

# Chile, a Choral Movement in Crescendo

*By ALACC-Chile, Asociación Latinoamericana de Canto Coral*

Choral singing as an organized activity began in Chile at the beginning of the twentieth century with the foundation of the Bach Society, followed in 1957 by the Federation of the Choirs of Chile, and the situation is unchanged today.

At present we have a choral movement which is growing non-stop the length and breadth of the country, with over three and a half thousand choirs operating in the context of different institutions, including the Church, private and public companies, municipalities, educational institutions, and even foreign communities. In addition, the choirs integrate with organizations such as:

- **The Latin American Association of Choral Singing – ALACC-Chile:** The appearance of ALACC on the scene has meant a renewal and enrichment of choral works, highlighting the courses given by leading international masters. This was made possible thanks to the sponsorship, over the last ten years, of the Catholic University of Chile: Nestor Andrenacci, Werner Pfaff, Joseph Pratt, Robert Sund, and Maria Felicia Perez among others. The association has also arranged for foreign choirs – such as the Keystone State Boychoir from Philadelphia – to visit the country, and has organized workshops with foreign directors visiting the country with their choirs. These have included Carmina Slovenica from Slovenia, Yale Alumni Choir from the USA, the Petits Chanteurs of Paris, and others. Of special note

is the “**Mario Baeza**” **International Choir Festival** organized by ALACC every two years. The sixth and latest festival was held in Valparaíso and Viña del Mar in August 2010 and was a great success. It was attended by eleven choirs from abroad and nine Chilean choirs, and the inauguration was held in the Hall of Honor in the National Congress building. The assistant directors attending the event found a shared interest in reviving ALACC at the Latin American level, and in strengthening ties and promoting cultural and artistic exchanges. Over the years, choirs from Spain, Norway, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Venezuela have participated in the Festival.



*Coral Juventudes Culturales  
de la Universidad Central  
de Caracas conducted by  
Luis Eduardo Galián,  
Venezuela*



*Coral Amalia Carrera  
conducted by Amalia Carrera  
Duque, Bucaramanga,  
Colombia*

- **Corporación Coral Universitaria de Chile:** An organization which groups together choirs from the country's main Universities.
- **Sociedad Coral de Profesores de Chile SOCOPROCH:** An organization which groups together choirs from teacher training colleges and holds the SOCOPROCH Choir Festival annually in different regions of the country.
- **The Municipal Theatre "Grow Up Singing" Program:** Important annual choir competition which has trained the directors of approximately three hundred children's choirs every year for the past twenty years.
- **Federation of the Choirs of Chile FEDECOR:** Formed from different choirs in Chile who wish to join together, holding an annual National Choral Festival.
- **Agrupación Coral de los Ríos ACORIS:** Brings together choirs from the Rivers Region in the south of the country.
- **Associations of regional choirs, senior citizens, and others.**

### **Choirs in the Bicentennial of the Republic of Chile:**

To celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Chile's Independence, a number of events were planned throughout the country, and choral activities were one of the most important because of the diversity of the members. Children, young people, adults,

and older people presented a variety of programs, each having the **Bicentennial Hymn** as a shared element. **Chile Sings** started in September 2009 with well-attended presentations in the different towns throughout the country and culminated in the event "**Voices of the Bicentennial**", which brought together a multitude of people at the government building, with the participants ranging from children to senior citizens.

## **Chile: 2010 Choral Diary**

January 2010

**51<sup>st</sup> National Festival of Choir Teachers** organized by SOCOPROCH in Calbuco, with thirty choirs and six hundred teachers from all over the country participating

March 2010

**1<sup>st</sup> 2010 Choir Meeting.** Vocal groups and choirs from parishes, chapels, schools and apostolic movements. Archbishopric of Santiago.

July 2010

**First Inter-Student Choir Festival**, entitled "Let all the Schools and Colleges sing in Iquique", organized by Dusan Teodorovic University Choir of Arturo Prat University and its director Maestro Morales Escobar

August 2010

**Sixth "Mario Baeza" International Choir Festival** held in Valparaíso, Viña del Mar and the V Región of Chile, organized by Asociación Latinoamericana de Canto Coral ALACC-Chile (The Association of Latin American Choral Singing).

September 2010

**Student Choir Meeting**, organized by the Faculty of Art at the University of Playa Ancha and held at the Auditorium of the Scuola Italiana in Valparaíso.

October 2010

**Seventeenth National Festival of Chilean Choirs** in San Antonio, Chile, organized by FEDECOR, the National Federation of the Choirs of Chile. Sixteen choirs participated, together with an Argentinean choir.

October 2010

The **University of Talca** celebrated its twenty-ninth anniversary with a ceremony and a concert, and awarded the "Abate Molina" Medal of Merit to Maestro **Vicente Bianchi**.

November 2010

The prominent professor and choir director at the Southern University of Chile, **Hugo Muñoz Sepúlveda**, received recognition, being honored with the **Municipal Art Prize 2010**.

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