

Message from the IFCM President

Since time immemorial, choral singing, the peoples' song, has always given a certain rhythm to human society. It greets the young as they enter life; it is part of all events in adult life and, at the end, accompanies them to their last resting place. In some cases, the practice of choral singing can be a useful tool in education and training. For this reason UNESCO reconfirmed its special role on the occasion of its first World Conference on Arts Education in Lisbon in 2006. The first International Forum "Voice, Youth and Arts Management" organised by the International Federation for Choral Music in Caen, France, in February 2008, took on this mission as an ideal for life.

As already stated, the major themes of life are dealt with in choral singing, and the young people who know and accept this become standard bearers of this responsibility. This can be observed in each Songbridge, an event initiated by the late Erkki Pohjola: the ideal of peace, fraternity and dialogue between people through music, where young people from all origins and horizons sing together.

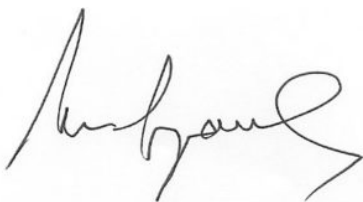
These ideals might even provoke callings by persuading a few "chosen ones" to base their career on these ideals after having followed a long education in excellent universities or professional centres like the ones in Juiz de Fora, in Brazil, or in Bloemfontein in South Africa.

Isn't such a mission worth devoting one's entire life to?

This special dossier of the International Choral Bulletin coincides with the conclusion of the immense work accomplished by Jutta Tagger who, for more than ten years, made this magazine into what it is now and managed it; it was her calling card. It is our obligation to pay a well deserved tribute to her at this point.

Her vast knowledge of the choral world, her specialised network, her unflagging constancy and devotion, all these qualities combined, contributed to the fact that the IFCM has become a worldwide point of reference in the field of choral singing. These qualities are also commendable elements for the education of young talents.

We shall miss these qualities. We are already missing them. Luckily they still will be there to guide us in the right direction, and we are happy to have discerned them in the person of Andrea Angelini, her successor in this task, the fundamental precondition for which are a sharp awareness and a moral joy to be able to channel and organise the ideas and manifestations of an eternal art which carries us along, into the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrea Angelini', with a stylized, flowing script.

Accra, 28 September 2009

Lupwishi Mbuyamba