

Introducing the WSCM 2023 Organizing Committee

Jennifer Taynen, Canada/Qatar

WSCM2023 General Manager

January 3, 2021, saw the first meeting of the World Symposium on Choral Music (WSCM) 2023 Qatar Organizing Committee. Composed of six representatives from the International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM), six representatives from Qatar and the region selected by Qatar National Choral Association (QNCA), and two honorary members, the team is set to work on the monumental, and exciting task of bringing the WSCM to the Middle East region for the first time. Qatar, with its ancient traditions of hospitality and contemporary global outlook, offers a unique and welcoming setting for voices from around the world to mix, mingle, and share their unique choral traditions and knowledge.

The WSCM is the IFCM's flagship event. Every three years it draws together the best of the choral world, including choirs, conductors, composers, musicologists, music industry representatives, and more. Delegates and participants are hosted in a major global city for an eight-day program of concerts, workshops, masterclasses, book talks, presentations, networking events, an expo, and of course plenty of singing. This first foray of the WSCM into the Arab world offers the potential for a wealth of new experiences for all involved. The WSCM 2023 Committee is excited by the opportunities presented in this new location and looks forward to creating an innovative WSCM that builds on the strength of past WSCM experiences and successes.

The 2023 WSCM planners are organized into two committees, the Artistic Committee and the Administrative Committee.

The Artistic Committee is co-chaired by Giovanni Pasini (QNCA) and Jan Schumacher (IFCM Vice-President). It includes an additional four members: Cristian Grases (IFCM representative), Nasser Sahim Nasseb (Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra), Alena Pyne (Sing Qatar), and Beverly Shangkuan-Cheng (IFCM representative). In addition to this team, the Artistic Committee has nominated Dana Alfardan, a Qatari composer and songwriter, as an Honorary Member. The Artistic Committee is also in the process of establishing a regional artistic advisory board to assist in the design of the Middle Eastern portion of the program. Together these individuals will ensure that the very best of the world and the region is represented on the stages and at the podiums of the 2023 WSCM.

In considering the very unique responsibilities of representation and diversity with which the Artistic Committee is tasked, Jan Schumacher expressed the following:



"IFCM's World Symposium has always been the place to showcase a sampling of the most prestigious choirs from all over the world. The Artistic Committee for the 2023 WSCM aims to highlight vocal excellence as well as vocal diversity in styles and regions. In so doing we can ensure every participant of the symposium discovers new and exciting ideas, possibilities, and innovations. To plan this in a young and up-and-coming Arab choral scene promises to be an inspiration and pioneering work process."

The Administrative Committee is co-chaired by Ki Adams (IFCM Vice-President) and Jennifer Taynen (QNCA). Members of the committee are Yoshihiro Egawa (IFCM Vice-President), Gábor Móczár (IFCM representative), Aljazi Al Henzab (Qatar Foundation), and Anwar Al Nimri (Arab Choral Network). The Administrative Committee is delighted that Khalid Salim, Head of the Qatari Ministry of Culture and Sports' Music Affairs

Center, has accepted the title of Honorary Member in their team. The Ministry of Culture and Sports' active participation in the planning of this event offers very welcome resources and assistance in all aspects of this project. With Qatar's state-of-the-art facilities, global connectivity as the hub for Qatar Airways, and infrastructure legacy of the 2022 FIFA World Cup, participants in the 2023 WSCM can look forward to a seamlessly organized event that is easy to navigate and accessible to all.

Khalid Salem, Head of the Qatari Ministry of Culture and Sports' Music Affairs Center, explained after the inaugural committee meeting,



"We are thrilled to be able to host this event here in Qatar! And I am personally excited to be part of the organizing. My entire team at the Music Affairs Center is eager to work towards its success. The WSCM offers an unprecedented opportunity for cultural exchange between our region and the rest of the world. We look forward to welcoming the choral world here... sharing our singing traditions with you and learning from yours."

Both Artistic and Administrative Committees have quickly settled down to work. With Covid's cancelation of the 2020 WSCM in New Zealand and the setbacks, disappointments, and delays for choral events around the world, there is catching up to do over the next few months. The 2023 WSCM team has prioritized a detailed examination of the event timeline. Due to Qatar's summer temperatures, the IFCM has made the unprecedented decision to shift the timing of the WSCM, with an opening ceremony scheduled for late December and running into January 2024. At this time of year Qatar experiences sunny warm temperatures perfect for outdoor events and

concerts, and much of the world is still enjoying the vacation days that follow after religious holidays. The Organizing Committee is confident that all the necessary preparations are on schedule to ensure the 2023 WSCM is a massive showcase of the very best the choral world has to offer. By 2023, we are all going to be ready for a large-scale celebration of our art form, in all its diversity and beauty. And Qatar will be ready to host that celebration!

Edited by Karin Rockstad, USA