

Summer School for Conductors and Composers 2020 'Choral Lab. 21st century', retrospective

Olga Lukianova

singer and manager

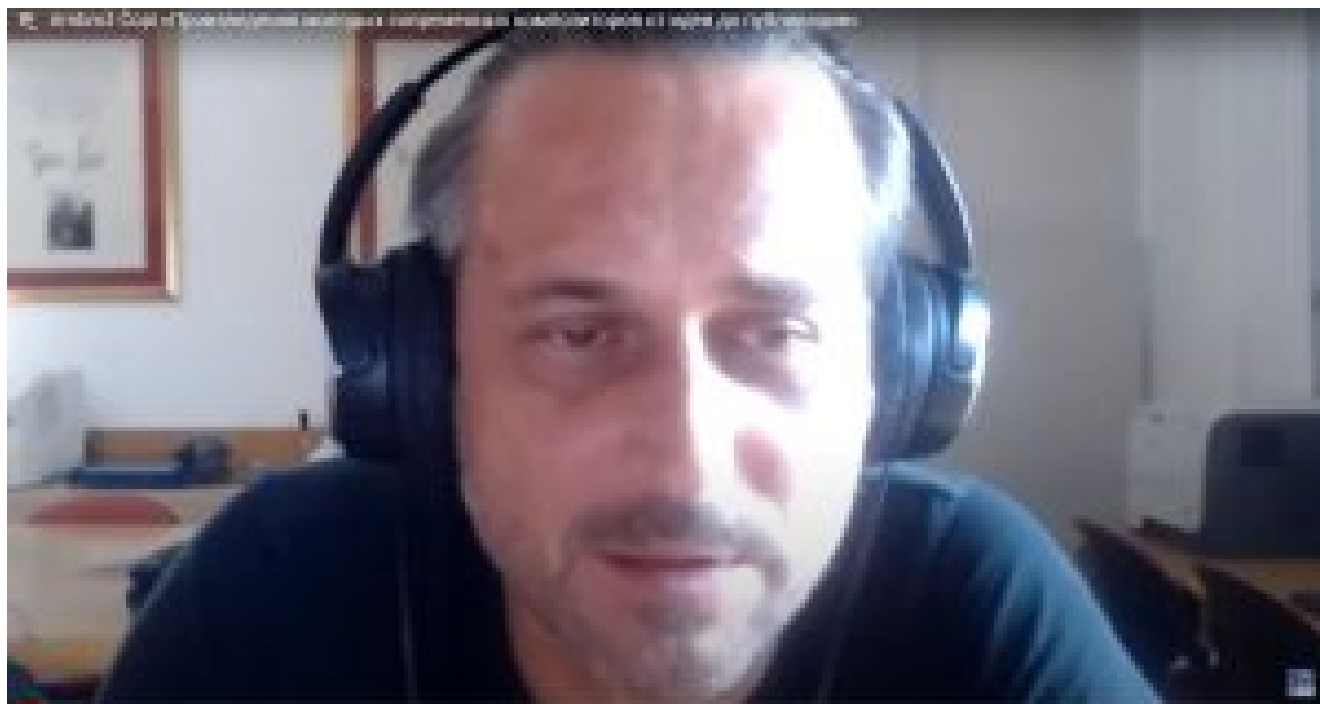
Every year, at the end of June, conductors and composers from all over Russia and neighbouring countries come to Gatchina, a small town near Saint Petersburg. During these 6 days, Gatchina turns into a choral music centre, holding seminars with the most well-known Russian choir leaders, running master classes with European musical experts, organizing choral music composition classes and the participating groups' concerts, and sharing experiences and creative musical inspiration.



The Bremen Town Musicians body percussion composition

2020 proved to be a time of unexpected events. Though impossible to organize our Summer School the way we were used to, many musicians looked forward to taking part anyway. It was decided by the Interregional Association of Children's and Youth Choirs from the Northwestern Region of the Russian Federation to hold the traditional Summer School for conductors and composers in an online format. This was something new for people and also a great challenge!

Summer School 2020 master classes were held by top Russian conductors and choral composers as well as by experts from abroad, including: Vladimir Minin (Russia, Moscow), Ambrož Čopi (Slovenia), Rasa Gelgotiene (Lithuania), Inessa Bodyako (Belarus), Mia Makaroff (Finland), Viktor Yemeljanov (Russia, Samara), Alexey Larin (Russia, Moscow), Jēkabs Jančevskis (Latvia), and others, representing an amazing diversity of experience and mastery.



Ambrož Čopi online with us!

The online format made it possible for conductors and composers from all over the country and elsewhere to take part in the Summer School events. The total number of participants was over 300 musicians!

Every day the participants mastered contemporary schooling techniques and methods and studied new choral pieces by Russian and European composers. Alexandr Ostapenko and Zarina Kogay held additional master classes on Body Percussion techniques, and Viktor Yemelianov led an additional workshop entitled 'Phonopedic method of voice development'.



Evening online concerts



Online meeting with Vladimir Minin

The intensive schooling program continued in the online café, where participants got to know each other, shared experiences, and discussed contemporary choral music. Special online concerts, presenting the best examples of world choral music, were held every evening.

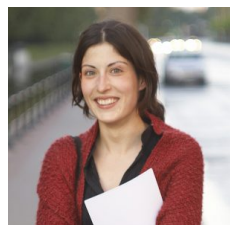
This year, the Summer School composers program was held as individual classes. Seventeen composers participating in the Summer School were divided into 3 groups, working with Mia Makaroff, Alexey Larin, and Jēkabs Jančevskis.

During their morning classes, the participants discussed contemporary composing techniques, use of folklore tunes in composing, and writing for children's choirs, and the afternoons were dedicated to the challenging job of creating their own choral compositions, with the guidance of the Summer School teachers.

Despite all the restrictions, the Summer School for Conductors and Composers 2020 was still a success and got lots of grateful and positive reviews.



Visual aids for children



Olga Lukianova (1984) was born in Gatchina, a small town near St. Petersburg (Russia). She has been involved as a singer in the choral world since childhood. For a few years, she worked as manager of the Roganova Youth Capella Harmony choir under the leadership of Irina Roganova. She has also volunteered as executive manager at the Summer School for Conductors and Composers 2020 “Choral Lab. 21st century”. Email: olga.lukianova@jetbrains.com

Edited by Steve Lansford, USA