

One Voice for Choral Music in Europe

European Choral Association – Europa Cantat

Press release by Sonja Greiner – General Secretary

On November 27th 2010 the members of **Europa Cantat – European Federation of Young Choirs** and **AGEC – Arbeitsgemeinschaft Europäischer Chorverbände** completed the merger between the two organisations to the “European Choral Association – Europa Cantat”. Under this new name the two European choir organisations will change from January 2011 into the leading pan-European non-profit organisation dedicated to education and cultural exchange in the field of vocal music, among young people and adults. AGEC was founded in 1955 and its main focus was the cooperation between national choral organisations for the promotion of mutual understanding through singing and music-making. Europa Cantat was founded in 1960/1963 as a tool to organize international cooperation, promote tolerance and peace through common singing and the intercultural exchange of choral repertoire. Without giving up these original aims, the two organisations will join forces in the new association.

The **European Choral Association – Europa Cantat** will directly represent around 50 national and regional choir and conductors’ organisations and well over one million singers, conductors, composers and choral managers and will reach out to more than 20 million in over 40 European countries.

Through the **European Choral Association – Europa Cantat** choral music in Europe will thus speak with one voice and represent the European choral world in international music organisations

and at political level in Europe.

The ***European Choral Association – Europa Cantat*** aims with this merger to strengthen the position of choral music within Europe and to promote the human, educational and social effects of choral singing and common music making.

In order to achieve this aim the association will continue to organize and develop activities in cooperation with members and (new) partners. It will widen its scope through cooperation with research institutions to explore and gain knowledge on e.g. social and physical aspects of singing. It seeks to support the economical development of the sector by reaching into fields such as cultural management, fundraising and sponsoring. And with successful and inspiring projects in mind, the ***European Choral Association – Europa Cantat*** will also continue launching musical integration projects for and with minorities and people with disabilities.

The programme of the ***European Choral Association – Europa Cantat*** for the coming years includes the EUROPA CANTAT festival in Torino (IT) in July/August 2012, EUROPA CANTAT *junior* in Pärnu (EE) in July 2011, annual sessions of the Eurochoir (2011 in Italy and 2012 in the Czech Republic) and the World Youth Choir, a number of International Singing Weeks in different European countries, seminars, courses and study tours for conductors, composers and choral managers, a regular composition competition and conferences.

The ***European Choral Association – Europa Cantat*** will be governed by a Board of 15 representatives from 13 European countries, including members of the Boards of both associations, under the Presidency of Sante Fornasier (Italy) supported by Vice-Presidents Gábor Móczár (Hungary), Fred Sjöberg (Sweden) and Anneliese Zeh (Austria) as well as by treasurer Jean Smeets (Belgium). The seat of the association will be in Bonn (Germany) with Secretary General Sonja Greiner and her team.

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