

# Message from the President

Dear Friends,

Time flies as we enter the third quarter of the year and the global public health crisis caused by COVID-19 continues to influence the whole world significantly. In the past three months, many countries have suffered from sadness during this pandemic. A large number of people have been infected by the virus; some have lost their loved ones, healthcare professionals have kept fighting against the virus to save more lives and most of us have stayed at home in quarantine to protect our families.

Ever since governments all over the world imposed stringent anti-epidemic rules and restricted massed gatherings, people's lives have been affected and changed. It is as though the pause button of the world was pressed and many cultural events, sports, and festivals were canceled or postponed, such as the 2020 World Symposium for Choral Music in New Zealand and the World Youth Choir 2020 session in Germany.

In the face of these negative changes in our life, we might feel deep sorrow and regret about this unfortunate situation. However, we will never give up. Our musical imagination will not stop, our expectation for a beautiful life will not be broken, and our love will not putter out. Since pressing pause often allows a sense of clarity when we are stuck in the weeds, going through this pandemic also brings an opportunity for us to review the past, to think about the future – to learn, research and create.

In this situation, the IFCM continues to make every effort to serve our members, helping choral choirs and promoting choral education all over the world. We are exerting ourselves to seek more innovative approaches and online possibilities to execute our projects, since many events are transforming from

local to online.

My private company – International Cultural Center Monte Real in Portugal – is invested in developing an applet to launch an online project which is named Colorful Voices. This online project will be an effective strategy to help and support IFCM remain fresh, focused and engaged.

This online project will help express the IFCM's goals and concepts, making more choral fans around the world know more about the IFCM and help attract more members for the IFCM. Articles from ICB and e-News of IFCM have been translated and posted on the applet regularly. Other projects and activities of the IFCM, such as Conductors without Borders, will be added subsequently soon. The applet enables people from various countries, especially from developing countries, to have easy access to the latest information in the worldwide choral community.

Meanwhile, this online project includes an International Choral Academy, offering a number of lectures, presentations, Zoom seminars, and virtual choir performances. On the 16th of May 2020, the first Zoom seminar took place as the Open House of the International Choral Academy and 15 well-known conductors, composers, and professors took part in and interacted with more than 250 participants. I was very touched that all of the people who participated in the Open House were from different continents and had communicated wonderfully for almost two hours. I could tell their passion from their excited voices and sparkling eyes; some of them had even woken up very early in the morning due to different time zones.

The network connects us to each of the individuals online and their colorful voices will enrich our minds and lives. These connections ultimately extend from one of us to all of us. As a result, we will learn together, discover more about ourselves and grow. I look forward to meeting more friends through this online project, hearing more colorful voices and

together singing a song of love and hope for the world!

Best wishes,

Emily Kuo Vong, President – International Federation for  
Choral Music

*Edited by Nicole Wilkinson, UK*