

11th International Choir Competition in Riva del Garda

A "Singing Boat Trip" on Lake Garda

Press release by Stefanie Vera Müller

It was a beautiful spring day as INTERKULTUR representatives and the city mayor, Claudio Molinari, welcomed the choirs to the *International Choir Competition in Riva del Garda*. In all, a total of 38 choirs made up of almost 1,500 singers from thirteen nations had made the trip and marched through the town in the traditional parade of choirs before performing in the competition and concerts. The colourful and entertaining programme on the opening evening, 28th March, got audience and choirs alike into the mood for an enjoyable and musical few days. Featuring choirs from Denmark, Singapore, Norway, Austria, Trinidad and Tobago, and South Africa, the festival held the promise of a uniquely diverse musical experience.

One of the surprise moments of the opening ceremony was the presentation of certificates of honour to participants who had performed at many previous INTERKULTUR events. These loyalty certificates were presented to choirs from Singapore, Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary and Italy. The *Kammerchor des Kurfürst Friedrich Gymnasiums Heidelberg*, Germany, conducted by Werner Glöggl, was attending its fifth INTERKULTUR event and won a little boat trip on Lake Garda. Werner

Glöggl and his choir first performed at an INTERKULTUR event in November 1989: and they all remember well the significance of the date, which marked the fall of the Berlin Wall and the

collapse of the border that divided the two German states.

The competition featured the categories "Sacred Choral Music", "A Cappella" and "Children's and Youth Choirs". Ensembles from Europe, Africa, the Americas and Asia performed in front of the jury. Jurors Prof. Giovanni Acciai (Italy), Dr. Kinga Litowska (Poland), Prof. Tatyana Malysheva (Russia), Dr. Vivien Pike (Britain) and Hubertus Weimer (Germany) were deeply impressed by the quality of singing and awarded 24 gold, 16 silver and 4 bronze diplomas. Choirs awarded a gold diploma are automatically qualified to take part in the Champions Competition at the World Choir Games or the World Choir Championships.

Two conductors' prizes were awarded at the *International Choir Competition*. The distinction went to Helena Fojkar Zupančič, conductor of the *Zbor Gimnazije Litija* (Slovenia) and Matteo Valbusa, conductor of the *Coro maschile "La Stele"* (Italy). A special prize went to *Danmarks Radio Pige-koret* (Denmark), conducted by Michael Bojesen, for their outstanding performance of the song "Plant a Tree", written by Michael Bojesen. Akustika Chamber Singers (South Africa), conducted by Christo Burger also received a special prize for their unique rendering of "Karimanatu kuicha" by Ko Matsushita.

The most outstanding performance was by *Akustika Chamber Singers* (South Africa) and conductor Christo Burger, which won the category "Mixed Choirs with Compulsory Work" and the Grand Prix. *Danmarks Radio Pige-koret* (Denmark) with conductor Michael Bojesen was awarded the audience prize. The *Kammerchor des Kurfürst Friedrich Gymnasiums Heidelberg*, conducted by Werner Glögler won the category "Mixed Youth Choirs".

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