

# Message from the President

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I write to you during this month of September, after a very successful IFCM summer.

As you know, we had three festivals all over China during the month of July. Our first festival was the China Inner Mongolia 2018 Belt and Road Choral Festival – International Choral Week in Hohhot where we had the pleasure of hearing the beautiful voices of native choirs, as well as choirs who travelled all the way across the world to join us. It was a magnificent and culturally rich experience. During this festival, we enjoyed the presence of the World Youth Choir, 68 singers from all over the world, aged 17 to 26, who performed an amazing repertoire, conducted by Jonathan Velasco and Helene Stureborg, two wonderful and well-known conductors. The festival also organised a WYC workshop to promote cultural diversity among local singers. Next year, we'll celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the WYC project.

After a spectacular experience in China – Inner Mongolia, we headed to Beijing for the 14<sup>th</sup> edition of the China International Chorus Festival and the IFCM World Choral Education Conference. We welcomed 300 choirs from all over the world at this festival. The World Youth Choir was also part of the programme and gave beautiful performances to a delighted Beijing audience. During their stay in Beijing, the choirs were able to get to know and enjoy the local culture, a great opportunity that will be in everyone's heart forever, I have no doubt about it.

Last but not least, we went to the 2018 China (Quiandongnan) International Folk Song Choral Festival and IFCM Voices Conference in Kaili, where the festival committee had prepared some very special events in different places of the region. We

visited Miao and the Dong villages to fully enjoy their ethnic culture. The choirs admired breath-taking views, experienced the local food and performed in amazing places, a truly unforgettable experience.

IFCM was also very happy to host the 2018 Asia Pacific Youth Choir (APYC) Tour in Kaili. The APYC is composed of very talented young musicians from the Asia-Pacific region. They rehearsed in Kaili for the first time under the leadership of Dr. Beverly Shangkuan-Cheng, this year's APYC conductor. Similar to the WYC, the APYC has different singers and conductors who join together every year in different locations. Despite a short rehearsal period, these brilliant singers gave wonderful performances and charmed each audience with their voices.

After the month of July in China, I travelled to Tallinn for the Europa Cantat XX Festival. This was a memorable festival with many choirs from different countries and a completely different cultural experience, as I immersed myself in the rich, Estonian culture. I can safely say that this was an extraordinary summer for choral music lovers around the world.

In the background, IFCM has been working on a new subscription system for its members, as well as an application that will make it much easier for choral lovers to stay up to date with the choral world and IFCM. With this app, you'll be able to share your love for choral music with people around the world. We have also been very active on promoting the World Choral Day, which, this year, will be linked to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WWI.

IFCM is proud to lead the world of choral music, creating unique opportunities for talented musicians to show their art, to get to know others' art and culture, giving each other unforgettable memories. IFCM connects the world through choral music.

Let me end this letter with a fervent wish that you'll keep on supporting choral music as well as sharing your passion for singing, as it is our strong community that allows us to keep doing what we love, year after year.

*Edited by Karin Rockstad, USA*