

World Choral Day, Twenty-three Years Old But Younger than Ever

By Francesco Leonardi, IFCM Project Manager

Twenty-three years have passed since Alberto Grau launched the grand project of an international day dedicated to choral singing, to highlight not only the artistic and cultural value of song, but also its significance in the social sphere. The idea of celebrating singing at the same time around the world also makes us realise how this human activity goes beyond political ideals, cultural differences and even differences in climate.

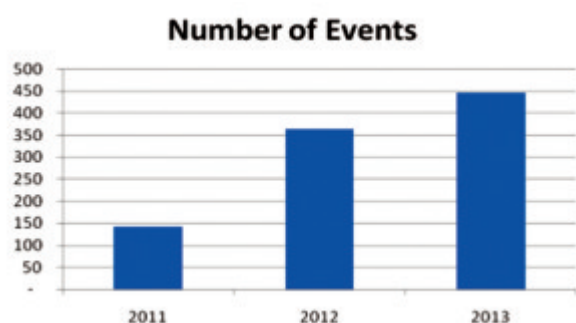
Not only does this festival show no signs of ageing, but also, and especially in recent years, it is experiencing renewed success and growing membership. Since (during the WCSM9 in Puerto Madryn) I was officially appointed Project Manager of the WCD, together with the working group which includes Jennifer Tham (Asia), Cristian Grases (North and South America), Rudolf De Beer (Africa), Stephen Leek (Oceania) and Jeroen Schrijner (Europe), the goal has been to raise awareness of the importance of this event for the choral world and therefore to increase the participation and number of events associated with it.

For this purpose, using technology, I have created a dedicated website (www.worldchoralday.org) through which it is possible for anyone to quickly and easily register their event and download the proclamation (translated into more than twenty-five languages) and graphics to display at concerts and on social networks. Thanks to this new technological tool we have also made it easier to collect feedback from concerts, giving you the possibility to publish photos and videos of the event

on the website. We now have 52 videos and 115 photos from all over the world that embody the joy of this event.

This year in particular we advised choirs to devote the day to raising funds for victims of the earthquake which took place in the Philippines just days before World Choral Day, to emphasize the strength of a choral world that has always been attentive to social issues and mutual aid. It seems fair to take advantage of this article to bring the thanks of our Filipino friends to all the participants. Heartfelt thanks, therefore, to all those who wanted to give a concrete sign of their closeness to the Philippines at a very difficult time.

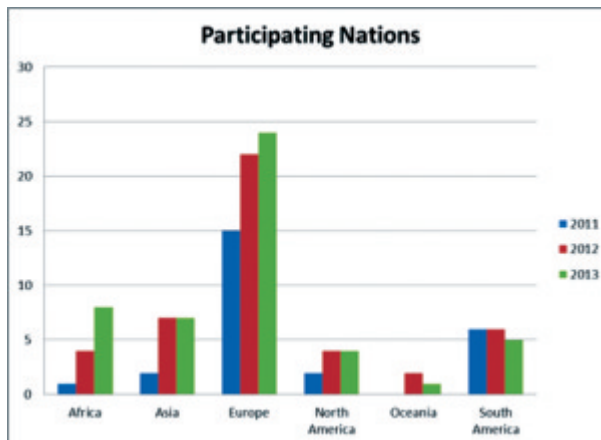
For the third year running, participation at WCD from all over the world has been on the increase, reaching nearly 450 events this year in about 50 different countries around the world. It should be noted that, in addition to the usual individual concerts, many choir festivals joined in.



These numbers are significant and a very strong indicator of how the choral experience, even in the most remote countries, is becoming an important element of social consciousness as well as personal education. The efforts of IFCM in recent years have been rewarded and, thanks to the introduction of the WCD participation certificate, the feeling of belonging to the choral world has also increased. The percentage of choirs who have repeated the experience of taking part in this celebration is approaching 80%, an important sign of how this day is becoming a tradition for many choirs.

Even the distribution of the registered events shows how the

WCD message is reaching all the continents of the Earth, uniting cultures and peoples in a single testimony to civilisation and peace.



The daily distribution of events highlights how even the idea of extending the duration of the WCD beyond the single day chosen for its celebration, therefore including events taking place within a few weeks from that date, has enabled many more choirs to celebrate the ideas and message of this festival. The WCD is becoming more and more a month of concerts and events aimed at bringing out the comprehensive nature of choral singing so we invite you to start programming your concert now for the next edition which will take place from the first weekend of December 2014.



But it is not over. We cannot and must not stop here. We must find ways to involve even more events, more countries, with your help and your ideas. We are already planning the 2014 edition: if you want more information do not hesitate to contact me at project.manager@worldchoralday.org

Singing is good for those who sing, but also for those who

listen... make sure the whole world knows about your concert and can enjoy it!

Translated from the Italian by Mirella Biagi, Italy-UK