources of all ethnic cultures around the world. Gather the talents of the world and bring together the wisdom of the sages of all countries, it is the social and historical responsibility of choral workers of the world over to accurately understand and actively promote the context and vitality of folk choral music of different countries.



### **PROF. YAN BAOLIN (China)**

- Professor of Zhejiang Conservatory of Music
- National first-class conductor
- Vice president of CHORUS-CHINA





**World  
Choir  
Games**



**2023**  
**Gangneung**  
Republic of Korea

7/3-13, 2023

# 1 YEAR GLOBAL COUNTDOWN EVENTS

**for the 12<sup>th</sup> World Choir Games  
Gangneung, Republic of Korea**

**July 03, 2022:** World Peace Singers - 2<sup>nd</sup> Peace Concert 2022  
(INTERKULTUR TV, YouTube...)

**July 04, 2022:** Countdown Events live in Gangneung  
Press Conference at Lakai Sandpine Resort  
Celebration Ceremony at Gyeongpo Beach

**July 08, 2022:** Talk show: Greetings to Gangneung  
(Tencent Meeting...)

**July 10, 2022:** Hello Korea (YouTube...)

**July 13, 2022:** Friendship Concert in partner city -  
Celebration of the 30 year Diplomatic  
Relationship between China and  
the Republic of Korea  
(YouTube, Facebook, WeChat...)

**WCG2023.COM**

AN  INTERKULTUR EVENT



# THE COUNTDOWN TO THE NEXT WORLD CHOIR GAMES HAS STARTED

*by Henriette Brockmann and Nicolas-Constantin Gliese*

**Host city Gangneung celebrates huge Countdown Event with international guests from politics and the arts and music community**

The **WORLD CHOIR GAMES 2023** host city Gangneung in South Korea and INTERKULTUR, the founding organization of the event have launched the 1-Year Countdown to the event on July 4, 2022 with a festive Celebration at the Lakai Sandpine Resort and the Gyeongpo Beach in Gangneung and international Celebration Activities for choral music lovers.

As part of the Celebration Ceremony, the flag of the World Choir Games was officially handed over to Hong-gyu Kim, Mayor of Gangneung by Mr. François Bontemps, Ambassador to Belgium in the Republic of Korea, as representative of the previous host country Belgium, together with INTERKULTUR Vice President Stefan Bohländer.

Further, the Choral Olympic Flame was lit, and the World Choir Games Countdown Clock, which will now be installed at a main tourist spot in the city, where it will be counting down the days until the official Opening Ceremony of the 12<sup>th</sup> World Choir Games on July 3, 2023.

During the ceremony, **Günter Titsch, President of INTERKULTUR, the World Choir Games and World Choir Council** expressed his warm thanks to the partners for the good collaboration and encouraged choirs from all over the world to join the event in Gangneung to send a sign for peace and mutual understanding to the rest of the world:

*“The region of Gangwon and the city of Gangneung are - also because of their experience in hosting the 2018 Winter Olympics - an ideal place to bring people from all over the world together and to make the unifying power of choral music a strong international symbol of peace.”*





The **President of the World Choir Games 2023 National Organizing Committee, Mr Yongsoo Huh** is looking forward to the event with much confidence:

*“The World Choir Games, the largest choral competition in the world, will enhance Korea’s global image as a cultural powerhouse and promote the further development of worldwide choral culture and music.”*

For the countdown event period from July 3-13, there are numerous activities were offered and carried out to increase anticipation for the event globally, and to celebrate international choral music as a wonderful gift to all lovers of choral music in the world: from a global Peace Concert to a cordial Friendship Concert with Gangneung’s Partner City and warm greetings from the whole world to Gangneung, looking forward to a great celebration in the summer of 2023.

The official registration period for the World Choir Games ends on **DECEMBER 7, 2022**

All details about participation and registration for the 12<sup>th</sup> World Choir Games Gangneung 2023 is available on the official event website: [WWW.WCG2023.COM](http://WWW.WCG2023.COM).





**WORLD PEACE SINGERS**  
**PEACE CONCERT ON COUNTDOWN**  
 to the 12<sup>th</sup> World Choir Games Gangneung, Republic of Korea

**JULY 3-13, 2023**

Artistic Director: Fred Sjöberg (Sweden)  
 Participating choirs and conductors:

- The Salt Lake Vocal Artists – Conductor: **Dr. Brady R. Allred** (USA)
- Tuks Camerata – University of Pretoria  
 Conductor: **Dr. Michael Barrett-Berg** (South Africa)
- Siparantum Choir – Conductor: **Memli Kelmendi** (Kosovo)
- JMR1MS Boys Choir – Conductor: **Romāns Vanags** (Latvia)
- Ss. Cyril & Methodios Choir of Thessaloniki, Greece  
 Conductor: **Dr. Maria-Emma Meligopoulou** (Greece)
- Schola Cantorum de Venezuela – Conductor: **Maria Guinand** (Venezuela)
- Camarata Chamber Singers – Conductor: **Dr. Ryan Goessel** (Republic of Korea)

**JULY 3, 2022 – 14:00 CEST**  
 (INTERKULTUR TV, YouTube...)

**WCG2023.COM**

AN INTERKULTUR EVENT

## “WORLD PEACE SINGERS” – PEACE CONCERT

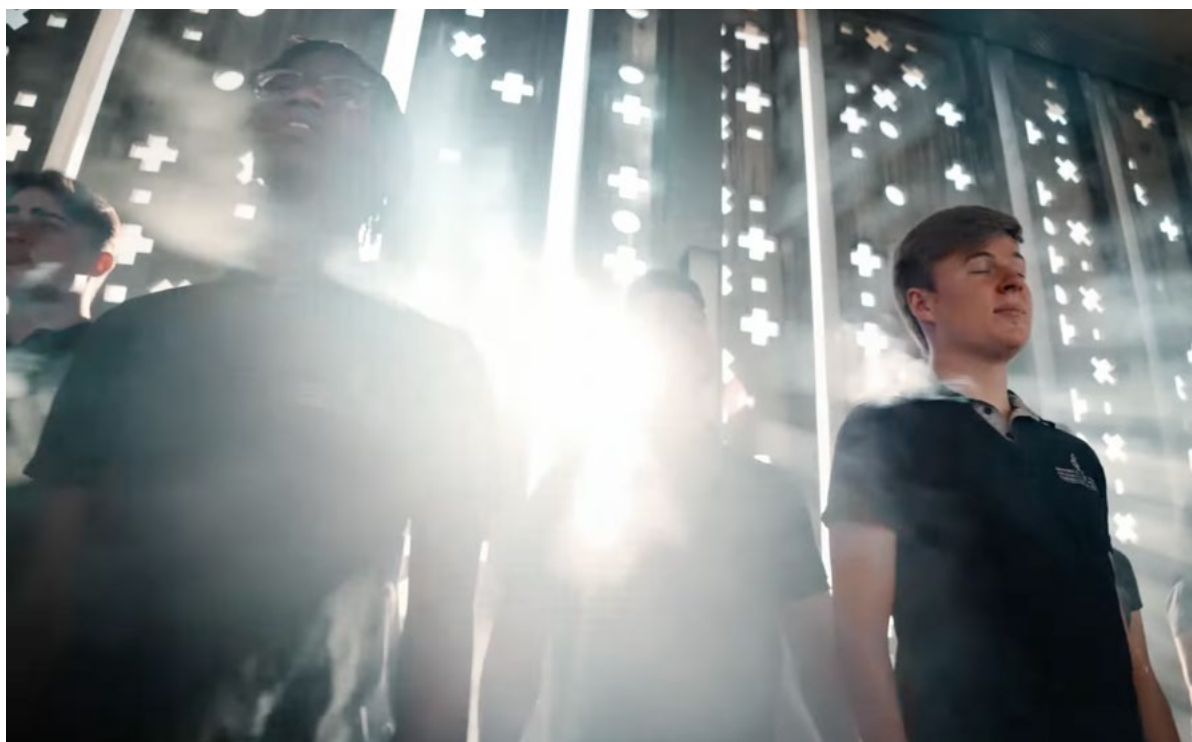
### INTERNATIONAL ONLINE EVENT

The countdown days have started with a “World Peace Singers” Peace Concert; an online concert with great contributions from 6 top choirs around the world. Watch it on [INTERKULTUR TV](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#) and other international media channels.



Dr. Michael Barrett-Berg (South Africa), Maria Guinand (Venezuela), Memli Kelmendi (Kosovo), Dr. Maria-Emma Meligopoulou (Greece), Brady Allred (USA), Dr. Ryan Goessel (USA/Republic of Korea) and Romāns Vanags (Latvia) have participated in this project with their choirs, arranging beautiful songs and videos. The Artistic Director of the Peace Concert is Fred Sjöberg, Artistic Director of INTERKULTUR and Vice President of the World Choir Council.

This concert is a journey through the different continents to find the different approaches in music in connection with peace.







**WORLD CHOIR GAMES** | **2023 Gangneung Republic of Korea**

**JULY 3-13, 2023**

# FRIENDSHIP CONCERT IN PARTNER CITY

for the 12<sup>th</sup> World Choir Games Gangneung, Republic of Korea

Celebration of the 30 year Diplomatic Relationship between China and Republic of Korea

**JULY 13, 2022**  
 08:00 CST | 09:00 KST | 14:00 CEST  
 (YouTube, Facebook, WeChat...)

**WCG2023.COM** | AN INTERKULTUR EVENT

## “PARTNER CITY FRIENDSHIP CONCERT”

INTERNATIONAL ONLINE EVENT WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON SOUTH KOREA AND CHINA

The 1-Year Countdown to the 12<sup>th</sup> World Choir Games Gangneung 2023 has coincided with the celebrations of the 30-year Diplomatic Relationship between China and Republic of Korea. A Friendship Concert between Gangneung and its Chinese partner city Jia Xing has taken place on this occasion. It was published on the different Social Media accounts in China, like the World Choir Games WeChat channels, INTERKULTUR.TV and other international media channels.

## TALKSHOW “GREETINGS TO GANGNEUNG”

ONLINE EVENT FOR CHINESE SPEAKING CHOIRS AND CONDUCTORS

This live meeting with World Choir Games Champion Choirs, conductors and international jurors was hosted by INTERKULTUR China via Tencent meeting. It happened as a live event in Chinese, and a recording is being displayed on the World Choir Games WeChat and international media channels.




**WORLD CHOIR GAMES** | **2023 Gangneung Republic of Korea**

**JULY 8, 2022**  
 20:00 CST

**Wu Lingfen**  
Member of the World Choir Council

**Meng Dapeng**  
Member of the World Choir Council

**Xie Mingjing**  
Guangdong Experimental Middle School Choir

**Diao Zhijun**  
Guangzhou Little Petrel Children's Choir

**Meng Chaomei**  
Student Choir of Nankai University

**Guo Xiaoming**  
Hunan Zhiming Art Troupe

**Iris Huting**  
MC&Project Director

Platform: Tencent Meeting

**GREETINGS TO GANGNEUNG TALK SHOW**

AN INTERKULTUR EVENT

# UNITE FOR PEACE! SINGING TOGETHER BRINGS NATIONS TOGETHER

*CHOIRS, CONDUCTORS AND COMPOSERS  
ARE SENDING MESSAGES FOR PEACE OUT INTO THE WORLD THIS YEAR*

In times of global challenges of climatic, economic and political unrest, there is hardly a better time to reflect on the truly important things in life and set a sign for world peace. Composers of all epochs as well as contemporary artists have been making the desire for peace as subject of their music. No matter, whether choral, traditional peace songs or arrangements for choirs – singing for peace has always been an integral part of the international choral scene.

In 2022, singing for peace has, unfortunately, once more become an important and necessary way to express hope and solidarity with the victims of war. People from all over the world are coming together to express their desire for peace among all the peoples in the world.

INTERKULTUR has dedicated a series of different activities in this year to the promotion and support of interactions in the international choral scene that seek peace, friendship, cooperation and development between choirs and musicians from different countries.

The **first [Peace Concert 2022](#)** was released on March 14 as a symbol of unity, brotherhood and understanding. Especially in these difficult times, music warms the heart and brings hope and light to the people. The series was continued with a **second [Peace Concert](#)** on July 3, 2022. In both concerts, choristers, conductors, and composers from all over the world shared their messages and songs to set a sign for a better world that lives in peace and harmony. We thank everyone for their participation!



## BRANKO STARK (Croatia)

Member of the Advisory Board  
of the World Choir Council

Further, our friend and member of the World Choir Council, **BRANKO STARK** shared with us his new piece “**Et In Terra Pax**”. As he explained to us, he felt the need to write this song when the new war broke out in Europe: “My ‘weapon’ is music, with which I fight for peace by composing works for peace. I did that 30 years ago, and I have done that now. This is the reason why this song came into being. It is my inner cry and an appeal to people to preserve peace.” The song is written for mixed choir a cappella, the text is taken from the Gloria and is both secular and sacred. “These four words say it all. In the score there are translations of the text into 35 languages so that it can be understood by almost everyone. At the same time, the enumeration of so many languages is also meant to be a symbol of the unity of people from the most diverse cultures - despite language barriers, the call for peace is the same”, Branko further told us. Choirs from Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Africa and Europe have already started to work on the piece and perform it in their concerts, and are thus following perfectly the intention that the composer had with this piece: “It was very important to me to show the people in Ukraine that they have not been forgotten and to give them new courage through such a small musical gift. Because singing together connects, strengthens and creates optimism. I would be very happy and extremely grateful if my colleagues from the World Choir Council Council would be helpful in spreading this piece and forward it to choirs and choir directors who can reach them.”



If you’re looking for new repertoire to dedicate a choir performance to peace in these days, we can also share some recommendations from our Ukrainian representative in the World Choir Council, **Anzhela Maslennikova**. You can download the scores and some audio samples [here](#).

Further, the **Choral Society of Ukraine** shared a few suggestions on repertoire by Ukrainian composers they would recommend, too, and made the scores for these pieces available for everyone in this [dropbox folder](#).

And even our Honorary **Artistic President John Rutter** composed a new piece called “Prayer for Ukraine” earlier this year. You can find every information about the piece [here](#). The music will be provided by John Rutter and his team free of charge to everybody who asks for it.

**We hope these sources are helpful for your upcoming choir projects dedicated to Songs for Peace. Let’s sing together for peace and harmony and let’s all stand together to make the world a better place!**

**Et in terra pax**  
And On Earth Peace  
MMXXII  
Branko Stark

*f* 54  
Et in ter-ra pax, et in ter-ra pax ho - mi-ni-bus bo-nae vo-lun - ta - tis,

FOR EVERYBODY, WHO WANTS TO JOIN BRANKO STARK’S MISSION OF SPREADING “ET IN TERRA PAX” THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, THE SHEET MUSIC IS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD [HERE](#).

[Click here](#)

# PROJECTS

## 2022 / 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 1/2023:** Publishing: January 31, 2023 (Closing date for articles: November 30, 2022)

**Issue 2/2023:** Publishing: September 30, 2023 (Closing date for articles: June 30, 2022)

**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.

### 2<sup>ND</sup> MEETING 2022: PRELIMINARY

**November 17, 2022:** Meeting Asia/Pacific/Middle East virtual via ZOOM and live Event in Hainan, China

**November 17, 2022:** Meeting North/Central/South America

**November 18, 2022:** Meeting Africa/Europe

*Stay tuned for what's coming up for you.*

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

**JULY 07-09, 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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.**

### MUSICA MUNDI ACADEMY SPECIAL

#### HELLO COUNCIL – CHINA | PACIFIC

VIRTUAL LIVE TALKS – CONNECTING THE CHORAL WORLD

China: November 11, 2022 | 2023: 2-4 Editions - Dates: TBA

Pacific: First edition: December 9, 2022 | 2023: TBA

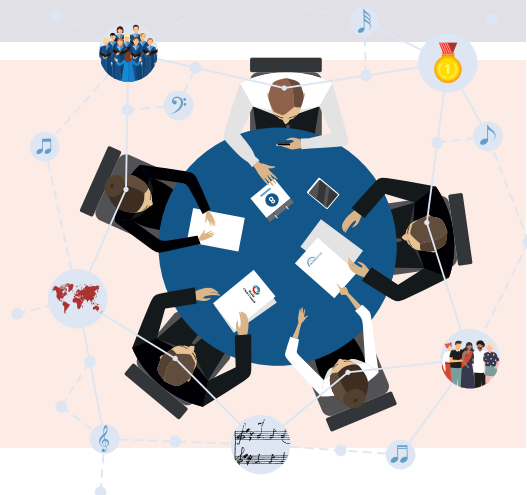
#### WORLD PEACE SINGERS – NEW YEAR & PEACE CONCERT 2023

Conducted by Johan Rooze (Netherlands)

January 01, 2023

#### WORLD PEACE SINGERS – PEACE CONCERT 2023

during 12<sup>th</sup> World Choir Games 2023 in Gangneung (Republic of Korea)



\*Dates might subject to change.

World Choir Council c/o INTERKULTUR  
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**interkultur.com**



# EVENTS 2023

## Choir Competitions, Festivals and Sing-Along Projects



**04** 7<sup>TH</sup> VIETNAM INTERNATIONAL CHOIR COMPETITION  
April 2-6, 2023 | Hoi An, Vietnam



**04** SING ALONG CONCERT "ON TOUR" MILAN  
April 20-23, 2023 | Milan, Italy **FOR INDIVIDUAL SINGERS**



**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** 6<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONDUCTOR'S SEMINAR WERNIGERODE  
July 1-4, 2023 | Wernigerode, Germany



**07** 12<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL JOHANNES BRAHMS CHOIR FESTIVAL AND COMPETITION  
July 5-9, 2023 | Wernigerode, Germany



**07** 12<sup>TH</sup> 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** 4<sup>TH</sup> VOICES FOR PEACE  
September 27 - October 1, 2023 | Perugia/Assisi, Italy



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



**10** 5<sup>TH</sup> 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



# 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 and voluntary international advisory body of INTERKULTUR.*

*INTERKULTUR and the World Choir Council are very proud to present 15 new members from 15 countries for the World Choir Council. These new members represent their country 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 all new members to you:*



### ANTOANETA RADOCAJ-JERKOVIC CROATIA - EUROPE

- conductor, singer and university professor of choir, choral conducting and music pedagogy at the Academy of Arts and Culture, University in Osijek.
- Antoaneta Radocaj-Jerkovic holds three MA in choral conducting, singing and music pedagogy from Universities in Croatia and Hungary, and doctorate in (choral) pedagogy.
- She perfected her conducting in Germany, Hungary and in the USA
- Artistic director and conductor of several choirs (Vocal ensemble Brevis (female), University choir of the Academy of Arts and Culture (mixed), Children Choir Osjecki Zumbici.
- She has won over thirty awards for her artistic work at national and international choir competitions.
- Antoaneta Radocaj-Jerkovic published scientific papers on music pedagogy and choral singing both in the country and abroad and has published two books about choral singing.
- She is a member of national and international panels at choral music competitions.

## MARIETTE WILSON FRANCE - EUROPE

- At the age of 17 Mariette Wilson joined her first choir in Saint-Étienne, France, under the direction of Jean-Baptiste Bertrand, with whom she quickly took her first steps as assistant conductor. Her musical studies led her to Paris, where she studied musicology at La Sorbonne, voice with Sophie Marin-Degor, and choral conducting at the Conservatoire d'Aubervilliers-La Courneuve with Catherine Simonpietri.
- Mariette Wilson then moved across the ocean to Florida, USA, where she further studied choral conducting with Dr. Richard Zielinski and Dr. Robert Summer, and voice with Prof. Annetta Monroe. After obtaining a Master's degree in choral conducting and vocal performance, she returned to France, in Lyon, where she has since been conducting a variety of choirs and continued deepening her understanding of vocal technique.
- In 2012 she created Les Chantiers Musicaux, a school of music based in Lyon, where she teaches vocal technique for adults, with her personal approach, that combines her American experience and her practice of yoga, where singing is not only a musical action but also an expression of the whole being.



- Ms. Wilson's philosophy also includes using music as a means for service, and she has been developing various social projects to create bonding between populations that are otherwise separate, by teaching and performing with her groups in prisons, homeless shelters, retirement homes, medical centers for the blind or disabled people.
- She is regularly called upon to teach voice workshops with various choirs in the region, where she also performs as a soprano solo.
- Mariette Wilson was a member of the international jury at the 2021 World Choir Games.
- She recently started working at the Lyon auditorium where she gives voice workshops for the general public.

## DONKA MITEVA GERMANY - EUROPE

- Studied choral conducting at the State Academy of Music in Sofia (Bulgaria) and orchestra conducting at the Robert Schumann Hochschule in Düsseldorf (Germany)
- From 2007-2011 conductor and Choir Director at the Staatsoper Münster (Germany)
- Since 2011 Artistic Director and conductor of Collegium Musicum Berlin at the Free and Technical Universities in Berlin
- Recipient of several conducting prizes in Münster in 2011 and St. Petersburg in 2013





**MICHAEL DAWSON**  
IRELAND - EUROPE

- Michael is founder and CEO of the Irish Institute of Music & Song
- He is Artistic Director of the Fingal International Festival of Voices
- Conductor of the National University of Ireland, Maynooth University Chamber Choir - 2011 - 2016, 2020 - Present
- His ensembles have won several major competitions across the world including the Choir of the World Competition at the Llangollen Eisteddfod, Wales
- Delivers and facilitates upward of 50 choral masterclasses in Ireland and internationally each year
- He is a regular adjudicator and clinician at International choral competitions and festivals
- Awarded a Fulbright Scholarship and teaching assistantship to study a Doctoral Degree in Choral Music at the University of Southern California in 2016
- Former singer with Anúna and has toured the world extensively and recorded on several video game soundtracks including Diablo III and World of Warcraft
- Lecturer at Maynooth University, University of Limerick and University of Southern California
- Michael lectures on science informed voice pedagogy, Irish choral music & traditions, conducting technique, choral skills and leadership



**CINZIA ZANON**  
ITALY - EUROPE

- Cinzia Zanon is an expert in choral artistry for children's and youth voices - she strongly believes in the educational value of choral music
- Since 1990, she is currently the conductor and artistic director of 3 choirs, winning awards in national and international competitions: Giovani Voci Bassano, Gioventù in cantata, Melicus. With them she did tournée in America, Canada, Argentina, Brasil, Japan, Australia, Philippines, China and in lots of countries in Europe.
- Cinzia Zanon is the artistic author and director of national and international events like the "Primavera musicale - incontri corali internazionali", „Canticoro“ and "Poesia in canto".
- From 2007 to 2015 she took part to the Regional Artistic Commission of ASAC and from 2014 to 2017 she is part of the National one: FENIARCO.
- Cinzia has been a jury member in National and International Competition. She received for four times the "special prize for conducting", three in International Competitions (1999, 2016, 2022) and one in National one (2017).



## **ANNA UNGUREANU** **ROMANIA - EUROPE**

- Anna Ungureanu is the leading conductor of the Romanian National Chamber Choir "Madrigal - Marin Constantin".
- Her conducting vision and choice of programs amplifies the unique concept of the Madrigal Choir, created by its specific repertoire and sonority, stereophonic location on the stage and impressive costumes. Moreover, the professional experience gained along the side of the founder of Madrigal Choir, Maestro Marin Constantin, with whom Anna Ungureanu spent over nine years, recommends her as a disciple and successor of the legendary musician.
- In 2022, Anna Ungureanu received the Marin Constantin Award for "Excellence in Music" Specialized in the conducting art with the musicians Marin Constantin and Ion Marin, Anna Ungureanu conducted countless concerts all over the world (Europe, Israel, Turkey, Russia, Japan or China.)
- She also achieved decades of experience in research and teaching.



## **ENRIQUE AZURZA** **SPAIN - EUROPE**

- Enrique Azurza is the Artistic Director of Sociedad Coral de Bilbao since 2016. He studied choral conducting in the Basque Country and in Stockholm with Anders Eby, Eric Ericson and Carl Högset.
- He has conducted the choir "Hodeiertz" of Tolosa since 1985. In 1997 he founded the professional Vocal Ensemble KEA with the aim of promoting contemporary and ancient music. He has been the Spanish representative in the World Choral Symposium with "Hodeiertz", Sydney 1996, and with KEA vocal ensemble in Argentina 2011.
- He teaches choral singing in Musikene, Centro Superior de Música del País Vasco and is President of the Confederation of Choirs in the Basque Country.
- Azurza has conducted the Choir of the University of the Basque Country (1999-2016), the Choir of the Choral Singing Institute of Aragon (1993-2003), the Spanish National Youth Choir and the Coro Lírico de Cantabria (2011-2015). All of the choirs have successfully participated in national and international contests and have recorded several CDs.
- He gives regularly workshops and has been member of the jury in different festivals. He is member of the musical committee in the International Choral Contest of Tolosa, in the World Symposium Barcelona 2017 and artistic director of the National Choral Contest of Ejea de los Caballeros.



## **IVO ANTOGNINI** **SWITZERLAND - EUROPE**

- Ivo Antognini, composer with Swiss and Italian dual citizenship, writes music for choirs of all levels and has a distinctive personal style.
- His choral works have won many awards in national and international choral composition events and have been performed in more than 55 countries.
- He regularly serves as a jury member in national and international choral and composition competitions and has been presenting his music in Switzerland, Italy, Hungary, Slovenia, Greece, Bulgaria, United States and Japan.
- A concert dedicated completely to his choral music took place in March 2016 at the Lincoln Center, NY. His first major, extended work, "A Prayer for Mother Earth", for mixed choir, children's choir, orchestra, soprano soloist and piano, was premiered at the Carnegie Hall in New York in May 2016.
- Recent recordings with Antognini's music include "Canticum Novum", a portrait CD featuring the Salt Lake Vocal Artists, "Invisible Stars" and "Perpetual Twilight" (SIGNUM RECORDS), with UCD Choral Scholars, "Sacred Songs of Life & Love" (PENTATONE) with South Dakota Chorale and "To Bethlehem" (RESO-NUS) with Kantorei of Kansas City. His choral pieces are published by Alliance Music Pub., Walton Music, Hal Leonard, Edition Peters, ECS Publishing, G. Schirmer, Colla Voce, Boosey & Hawkes, Carus-Verlag and others.
- Ivo Antognini teaches ear training and piano at the Conservatorio della Svizzera Italiana in Lugano (Switzerland).



## **KAY YEN RONNIE CHENG** **CHINA | HONG KONG - ASIA**

- Kya Yen Ronnie Cheng is a seasoned conductor in both the Choral and Orchestral Arts, directing various ensembles that have won championships in renowned competitions such as the World Choir Games in Austria, China, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, the United States and Wales.
- Mr Cheng's lifelong work in Choral Arts was recognized when he received the Outstanding Artistic Award as well as the Outstanding Conductor Award in various International Competitions.
- He has served in the local arts community as Council member of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and continues to serve as Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Hong Kong Schools Music and Speech Association, Audit Committee Member of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and Steering Committee Member of the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme.
- His latest endeavour with his ensemble Diocesan Choral Society, continues to gain international acclaim in various competitions every year, most recently performing at the Taipei international Choral Festivals as well as being crowned as the Champion of the Inaugural Tokyo International Choral Competition.
- During the pandemic, Kay Yen Ronnie Cheng rallied over 20 choirs from over 5 continents in the world to join hands in the "Sing Around The globe" (SATB) project to perform Tichelli's "The Earth Song" through the online platform.



**NATHALIE GOLDBERG**  
ISRAEL - ASIA

- Nathalie Goldberg completed her first degree in orchestra conducting at the Music Academy in Jerusalem, her Master's degree – with honors at the The Buchmann-Mehta School of Music in Tel –Aviv University and her teaching certificate at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

- For over 10 years she served as head of the music department at Hof Hacarmel High School where she taught music theory courses. She also taught at two art schools Reut Art School, Haifa, and Ironi Alef, Tel Aviv.
- For three years, together with Conductor Yuval Ben Ozer, served as Chairman of the Israeli Choir Association. Conducted "Hof Hacarmel Girls" Choir for six years , and "The Efroni" choirs in Emek Hefer for seven years.
- She currently serves as a lecturer at the Faculty of Music Education at the Levinsky College of Education, a choir instructor on behalf of the Music Education Inspectorate of Haifa Region, runs workshops and seminars for music teachers and choir conductors in Israel and overseas. Along with Zvika Vogel, founded in 2014 the Nona Vocal Arts Center, and currently serves as its Music Director and Conductor.



**ZLATAN FAZLIC**  
QATAR - ASIA

- Zlatan Fazlić graduated from the Music Academy of Sarajevo where he gained a First-Class Honours degree in Piano Performance. He continued his music studies at the Guildhall School of Music in London.
- His teaching career spanned over 25 years, during which time he taught at and led some of the finest Music and Performing Arts departments in the UK. Among his many musical passions, choral conducting is one of his favorites.
- Highlights from his professional life in the UK included his Junior Chamber Choir, Middle School Choirs, Boys' Choirs, Senior and Adult Choirs all of whom won many local, county and international choral competitions in the UK between 1995 and 2019.
- Zlatan arrived in Qatar from the UK in August 2021 as the new Director of Qatar Music Academy. He will be leading the award-winning Qatar Youth Choir.



**DR. KITTIPOORN TANTRARUNGRUJ**  
THAILAND - ASIA

- Dr. Kittiporn Tantrarungroj associated himself with choral singing since his early years as a member of a church choir in his hometown. He enriched his experiences and learnt the art of choral music while studying in the Philippines.
- As a well-known figure, both in Thailand and in the international choral communities, he is frequently invited as lecturer, clinician and jury member. He travels extensively in Thailand, giving choral seminars to educate teachers as well as advice to conductors nationwide.
- Tantrarungroj is a vivid choral arranger and composer and about two hundred of his choral compositions are widely spread and sung by various choirs in Thailand. Among all, his composition "Lao Duang Duean" was the first Thai choral arrangement ever published by a Western world publisher.
- Dr. Tantrarungroj lives in Bangkok and earns his living working as a surgeon. Moreover, he is an accomplished piano and organ player.

## BAŞAK DOĞAN TURKEY - ASIA

- Başak Doğan is an innovative conductor whose unique style has been turning heads around the world. After finishing her master in Philosophy of Music at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul, she got her second master's degree in Rhythmic Choral Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music, Denmark, with the thesis of 'Intuitive Conducting'.
- As a versatile conductor, she appears at numerous choral events, leading singers from all age groups. She won prizes and international recognition with her choir Chromas.
- Known best for blending different styles, Başak has developed a distinctive method for leading singers. Her enthusiasm for bringing her own cultural background into the choral world has had an impact on rhythmic choral music.
- Central to her style is "Vocal Painting," a series of signals that allows the conductor and choir to improvise together and create "music of the moment."
- Her new initiative "Vokal Akademi" has become the center for all the singers who want to master their singing and further their music career.



## JOHN ROSSER NEW ZEALAND - PACIFIC

- Having graduated MA in Latin and Greek from the University of Auckland and gaining an LTCL in performance singing, John trained as a choral conductor under Professor Peter Godfrey.
- A foundation member of both the National Youth Choir and the New Zealand Singers, in 1985 he formed the innovative and highly successful a cappella chamber choir Viva Voce, which he has now led in over 400 concerts, broadcasts and recordings.
- He has also appeared as guest conductor for many groups, such as the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, St Matthew's Chamber Orchestra, Auckland Sinfonietta, Hamilton Civic Choir, Rotorua District Choir, South Auckland Choral Society, Whangarei Choral Society and the Auckland Bach Cantata Society.
- He was for several years Director of the Hamilton Music School and ran the Auckland International Festival of Choirs in 1996.
- From 1996 to 2018 John worked as Chorus Director and Associate Conductor for New Zealand Opera, for whom he prepared over 60 operas and conducted five. He has given several concert recitals and recorded three programmes for Radio New Zealand.
- Frequently engaged for choral and vocal courses, radio talks, compèring, workshops and adjudication, John was awarded a grant in 2008 by the NZ Arts Council to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> World Symposium on Choral Music in Copenhagen and was later invited to Brisbane to conduct the inaugural ANCA Chamber Choir for the Australian National Choral Association, Queensland. He has conducted a host of large choral events, including the 1000 massed voices at Auckland's annual outdoor extravaganza Starlight Symphony for 15 years.

- In 2006 John was elected inaugural Chair of the New Zealand Choral Federation (NZCF) and continued to lead the Board for much of the next 12 years. In 2011 he devised and directed the NZCF National Anthems Project for the Rugby World Cup, conducting at 13 games himself, including the Final.
- Two years later he organized the Tallis Project in conjunction with renowned UK ensemble The Tallis Scholars, and in 2016 led NZCF's successful bid to host the World Symposium on Choral Music (WSCM2020) in Auckland, subsequently being appointed its Artistic Director.
- He is also National Director of both Sing Aotearoa and The Big Sing, and in 2018 was awarded life membership by NZCF.
- Following the cancellation of WSCM2020 due to the pandemic, John was invited to lead a bid to host the 2024 World Choir Games in NZ. When INTERKULTUR awarded the Games to Auckland in late 2020, he was appointed NZ's Artistic and Games Director. In the same year he was elected to the Board of the International Federation for Choral Music. John was made a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (CNZM) for services to choral music in the 2022 New Year's Honours List.

# WELCOME

## **BÉRANGER YAKASSOU** **BENIN - AFRICA**

- Béranger Yakassou is a lyric singer.
- He took the master class in lyric singing from July 16 to 27, 2018 and participated in the reparation concert at the auditorium of the French Institute of Cotonou on July 28, 2018 under the direction of Mr. Gérard WEILLER (Haute-contre, professor of piano and voice) and Mr. Félix NASSI (choral and orchestral conductor, director of the festival "Les rencontres polyphoniques du Bénin").
- Béranger Yakassou participated in the classical concert as a lyric singer at the Golden Tulip le Diplomate in Cotonou on August 15, 2019, conducted by Mr. Felix NASSI, as well as in the lyric concert as a lyric tenor under the straw hut of the French Institute of Cotonou, July 23, 2021.
- He participated in the preparation and recording of the oratorio "Heavens" by Philippe Lamouris, a work created in the framework of the World Choir Games Flanders (Belgium) 2021 as choirmaster at the Carrefour Jeunesse, Comè from July 18 to 27, 2021.
- Béranger Yakassou is the current musical director of the Children's Choir of Benin and the Félix Choir of the NGO Carrefour Jeunesse Afrique, Comè.



## **ELIOENAI MEDINA** **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC -** **MIDDLE AMERICA**

- Elioenai Medina obtained his Master's degree in Choral Conducting and Pedagogy at the International University of La Rioja (Spain), directed by Dr. Nuria Fernández (Spain). International University of La Rioja directed by Dr. Nuria Fernández (Spain), complementing his studies at the National Conservatory of Music, graduating as Professor of Piano
- Professor of Piano and Superior Courses of Music in Santo Domingo, from the class of the teacher Jasmina Gavrilovic, Dominican Republic.
- He has a degree in Music from the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, where he also works as a pianist,
- Elioenai Medina also serves as pianist of the group of lyrical singers, which has become a reference in the lyrical a reference in the Dominican lyrical panorama.
- He has also been teaching at the National Conservatory of Music for more than twenty years, and many young people have been years and many young people have benefited from his teachings. He is the Director of the National Choir of the Dominican Republic, the first choral institution in the country, pianist of the Dominican National Symphony Orchestra, and develops the project of training young singers from the project of formation of young singers from the National Choir that comes to fill an educational void educational gap in the Dominican choral panorama.
- Elioenai Medina is the conductor of the Dominican Judicial Power Choir, a group of recognized prestige in the local choral scene. The groups he directs have won national and international awards and recognitions.



## **CARMEN GIOVANNA MONTAÑO** **BOLIVIA - SOUTH AMERICA**

- Carmen Giovanna Montaña studied music specializing in lyric singing at the National Conservatory of Music in the city of La Paz with numerous teachers such as Beatriz Mendez, Karina Stephanian, Samia Ibrahim (Venezuela) and Alicia Cecoti (Prof. Teatro Colon), in addition to continuing her studies in Brazil, Venezuela and other specialized courses focusing on psychology and psychopedagogy of music. She did the Post Degree "OPERA SINGERS" at the BERKLEE CONSERVATORY in Valencia, Spain, culminating her studies in lyrical singing and opera in 2017.
- She participated in various competitions of regional character, highlighting the event held in Trujillo Peru where she reached the semifinal stage. She also won second place in the lyrical singing contest „Das Lied“, held in the city of La Paz.
- During the last years, Carmen Giovanna Montaña showed her professional qualities standing out again as soloist with the Youth Symphony Orchestra of Santa Cruz, in the "Coronation Mass" by W. A. Mozart (2012), in the "Misa Angustis" by Haydn (2013) and in the "Christmas Oratorio" by J.S. Bach (2014).
- She was invited to the "Gala lirica" organized by the Municipal School of the Arts in the city of El Alto performing famous Opera Arias as Principal Soloist with the Municipal Symphony Orchestra of El Alto, conducted by Mtro. Fredy Céspedes.

- The last outstanding participation at international level was in Caracas, Venezuela with the Simon Bolivar Choir and Orchestra in the "Choral Symphony", one of the greatest works of Beethoven, under the baton of the great Venezuelan conductor Gustavo Dudamel. Finally, she played the role of Micaela in the opera "Carmen" by George Bizet, conducted by the French conductor Antoine Duhamel.
- In July and August of this year (2019) Carmen Giovanna Montaño participated as soloist and choral conductor in the Homage to Bolivia together with the National Symphony Orchestra and the folk group Awatiñas.
- Founder of the ArteCanto Choir in 2015, with whom she participated in the Night of Museums (2015, 2016, 2017 and 2019). She also participated in the production of Handel's Messiah, and for the second time in the INTERNATIONAL BAROQUE FESTIVAL OF LA CHIQUITANIA (2016 and 2018) As Director of the Fine Arts Choir she managed and directed the choir for its participation in the International Choir Competition in Barcelona, having several concerts in the tour EUROPE 2015 (Italy, France, Spain).
- Finally, Carmen Giovanna Montaño organized and directed the Choir ArteCanto-EMI and the CURUCUSÍ Ensemble in the recently completed Europe 2019 Tour, between June 24 and July 17 last. The Choir sang in the presence of Pope Francis I at St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. It performed other concerts in Rome, Valencia, Barcelona, Madrid, at the International Johannes Brahms Choir Competition Johannes Brahms International Choir Competition in Wernigerode, Munich, Berlin, The Hague and Paris, with resounding success.
- She currently teaches Lyrical Singing at the Instituto Superior de Bellas Artes, the Music House Academy and the Suzuki Academy, Director of the Choir of the Military School of Engineering EMI, Director of the Choir ArteCanto.



## JAIME AUGUSTO CONTRERAS GHIO PERU - SOUTH AMERICA

- Jaime Augusto Contreras Ghio has studied piano and has a bachelor in Choral Conducting (UNM - Peru) and Master in Musical Investigation [musicology] (UNIR - Spain).
- He has received master classes in piano, tubular organ, choral conducting and orchestral conducting from renowned teachers from Argentina, Austria, Costa Rica, Cuba, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Spain, United States and Venezuela.
- Jaime Augusto Contreras Ghio finished a diploma course in vocal pedagogy and continue his academic training with courses and seminars. He also held workshops and conferences about Peruvian music.
- As a pianist, he has offered innumerable recitals and concerts in different local halls and theaters.
- As a choir conductor, he has conducted several recognized choirs in the country. He worked as assistant conductor of the National Choir of Peru. In 2018 he founded the Camerata Vocal de Lima, with which he has participated in national and international festivals.
- Jaime Augusto Contreras Ghio is a professor of music theory (lenguaje musical) and choral conducting at the National University of Music (Universidad Nacional de Música UNM). He also teaches choral singing in the children's and youth choir Voces del Sol.

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- 1 CHILDREN'S CHOIRS
- 2 YOUTH CHOIRS
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- 4 ADULT CHOIRS
- 5 MUSICA SACRA A CAPPELLA
- 6 MUSICA SACRA WITH ACCOMPANIMENT
- 7 GOSPEL, SPIRITUAL,  
MUSIC OF SPIRIT AND FAITH
- 8 JAZZ, POP, SHOW
- 9 FOKLORE A CAPPELLA
- 10 FOKLORE WITH  
ACCOMPANIMENT

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# THE EUROPEAN CHOIR GAMES & GRAND PRIX OF NATIONS ARE BACK!

*SWEDEN WELCOMES THE 5<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN CHOIR GAMES & GRAND PRIX OF NATIONS IN NORRKÖPING 2023*

*by Henriette Brockmann*

The Swedish city of Norrköping is welcoming choirs for the European Choir Games & Grand Prix of Nations in 2023. Once again beautiful Sweden will host the event, which is famous as a continental, European version of the World Choir Games – the Olympic Games of Choral Music.

After the unforgettable experiences of the last event in Gothenburg 2019, in 2023 choirs from Europe and around the world will meet again in Sweden for choir competitions, concerts, workshops and international exchange – in a nation that is famous for internationally acclaimed choirs and singing groups.

For more than 30 years, INTERKULTUR has been fostering understanding and friendship among people from different nations, religions or denominations through peaceful musical festivals, with its innovative concept of choral competitions. The INTERKULTUR concept gives all choirs the opportunity to take part in international competitions – regardless of their personal level of artistic achievement or musical genre – and to benefit from the experience of internationally renowned choral experts and get advice for their artistic development.

Following the premier in Graz (Austria) 2013, a second and third edition in Magdeburg (Germany 2015) and Riga (Latvia 2017) choirs from all over the world met in Gothenburg (Sweden) in August 2019. For the fifth edition in 2023 the event will stay in Sweden, the nation of choristers, and welcome choirs from around the world in Norrköping. This city, located 160 km south of Sweden's capital city Stockholm, is an old industrial place that has turned to culture and knowledge innovation. The home of the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra, with several venues located in the city's old industrial landscape, will be the center of the European Choir Games 2023 where all choirs can meet, sing and celebrate together.

The core of the European Choir Games is the European Champions Competition, which has been designed for experienced choirs from Europe. They have the chance to become winners of the title "Champion of the European Choir Games" in ten different categories.



According to its philosophy INTERKULTUR's events are open for every amateur choir in the world, thus next to the Champions Competition of the European Choir Games there are two other competitions designed for choirs of all levels and from all over the world.

The Open Competition is for amateur choirs from all countries without or less competition experience.

The "Grand Prix of Nations" has been designed for top-class choirs from all over the world with international competition experience that have already proven their outstanding skills in concerts and international choir competitions.

Choirs have the chance to qualify directly for the Grand Prix of Nations from both Open Competition and European Champions Competition.

Along with the competitions, INTERKULTUR is offering educational activities – Evaluation Performances, workshops and coachings with international choral experts – which already have a long tradition outside Europe and are extremely popular among overseas choirs.

## COMPETITION CATEGORIES

### OPEN COMPETITION EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS COMPETITION GRAND PRIX OF NATIONS

- 1 Children's Choirs**
- 2 Youth Choirs  
(Mixed and Equal Voices)**
- 3 Chamber Choirs / Vocal Ensembles**
- 4 Adult Choirs  
(Mixed, Male and Female Choirs)**
- 5 Musica Sacra a cappella**
- 6 Musica Sacra with accompaniment**
- 7 Gospel, Spiritual, Music of Spirit and Faith**
- 8 Jazz, Pop, Show**
- 9 Folklore a cappella**
- 10 Folklore with accompaniment**





**“WE NEED TO FIND WAYS OF COMBINING TRADITION WITH DEVELOPMENT TO CONTINUE BUILDING A STRONG CHORAL LIFE.”**

**SWEDISH CONDUCTOR SUSANNA LINDMARK ABOUT CHORAL SINGING IN SWEDEN, HER CHOIR PROJECT ARCTIC LIGHT AND HER PIECE “SONG OF HOPE”**

*Choir-singing has played an important role in shaping the Swedish society and still today choral activities help building bridges between people. There's an estimated 600,000 people all over Sweden singing in a choir, which is around 17% of the population. And Swedish choral culture is very successful, even and especially internationally: From professional vocal ensembles like The Real Group to choral ensembles with great tradition like Lunds Studentsångförening or the choirs of Adolf*

*Fredrik's Music School – Swedish choirs and vocal ensembles have an excellent reputation in the international choral scene and many of the Swedish choirs and vocal ensembles are outstandingly successful in international choir competitions around the world.*

*But what is their secret of success? What makes Swedish choir music and Swedish choir traditions so special? Swedish choir conductor Susanna Lindmark has tried to give us some answers.*

**CHORAL SINGING IS POPULAR IN SWEDEN. WHAT IS IT THAT FASCINATES SWEDISH PEOPLE IN THAT PASTIME?**

I find it difficult to give an overall answer to this question since it has many layers, but I think recent research made during the Covid pandemic period by professor Ewa Bojner Horwitz (in collaboration with choral associations in Sweden and Norway) can show some of the reasons why people want to sing in a choir. In her study she asked choir singers from Sweden and Norway what they missed most with singing in a choir, when all choir rehearsal activities were shut down, and the answers were (very shortly): the social factor - the feeling of togetherness, emotional and artistic expression and being in a creative flow together.

My own experiences of leading a lot of different choirs on different levels of difficulty regarding the musical material can absolutely agree to the results in the [study](#).

As singers we carry our instrument inside – and the fact that everybody has a voice makes us equals in a sense. Singing together means sharing emotions and expressions and builds a community where even our hearts beat in the same rhythm. Choral singing has engaged a great amount of people in Sweden during a long time, but with the Covid-19 pandemic everything changed very fast, and I think that there is some re-building choral work to do now, as life is going back to be more like before the pandemic. To be able to support the choral life after the pandemic in Norrbotten, where I live, I last year took the initiative to build a regional Choral Centre called Körcentrum Nord, and this feels really important!

We have now started officially as a three-year project with funding from both the Swedish Cultural Council and the Regional Council in Norrbotten, together with the Regional Institution of Music, Norrbottensmusiken, where I am employed to lead the work.

# INTERVIEW

with Susanna Lindmark

**THERE ARE MANY CHOIRS FROM SCANDINAVIA AND ESPECIALLY FROM SWEDEN, WHICH ARE FAMOUS AND SUCCESSFUL ALL AROUND THE WORLD. WHAT IS THE SECRET OF THE SWEDISH WAY TO SUCCESS?**

That is a good question. I wish I could point out a secret ingredient, but of course many factors play a role here. There are some really good choirs in Sweden, and my experience is that we share that with many countries all over the world, and it is fantastic how many different colors and characters all these choirs all over the world have regarding to sound, expression and repertoire. Since singing is very deeply connected to the human being. This makes also our language, cultural and musical traditions and folklore natural brick stones in the building of a choral sound, and that can maybe partly explain that different parts of the world carry different choral sound ideals. But since our world is an open place we also, luckily enough we have the opportunity to be inspired in a million ways from a lot of choral expressions and traditions.

I think that one part of Scandinavian choir's good reputation has to do with the choral sound ideal. If I should describe how I interpret that sound ideal I should say that it is lyrical, well-balanced, clear, well-intonated and rich on overtones and often without vibrato. But of course, there are as many choir sounds as there are choirs and the matter of beauty lie in the ear of the listener. Other factors for any successful choir I believe is the choice of repertoire and the ability to express the music in a way that invites and includes the listener in the audience. For me personally, both as a conductor, composer and listener it is important that the musical expression has an emotional engagement together with the sound qualities above, and of course rhythmical clarity and fidelity to the score.

**ERIC ERICSON, WHO PASSED AWAY IN 2013, IS USUALLY THE FIRST NAME THAT COMES TO ONE'S MIND WHEN THINKING AND LEARNING ABOUT SWEDISH CHORAL MUSIC. AFTER HIS DEATH, HOW DID THE SWEDISH CHORAL SCENE CHANGE AND HOW MUCH INFLUENCE DOES HIS LEGACY STILL HAVE ON THE GENERATION OF YOUNG CHOIR DIRECTORS NOWADAYS?**

I think that Eric Ericson's role as "Father of the choral miracle" in Sweden is solid and clear, and after him there also have been, are and will be several great choral conductors to carry his legacy of deep musical and choral related knowledge forward.

However, I think that our society now is looking quite different from what it was during Ericsons time regarding a lot of things, for example the role of choir singing in schools with children, that has changed a lot with for example fewer school choirs. It is really important that we who work in the choral sphere engage in getting children to sing, so that we don't lose a whole generation of young people, growing up without knowing the richness of owning a voice and the power of singing together. Of course, for musical purposes, but also for individual personal growth, health and as an important part of building sustainable empathic societies and good leaders in the future.

Along with this, carrying the rich knowledge that our choral traditions hold when new generations of conductors rise, I think that is of great importance also to embrace a renewal of ways of expression regarding the art of choral performances. As our society changes and new generations of choral singers grow up with maybe other frames of musical references we need to find ways of combining tradition with development to continue building a strong choral life. In my opinion it should never be a matter of either tradition or new ideas, but always a combination, like to sides of a coin, to develop choral music.

I also think that it is important to set eyes on the matters of leadership and innovative new methods, besides the general traditional platform of choral knowledge such as of repertoire, interpretation, choral sound and voice treatment etc. My experience is that working in co-creative ways with choirs, including the choir as a creative resource, are important parts in the ongoing work of development of choir as a unique artistic expression. And also, to attract new singers and conductors.

**WHAT IS THE MISSION BEHIND YOUR CHORAL PROJECT ARCTIC LIGHT? HOW DOES IT LINE UP OR PERHAPS BREAK WITH SWEDISH CHORAL TRADITIONS?**

My mission with Arctic Light when I founded the choir in 2004, was to create a musical greenhouse of high artistic level and strong regional identity for young female singers in Norrbotten in the northern part of Sweden. Our region is an industrial region of mining, wood and steel, situated far from the big city areas, holding large distances and a low population and great wilderness nature experiences. Our region at the Polar circle area also had very little girls choir tradition meaning young female singers was a very invisible group. Due to our large distances with the singers living in different cities, and Arctic Light Choir meet for rehearsals only a couple of times a year. Some girls travel more than 400 km to every rehearsal very few travels less than 50 km. My vision was to create a creative choral environment where every singer is allowed to contribute with both voice, mind, body and creative ideas and of high importance, an emotional expression. To build a vocal sound and to be able to reach as high artistic level as possible in very little time, it has been necessary for me as a conductor to mould out methods that suits our quite untraditional rehearsal structure and to create a safe environment where every singer are among friends and dare to go outside your comfort zone, so that every individual should find her own place and space in the group and to be able to be at her best without pressure and prestige. To do that I use different kinds of improvisation, work with emotional expression and a have certain way of building the choir sound.

I think that my work with Arctic Light can be characterized as non-traditional, but I think it aligns with tradition as a platform on which we solidly stand. This platform gives the opportunity to explore new musical worlds and expressions. As a composer also, my aim to create a regional identity of sound and expression with Arctic Light, has resulted in new music, compositions for young choirs with for example inspiration from the great mountain areas, Nordic lights, and different cultural heritages in our region such as expressions from the sami culture. For me again it is never about either tradition or renewal. To aligne with the question of factors for success, I would say that building a strong artistic musical identity built on authentic values is a factor that has great possibilities for leading to great development both for the choir and the individual.

**MANY CHOIRS AROUND THE WORLD ARE FACING PROBLEMS IN RECRUITING NEW TALENTS AND YOUNG SINGERS. HOW DO YOU MOTIVATE THE YOUNG GENERATION TO SING?**

This is a challenge in our time. Everyone is so occupied with so many things.

However, my experience tells me that if you have a strong authentic vision that connects with the singers themselves, it is more likely that they will engage. By including the singers and create a friendly atmosphere where creative processes and exploring and learning, rather than delivering a result, are the focus points. (The good results will come anyway) By finding high quality repertoire (regardless of difficulty) that will connect with the singers where they are, and also be very thorough with the level of difficulty of the music, so that there will be challenge enough but not too much. I find that rhythmical music with a touch of folk music often is very effective and that young singers often can relate very well to quite difficult rhythms.

But most of all I believe in a leadership where every individual in the choir is of equal worth, is allowed to try and fail and grow and to take active part in the creative process.

**YOUR CHORAL WORK "SONG OF HOPE" IS PERFORMED BY CHOIRS FROM AROUND THE WORLD. DID YOU USE ANY TYPICAL ELEMENTS OF CONTEMPORARY SWEDISH MUSIC FOR THIS PIECE AND WHAT ARE THESE?**

Song of Hope is a special piece in that matter that the ideas behind it came to me on a flight to Indonesia and I wrote almost all of it down on a paper on that plane. Since then it really has continued flying out in the world and for that I am very grateful. When I write music, I am rather intuitive and it is not until the later stages of the composition process that I involve my theoretical brain, I aim to be in the creative flow catching the ideas, letting them speak. Of course, my knowledge of composing is the theoretical platform of knowledge without which I could not compose, but when I wrote it I just wanted to express what the lyrics communicated musically. I often let the text lead the process and always have an emotional engagement in my composition process. So, I don't compose with the purpose of use certain elements, but of course there are elements used in every piece. I used folk music- based rhythmical elements to illustrate the character of the melody of hope in the part that could be associated with a Swedish traditional trail - a kind of ongoing musical joyful energy to lift us up.



**YOU'VE PROBABLY BEEN IN TOUCH WITH SOME CHOIRS THAT PERFORMED "SONG OF HOPE". CAN YOU MENTION FEW NAMES AND TELL US ABOUT THEIR COMMENTS AND REACTIONS TO THE PIECE?**

I have had the great joy to experience a lot of choirs singing Song of Hope, on concerts festivals, making music videos, choreographies, Youtube recordings and so on. I know the song has been sung in almost all continents by fantastic young choirs and their wonderful conductors, and I am grateful for them singing and expressing my music. It is hard for me to mention anyone above someone else, and of course I have received their appreciation, but maybe it is better if you ask someone to speak with their own words than I should try to recapture their experiences of the piece, something that I find difficult.

**WHAT WAS YOUR MESSAGE BEHIND "SONG OF HOPE" WHEN YOU COMPOSED IT AND HOW MIGHT IT BE DIFFERENT FROM TODAY'S POINT OF VIEW, IN A PERIOD WHERE A WAR IN EUROPE, CLIMATE CHANGE, A WORLDWIDE PANDEMIC AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ARE MORE PRESENT THAN EVER BEFORE?**

My message with Song of Hope is that we all have a choice to choose goodness, warmth, love, comfort in difficult situations that life bring. It is a prayer for light to shine in darkness and that each one of us actually are these lights, if we choose to be. Everyone has a special glow and is able to let his or her light shine in this crazy world. We all are the same – children of this earth no matter age, race, background, ethnicity, gender etc.

We can all be sources of light in the dark and make a change for someone else, and these last years that has brought many different kinds of crisis I feel that the theme of the song still is highly relevant. It is really important not to lose hope in dark times, but with the power of music let the light shine through.



**SUSANNA LINDMARK (Sweden)**

- Composer, innovative Choral Conductor and Guest Lecturer, appointed „Children and Youth Choirs Conductor of the Year in Sweden“ 2017
- Founder, Artistic Director and Choir Manager for Arctic Light Girls´Choir since 2004 (Appointed „Choir of the Year in Sweden“ 2010)
- Board member of Swedish Choral Directors Association since 2014 and former Board member of UNGIKÖR, Swedish Children and Youth Choirs Association 2005-2010



## AIDA SWENSON (INDONESIA)

*HONORARY MEMBER OF THE ADVISORY BOARD OF THE WORLD CHOIR COUNCIL*

### **A STRONG VOICE FOR INDONESIA'S CHORAL MUSIC SCENE HAS FALLEN SILENT**

Mourning of Aida Swenson, member of the World Choir Council and a powerful supporter of choral music in the world

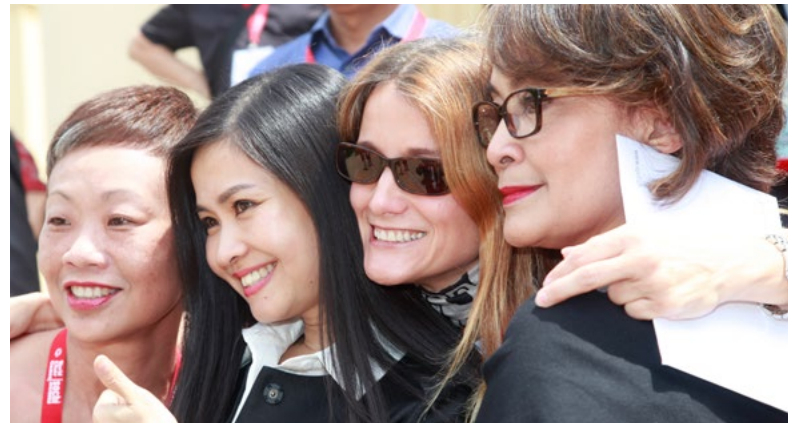
In the morning of September 8, 2022, the Indonesian choir conductor, lecturer and adjudicator Aida Swenson passed away in Singapore. INTERKULTUR and the World Choir Council are mourning the death of a longtime companion, strong supporter and good and lovely friend.

Aida Swenson has worked with INTERKULTUR for more than 20 years – as a regular juror at the World Choir Games and other international choir competitions, as a workshop leader and lecturer and also as a conductor of excellent participating choirs from Indonesia.

Also, events like the Asian Choir Games in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2007 and the Asia Pacific Choir Games in Manado, Indonesia in 2013 would not have become reality without her support and tireless commitment.

**She was one of the strongest voices in the international choral world and played an important role in developing and bringing forward choral music in her home country Indonesia and was highly committed to carry the musical heritage of her country out into the world.**

Aida spent many years traveling throughout Indonesia, visited many provinces between Borneo to Papua, creating and leading choirs, giving master classes, and training choral conductors. She was the driving force and soul of Indonesian choral music and always had an open ear for the weak and the poor, hoping that choral music would be a way for the young people to keep away from drug abuse and crime. She encouraged Indonesian choirs to make the important experience of an international choral exchange and she personally supported and gave advice to them at any day or night time in order to make their trips to international choir events possible.



Furthermore, Aida Swenson was the founder and conductor of the Indonesian Children's & Youth Choir Cordana, which gained international recognition and awards. As a graduate of the Westminster Choir College, USA, Aida conducted also numerous workshops internationally and adjudicated at choral events all around the world.

In INTERKULTUR's World Choir Council Aida not only represented Indonesia but she was also a Member of the Advisory Board of the Council. Her opinion and advice were always welcomed and listened to within the Council members. Her great commitment will be missed in this circle.

During the World Choir Games 2021 in Flanders she was also part of the General Meeting of the World Choir Council virtually, since it was always important to her to stay connected with the whole choral world, even during the pandemic.

Aida will be deeply missed by the worldwide INTERKULTUR family. We are thankful for the time she dedicated to us and to choral music and her great heritage will live on in the international choral scene.

INTERKULTUR President Günter Titsch with the whole INTERKULTUR team and the members of the World Choir Council from all over the world express deepest condolences to Aida's family and friends. May their happy memories give them peace and comfort during this challenging time!



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