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Project

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1. Starting point: Motives of the Artistic Director

In Autumn 2015, Helena Rösli came across the composition “The Peacemakers” written by the English composer Karl Jenkins. A composition for choir, solo and orchestra, in which the messages of peace by famous personalities are heard. It was during a time when there was much talk of building walls, closing borders and public hate messages. At the same time, the misery in Syria and other war-torn areas continued unimpeded.

Words from people of power about the efforts of peace are becoming increasingly rare. However, it is never too late for the messages of those people, who are untiringly committed to solidarity and peace, and who have been quoted in the “Peacemakers”, to be heard again and again. All “Peacemakers” around the world shall be seen and heard. Those, who in their everyday life, at their workplace or in their social life, seek peace ‘quietly’. These are the motives for the following idea.

2. The idea

Together with ChoRplus, and many other participating groups and individuals, TimeDate Association will unite the voices of peace around the globe, thus providing a cultural response to all efforts of peace.

On world Peace Day, the 21st of September 2023, choirs around the world shall perform Karl Jenkin’s composition for choir, soprano solo and orchestra, “The Peacemakers”. The performance shall take place in each choir’s home country at 8pm local time. Due to the different time zones this will result in a 24-hour concert relay around the globe giving sound to the words of peace in the musical work “The Peacemakers”.

The organisers wish for this musical message around the world to leave traces of peace and act as an enduring sign of solidarity and human dignity.

3. The compositions

The main composition «The Peacemakers» by Karl Jenkins

Of all composers still alive today the works by Karl Jenkins (*1944) are the most frequently performed worldwide. Alone “The Armed Man: A mass for Peace”, which was performed by ChoRplus for the very first time in Central Switzerland in 2008, has been played over a thousand times in 20 different countries.

His ensuing work “The Peacemakers” pays tribute to people who have given testimony for peace. It mostly references personalities of the 20th century such as Martin Luther King, Albert Schweitzer, Anne Frank, and Nelson Mandela, but also the English poets Shelley and Mallory, the composer Johann Sebastian Bach and Rumi, the Persian mystic from the Middle Ages. Representatives of Islam, Buddhism, Judaism and the Bahai faith also have their say.

Moreover, the musical language style was purposely chosen in order to be appealing to the broadest audience possible. Jenkins takes care of tonal variety by complementing classical orchestral instrumentation with instruments and styles of music from other cultures.

The following pieces from the work have been chosen for the project TimeDate Music:

- 1 Blessed are the peacemakers
- 2 Fanfara
- 3 Peace, peace!
- 4 I offer your peace
- 5 Inner peace
- 6 Healing Light: a Celtic prayer
- 7 Meditation: Peace is
- 10 Fiat pax in virtute tua
- 14 One Song
- 15 Let there be justice for all
- 17 Anthem: Peace, triumphant peace

Other enriching compositions

As a sign of a worldwide network of appreciation of all nationalities, several shorter compositions from different regions of the world such as Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia and South America are planned to be included in the joint concert program.

As a result, “The Peacemakers” will be shortened by a few numbers (see above). The final program will be determined at a later stage in collaboration participating groups.

4. The message for the International Day of Peace

A personality from each country, who has distinguished themselves by commitment and contribution to peace making, will emphasise the musical call for worldwide peace finding with a strong message. They represent the “current Peacemakers” who tirelessly stand up for humanity and wrestle for global solutions of peace.

5. The performance in Switzerland

The Swiss leg of this global musical relay of peace will take place in Lucerne, where “The Peacemakers” will be performed with Swiss choirs. Moreover, impressive portraits of peace by Lea Suter will demonstrate the enormous efforts undertaken by present “Peacemakers” to leverage the message of peace in their social environments. The portraits further demonstrate the commitment of personalities from war zones, who unwaveringly continue the cultural work of peace despite the terrible circumstances they find themselves in.

6. The performers

The conductress and initiator

Helena Rösli was born and raised in Werthenstein (Lucerne, Switzerland). After completing her apprenticeship as a carpenter, she turned her attention to choral music. She completed her initial training in choral conducting in Zürich under Karl Scheuber. Thereafter, she studied at the former Akademie für Schul- und Kirchenmusik in Lucerne (Academy for School and Church Music, now Academy of Music) where she completed studies in “Organ B” and “Church Music and Choir Direction A”. She also completed CAS training in orchestral conducting (Intermediate) at the Zürcher Hochschule der Künste (Zurich Academy of Art).

At present, Helena Rösli teaches at the Musikschule Rottal (Music School Rottal) and is the director of the local children’s choir. Additionally, she conducts the MauritiusChor Ruswil, the Kirchenchor Werthenstein *klein&fein*, as well as ChoRplus.

Helena Rösli is characterised by her musicality, diversity, inventiveness and her richness of ideas. She regularly involves herself in large-scale concert and theatre projects. She is a co-founder and the artistic director of the music festival “Felsenfest” which takes place every few years on the monastery hill in Werthenstein.

Helena Rösli has been a board member of the Schweizerischen Berufsdirigent*innen-Verband (Swiss professional conductors association) since 2018.

ChoRplus

ChoRplus is an ensemble of around 20 singers and was founded as a family choir in 1990 in Werthenstein. The choir has been directed by Helena Rösli since the beginning. Initially, the choir performed at small-scale concerts and at weddings and festivals. However, over the course of time the choir increasingly ventured into larger projects without neglecting the small performances. For larger concerts ChoRplus often collaborates with other choirs and singers.

ChoRplus distinguishes itself through its diverse and versatile repertoire which includes worldly and spiritual music from all eras and music styles. The choir performed in “Die erste Walpurgisnacht” (The first Walpurgis Night) by Felix Mendelssohn in Zug. It further sang the “Requiem” by John Rutter as well as the one by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. In Central Switzerland ChoRplus was the first choir to perform “The armed man” by Karl Jenkins and performed the seldomly played oratorio “Dem unbekannten Gott” (to the unknown God) by local composer Albert Jenny (1912-1992)

In TimeDate Music ChoRplus (www.chorplus.ch) will perform as the initiating choir and is seeking to collaborate with other choirs.

Other choirs

To be advised

Orchestra and Soloists

To be advised

The peace messenger**Portrait of Lea Suter**

Lea Suter is a peace activist who has been engaging with cultural peace projects in war zones around the globe for many years. After graduating in Russian studies, German studies and Communication, the young activist coordinated cultural events for the UNO in Geneva. More recently, she has been the acting director of the think tank 'foraus' (Forum foreign affairs). As a blogger and peace reporter from numerous regions of conflict, Lea provides insight into peace efforts from people all around the world who campaign for peace and communication through cultural means. She is the founder of the network 'peaceprints.ch' which advocates for "more positive stories about international co-habitation and particularly the power of culture in efforts of peace". Further, Lea Suter is the president of the newly founded "Forum fuer Friedenskultur" (forum for culture of peace) which is holding its first event "Ilanzer Sommer" (Ilanz summer) this August in Ilanz. Her peace efforts have strongly resonated with the media which resulted in the program "Kulturplatz" accompanying Lea's efforts in establishing a 'culture café' in the middle of an armed zone of conflict in Lebanon.

7. TimeDate Association

The organisers have founded the association 'TimeDate' with headquarters in Lucerne. TimeDate has taken on the responsibility for organising this unique worldwide musical event to celebrate the 'International Day of Peace' on 21st September 2023. The association is further responsible for the concert in Lucerne, Switzerland. TimeDate will support organisations and choirs which are taking part in the relay and performing the concert in their home country. However, each participating choir will be responsible for organising and financing their own performance.