

Ars Choralis 2014 International Symposium on Chorusology – the Choral Art, Singing and the Voice 24-26 April 2014, Zagreb, Croatia

By Branko Stark, choral conductor and composer

Zagreb, Croatia was once again host to Ars Choralis: The International Scientific Symposium on Chorusology for the Choral Art, Singing and Voice, organized by The Croatian Choral Directors Association (HUZ). Our vision and goal is to connect choral music and science in a stronger and more efficient way. Our Symposium is intended to contribute to the international improvement of choral music and sees itself as a complement to other symposia. We want to support research into the choral art and offer researchers a platform to present their results.



Marvin Keenze (one of the top singing pedagogues in the USA) receiving the Prize of the Croatian Choral Directors Association for his life works.

For this purpose we have created three things: the term *chorusology*, which stands for the multidisciplinary science of the choral art; the symposium Ars Choralis; and the International Choral Institute, which will publish

Arschor@lis, a scientific online magazine on chorusology. Members of the magazine's international editorial board include Johan Sundberg (Sweden), Christian Herbst (Austria), David Howard (Great Britain), Kenneth Bozeman (USA), Branko Stark (Croatia), Thomas Caplin (Norway), Santa Večerina (Croatia), Harald Jers (Germany), Filipa La (Portugal), and Per-Ake Lindestad (Sweden).

Presentation topics at *Ars Choralis* in 2014 included Choir/choral director; Vocal pedagogy; Conducting/Interpretation; Composition/Analysis/Hermeneutics; Vocal Performance/Vocal Stylistics; Spoken Voice; Science/Voice/Hearing; Science/Music; Music Pedagogy/Education; Sacred Music; Music/Media/Technology and others.

The Symposium was dedicated to the famous Croatian composer Ivan Zajc who passed away exactly a century ago. The guest of honor was Marvin Keenze, a well-known singing teacher from the USA. Other speakers invited included Johan Sundberg (Sweden), Thomas Caplin (Norway), Kittiporn Tantrarungroj (Thailand), Lisa Popeil (USA), Christian Herbst (Austria), and Kenneth Bozeman (USA). Altogether, there were 35 presenters from 12 countries and 39 lectures and workshops. The complete program booklet can be downloaded from our website (see address below).

The Croatian Choral Directors Association also announced awards and titles during the symposium. Marvin Keenze was awarded the *Croatian Choral Directors Association's Award* for his life's work in the field of vocal pedagogy. Santa Večerina, PhD (Croatia) received the same award, for her work in the field of phoniatics. Cynthia Hanzel-Bakić (USA/Croatia) and Lisa Popeil (USA) were awarded the *Plaque Sergije Rainis* for their achievements in the field of vocal art and vocal pedagogy. Also, for the first time, new awards were given for research and scientific work concerning chorusology. They were given to Kenneth Bozeman, Filipa La,

David Howard, Per-Åke Lindestad, Christian Herbst, and Rozina Palić-Jelavić. The professional title *Maestra Mentor of The Croatian Choral Directors Association* was given to Ivana Jelinčić and Zrinka Šimunović, as they have consistently achieved results at a high artistic level as choral directors.



Friday evening concert. All choirs and the audience are traditionally singing, as the end, 'We move the World'.

On the evening of the second day of the symposium, a solemn concert was held. The main performers were selected Croatian choirs, along with some of the invited speakers, who delighted the audience by singing, conducting and playing. These ensembles showed the audience that scientists can be excellent musicians, and that musicians can be excellent scientists. At the end of the concert, all the artists and the audience sang the world choral song *We Move the World*, which is traditionally performed at the end of this concert.

Those who participated in the event once more expressed the opinion that this symposium has become an international force for choir conductors, singers and all others who are in any way connected to the choral art, singing or voice.

This symposium, like the two preceding it, was a place to hear new and interesting lectures enriching the knowledge of choral directors and singers. The choral art, mostly based on subjective elements, can be furthered only by connecting it to objective elements through science. The fourth symposium will be held March 31 – April 2, 2016. You can find all the information about past and future symposia on our website:

www.choralcroatia.com

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