

# OpusChoral

**The new on-line choral music boutique is open!**

## **Background**

The idea of a sound data-bank dedicated to choral music was first discussed in Dakar (Senegal) by IFCM president Lupwishi Mbuyamba and then secretary-general Jean-Claude Wilkens, in January 2007. It was later transformed from an IFCM project into a commercial one in order to interest producers and ensure sufficient future revenues to enable project expansion. An initial team was appointed to research financial and technical solutions. Following the resignation of the technical director and difficulties with the original investor, the current team assumed responsibility for the project. Over a six-month period, this team made numerous contacts to secure funding and search out technical partners. When that search proved unfruitful, they decided to create a simplified corporation under French law, with 83,500 Euros in capital, held by the IFCM, the A Coeur Joie Federation, Emmanuel Noisette de Crauzat and several other investors. Following the 2008 Copenhagen symposium, where the project and organization were publicly announced, the articles of incorporation were registered with the Paris Chamber of Commerce, on October 20, 2008. A technical partner was found: Imedia, a Senegalese company specializing in website development. The service contract was signed in January 2009, a scope of work was created jointly and the Senegalese team began work, with the goal of making the site functional at the earliest possible date. Concurrently, the site design was developed by Cécile Mérino-Coutureau, currently artistic director of the weekly supplement to the French newspaper of record, le Monde. OpusChoral has already made two trips to Midem to expand the catalog of recordings available on the

site and to meet with music publishers to open additional sales territories.

### **The opusChoral site [www.opuschoral.com](http://www.opuschoral.com) is now open**

The entire catalog of five hundred albums is available for sale in France, Luxemburg, Cuba and Canada; all recordings in the public domain are available world-wide. A huge negotiation effort is still underway with numerous rights-holders in order to obtain access to the largest number of available catalogs possible, in the greatest number of sales territories, as rapidly as possible. OpusChoral has already signed with German, American, English, Belgian, French and Dutch labels. Recordings of Japanese, Tibetan, European and American choirs are available on OpusChoral. A search engine with multiple functionalities (search by country, music genre, type of choir, composer, artist) permits rapid access to the OpusChoral catalog. Also available are recent articles on choral music recordings, short texts highlighting various parts of the catalog, and an admittedly subjective "Favorites" section, all there to help Internet-users navigate through the catalog. Once a recording has been found, a description and the cover of the CD are displayed, as well as a brief description and the possibility of hearing a short excerpt of each track (limited to 30 seconds for legal reasons). After adding the desired recordings to their shopping cart, the user must register, if they have not already done so. The purchase can be completed within the PayPal secure payment system, using a purchasing card, credit card, PayPal account or other method, depending on the country.

The OpusChoral site is making every effort to remain entirely legal, no easy task given the quantity and complexity of the texts and constantly evolving situations in each territory. We retain the right to modify the appearance or content of the site at any time in order to comply with all applicable laws. Recordings downloaded from the OpusChoral are completely legal, and we intend to remunerate their copyright-holders

fairly.

## **Future developments**

Future improvements will not necessarily be visible to the public, for example, in the area of reports to publishers, labels and copyright-holders designed to ensure a completely transparent relationship between these entities and OpusChoral. Additional priorities include adding new catalogs and making the entire OpusChoral catalog available in new territories.

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*Translated from the French by Anita Shaperd, USA*