

PROGRAM

23. - 26. 4. 2026
Bratislava, Slovakia



XVIII. Medzinárodný hudobný festival
18th International Music Festival

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BRATISLAVA
MUSIC AGENCY

Slovakia Cantat

XVIII. Medzinárodný hudobný festival 18th International Music Festival

23. - 26. 4. 2026, Bratislava, Slovakia

Festival sa koná pod záštitou primátora hlavného mesta Bratislavy Matúša Valla.
The festival is held under the auspices of the Mayor of Bratislava, Matúš Vallo.

Hlavný organizátor / Organiser:

BRATISLAVA MUSIC AGENCY

Umelecký riaditeľ / Festival Art Director:

Assoc. Prof. Milan Kolena, ArtD.

Medzinárodná porota / International jury:

Prof. Štefan Sedlický, ArtD. /SK/
predseda poroty/chairman of the jury
Prof. Benedykt Błoński /PL/
Kaie Tanner /EE/
Prof. Paweł Łukaszewski, PhD /PL/
Assoc. Prof. Milan Kolena, ArtD. /SK/

Spoluorganizátori / Co-organizers:

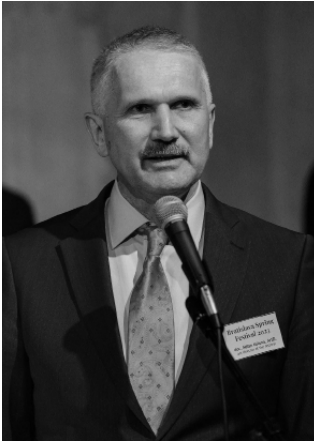
Bratislavské kultúrne a informačné stredisko
Hlavné mesto SR Bratislava
Spevácky zbor Apollo

Mediálni partneri / Media:

Kam do mesta
Citylife.sk

Fotograf / Photographer:

Vladimír Kuric



Milí priatelia hudby,

Vitajte v Bratislave - v srdci zborového a orchestrálneho umenia!

Som veľmi rád, že vás môžem privítať na XVIII. Medzinárodnom hudobnom festivale SLOVAKIA CANTAT 2026. Teší ma, že sa môžeme stretnúť a zdieľať naše nadšenie pre zborový spev a orchestrálnu hudbu. Tento rok sa na Slovakia Cantat 2026 zúčastní 13 zborov a jeden orchester z 9 krajín, teda vyše 550 hudobníkov. Zbory a orchester sa predstavia v 12 súťažných kategóriách. Tento festival je najväčším podujatím svojho druhu na Slovensku, a preto predstavuje pre slovenský hudobný život výnimočnú udalosť. Počas predchádzajúcich sedemnástich ročníkov sa na festivale vystriedalo vyše tristo speváckych zborov a orchestrov a viac ako päťtisíc hudobníkov, čo svedčí o neustálom rozvoji a medzinárodnom záujme o festival Slovakia Cantat.

Verím, že aj 18. ročník festivalu nadviaže a bude ďalej rozvíjať základnú myšlienku festivalu „hudba a umenie ľudí spája“, a zároveň verím, že nepôjde len o frázu, ale že spoločne prežijeme skutočné zjednotenie v jednej veľkej svetovej hudobnej rodine a nadviažeme nové priateľstvá medzi krajinami.

Bratislava počas festivalu otvára svoje najkrajšie koncertné priestory a pozýva všetkých prežiť nezabudnuteľné chvíle plné hudby. Verím, že z Bratislavy budete aj vy odchádzať plní nadšenia a pekných zážitkov a že v budúcnosti sa k nám radi vrátite. To vám zo srdca prajem.

Doc. Milan Kolena, umelecký riaditeľ medzinárodného festivalu Slovakia Cantat 2026

Dear friends of music,

Welcome to Bratislava - the heart of choral and orchestral music!

I am very happy to welcome you to the 18th International Music Festival SLOVAKIA CANTAT 2026. It brings me great joy and gratitude that we can come together and share our passion for choral and orchestral music. This year, Slovakia Cantat 2026 will host 13 choirs and one orchestra from 9 countries, bringing together more than 550 musicians, who will perform in 12 competition categories. As the largest event of its kind in Slovakia, it is a unique opportunity for the country's choral and orchestral life. With over 300 choirs and orchestras and 5000 musicians attending the previous seventeen editions, the festival has gained worldwide interest and progress.

I am confident that the 18th edition will continue to embody the festival's core ethos of "music and art connect people." I believe that this sentiment will not merely be a cliché, but we will genuinely form new friendships between countries.

Bratislava opens its finest concert halls and venues to all participating ensembles, and warmly invites you to enjoy a festival program filled with beautiful performances. I have every confidence that your visit to Bratislava will leave you with countless unforgettable experiences and cherished memories. I truly hope that you will feel compelled to return to this remarkable city in the future, and I send this wish from the depths of my heart!

Assoc. Prof. Milan Kolena, Art Director of the International Festival Slovakia Cantat 2026

PROGRAM FESTIVALU

23.4.2026 ŠTVRTOK / THURSDAY

19:00 OTVÁRACÍ KONCERT FESTIVALU / OPENING CONCERT

Childrens choir of Primary school dr. Jožeta Pučnika Črešnjevec /SI/, Kinder- und Jugendchor Magdeburg /DE/, A Capella Fide /TR/, Prímadonky /CZ/, Coro Juvenil da Academia de Música de Vilar do Paraíso /PT/, Ženski pevski zbor Aglaja /SI/, Leo Fortis /SI/, Trønderkor /NO/, Odins Ravner /NO/, Yonsei Music Academy Choir /KR/, Hedda /NO/, Primorski akademski zbor Vinko Vodopivec /SI/, Akademiska Sångföreningen /FI/

Jezuitský kostol/ Jesuits Church, Františkánske námestie/ Franciscan square

24.4.2026 PIATOK / FRIDAY

SÚŤAŽ SPEVÁCKYCH ZBOROV A ORCHESTROV / CHORAL AND ORCHESTRAL COMPETITION

Zrkadlová sieň Primaciálneho paláca, Primaciálne námestie / Mirror Hall of the Primate's Palace, Primatial square

Kategória: Mužské spevácke zbory / Category: Male adult choirs

14:00 Akademiska Sångföreningen /FI/

14:20 Primorski akademski zbor Vinko Vodopivec /SI/

Kategória: Súčasná hudba / Category: Contemporary Music

14:40 Akademiska Sångföreningen /FI/

Kategória: Detské spevácke zbory do 16 rokov / Category: Children's choirs up to 16 years

15:00 Kinder- und Jugendchor Magdeburg /DE/

15:15 A Capella Fide /TR/

Kategória: Detské spevácke zbory do 12 rokov / Category: Children's choirs up to 12 years

15:30 Childrens choir of Primary school dr. Jožeta Pučnika Črešnjevec /SI/

Kategória: Mládežnícke zbory do 21 rokov (SA) / Category: Youth choirs up to 21 yrs (SA)

15:45 Prímadonky /CZ/

Kategória: Ľudová pieseň s inštrumentálnym sprievodom / Category: Folksong with instrumental accompaniment

16:00 Childrens choir of Primary school dr. Jožeta Pučnika Črešnjevec /SI/

Kategória: Sakrálna hudba a cappella / Category: Musica Sacra a cappella

16:10 Hedda /NO/

16:30 Trønderkor /NO/

16:50 Leo Fortis /SI/

Kategória: Zmiešané spevácke zbory dospelých (SATB) / Category: Mixed adult choirs (SATB)

17:05 Trønderkor /NO/

FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

Kategória: Ľudová pieseň a cappella/ Category: Folksong a cappella

17:20 Leo Fortis /SI/

17:35 Ženski pevski zbor Aglaja /SI/

Kategória: Zbory seniorov / Category: Choirs of seniors

17:50 Yonsei Music Academy Choir /KR/

Nesúťažné zbory / Non competing choirs

18:05 Odins Ravner /NO/

18:20 Coro Juvenil da Academia de Música de Vilar do Paraíso /PT/

Kategória: Ženské spevácke zbory / Category: Female adult choirs

18:35 Ženski pevski zbor Aglaja /SI/

Kategória: Mládežnícke orchestre do 21 rokov- Symfonické orchestre / Category: Youth orchestras up to 21 years- Symphonic orchestras

19:30 Classic Orchestra Academia de Música de Vilar do Paraíso /PT/

25.4.2026 SOBOTA / SATURDAY

FESTIVALOVÝ KONCERT I. / FESTIVAL CONCERT I.

13:00 Kinder- und Jugendchor Magdeburg /DE/, Leo Fortis /SI/, Ženski pevski zbor Aglaja /SI/, Hedda /NO/, Yonsei Music Academy Choir /KR/, Odins Ravner /NO/, Akademiska Sångföreningen /FI/

Jezuitský kostol/ Jesuits Church, Františkánske námestie/ Franciscan square

FESTIVALOVÉ KONCERTY II. / FESTIVAL CONCERTS II.

15:00 Classic Orchestra Academia de Música de Vilar do Paraíso /PT/, A Capella Fide /TR/, Coro Juvenil da Academia de Música de Vilar do Paraíso /PT/

16:00 Trønderkor /NO/, Childrens choir of Primary school dr.Jožeta Pučnika Črešnjevca /SI/, Prímadonky /CZ/

VŠMU / Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava, Zochová 1

19:00 ZÁVEREČNÝ KONCERT A VYHLÁSENIE VÝSLEDKOV SÚŤAŽE / FINAL CONCERT A COMPETITION RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENT

Jezuitský kostol/ Jesuits Church, Františkánske námestie/ Franciscan square

26.4.2026 NEDEĽA / SUNDAY

Odchod medzinárodných speváckych zborov a orchestrov/ Departure of international choirs and orchestras

MEDZINÁRODNÁ POROTA / INTERNATIONAL JURY

Prof. Štefan Sedlický, ArtD. /Slovakia/ *chairman of the jury*

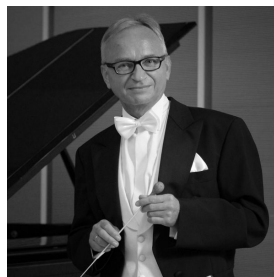
Prof. Štefan Sedlický, ArtD. studied piano at the Žilina Conservatory and at the University of Performing Arts in Bratislava where he also started conducting studies by prof. Hradil in 1989. Since 2008 he has been the senior college lecturer at the Music Arts Faculty of the Arts Academy in Banská Bystrica where he teaches choir conducting. He also cooperates with the Pedagogical Faculty of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. He is the conductor of several choirs with whom he has achieved a lot of success both home and abroad. He directs the Žilina mixed choir (1st prize in Spittal 1992; 2nd prize in Llangollen 1997; absolute winner and conductors' prize in Prague choir days 2000; Grand Prix in Bialsko Biala etc.). He has been the conductor of the chamber choir Cantica in Martin; Academic choir of Ján Cikker in Banská Bystrica from 1998-2008 (1st prize at IFAS in Pardubice; absolute winner of Academic Banská Bystrica in 2001 and 2007). In 2002 he took the conductorship of the Slovak Teachers' Choir after prof. Hradil. With this choir he has won various international awards. Since 2009 he has been leading also the mixed choir Cansona Neosolium of the Arts Academy in Banská Bystrica. He regularly cooperates as choirmaster with the State chamber orchestra in Žilina by presenting large vocal-instrumental works. He is active as lecturer in conductors' workshops and as juror in choir competitions in Slovakia and abroad.



MEDZINÁRODNÁ POROTA / INTERNATIONAL JURY

Prof. Benedykt Błoński /Poland/

Benedykt Błoński is a Polish choral conductor and professor, graduate of the Fryderyk Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw. He has worked with the Prof. W. Wawrzyczek Choir and is currently associated with the University of Warmia and Mazury Choir, with which he has achieved top prizes, including gold medals and Grand Prix, in Polish and international competitions and festivals. Since 2009, he has been the conductor of the CANTORES VARMIEŃSES Choir of the Warmia and Mazury Philharmonic. He has conducted hundreds of concerts in Poland and abroad, performing both Polish and international repertoire, including premiere works, and has recorded 13 CDs. He has also served as artistic director of major choral projects and festivals, including Eurochor 2001, the Polish-German Choral Academy “In terra pax,” and the F. Nowowiejski International Choir Festival. In addition, he has participated in numerous juries and artistic councils of choral competitions internationally and in Poland. He lectures at the Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz and the National Centre for Culture in Warsaw and currently serves as Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Warmia and Mazury. In 1999, he was awarded the academic title of Professor of Musical Arts by the President of Poland and has received distinctions such as the Gold Cross of Merit.



Kaie Tanner /Estonia/

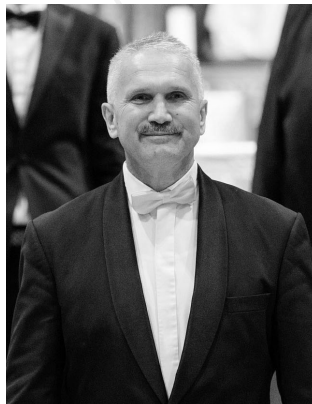
Kaie Tanner graduated from the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre with BA in choral conducting and MA in cultural management. She is working as general secretary of the Estonian Choral Association, and conducts the preparatory-, young children's-, children's- and girls' choirs of the Estonian Radio. Kaie is a board member of the Estonian Choral Association and International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM), and president of Choral Festival Network. Since 2001 she has organised several Estonian and international choral festivals, competitions and singing weeks both in Estonia and abroad. Kaie Tanner has conducted children's choirs in several Estonian Song Celebrations, Church Song Festivals and Estonian Mixed Choirs Festivals, conducted workshops and made presentations at numerous Estonian and international festivals and conferences, published articles in Estonian and international magazines and newspapers, worked in juries of international choir festivals (Beijing, Neerpelt, Hong Kong, Kaunas, Jurmala) etc.



MEDZINÁRODNÁ POROTA / INTERNATIONAL JURY

Assoc. Prof. Milan Kolena, ArtD. /Slovakia/

Milan Kolena is one of Europe's most dynamic choral conductors and educators. As artistic director of major international festivals in Bratislava, he brings together over 1,500 performers annually through seven festivals that unite musicians from around the world in powerful harmony. At the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava, he mentors future conductors with passion for choral conducting and Gregorian chant. With his ensembles – the Apollo Choir and Schola Gregoriana Bratislavensis – he's won top prizes and wowed audiences across Europe, Russia, South Africa, and Asia. His workshops and masterclasses, from the U.S. to China, are known for their energy, depth, and inspiration. In 2015, he was named Best Conductor at the Singing World Festival in St. Petersburg. As a jury member at the World Choir Games and competitions worldwide, he champions artistic excellence and youth talent. His Apollo Choir has captured Grand Prix titles in Moscow (2018), Barcelona (2023), and Greece (2024). He also serves as Vice President of the World Youth and Children Choral Artists' Association and Member of the INTERKULTUR World Choir Council. Dr. Kolena believes in the power of music to connect hearts, cross borders, and change the world – one voice at a time.



Prof. Paweł Łukaszewski, PhD /Poland/

Paweł Łukaszewski is a Polish composer of sacred and choral music, seen as a successor to Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Krzysztof Penderecki, Arvo Pärt, and John Tavener. He studied cello and composition at the Fryderyk Chopin Music Academy in Warsaw, later becoming a professor at the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music (since 1996) and Vice-Rector (2016-2024), and also taught as a visiting professor in Chile and Argentina. He has received numerous awards (including Fryderyk Awards, Orphée d'Or prizes, and major Polish state honours), with his works performed internationally at over 100 festivals. His output includes more than 150 CDs, with publications in several countries, and he leads musical institutions such as the International Festival "Laboratory of Contemporary Music," the Musica Sacra Association, and the Musica Sacra Choir of the Warsaw-Praga Cathedral. His music has gained particular recognition in the UK, performed by leading ensembles and recorded by Hyperion.



A Capella Fide /TR/

Conductors: Bahar Duransoy, Feride Lila Kayrak & Elif Defne Arslan

A Capella Fide began its work in 2022 under the direction of founding conductor Sinem Bayraktar. The choir is composed of middle school students aged 11-14 and renews its singers each year. It has performed in Fide Schools' traditional "Fideliler Sahnede" concerts and participated in the Istanbul Biennial. In 2023, the choir received the Bronze Diploma at the



Interkultur Sound Waves Linz competition. In 2024, it was awarded the Silver Diploma and the Grand Prize at the Fiestalonia Milenio World of Choirs competition. In 2025, at the "Fiestalonia Milenio Golden Voices of Montserrat" competition, the choir received the Honor Award from UNESCO's partner, the European Association of Folklore Festivals, in recognition of its outstanding contributions to the development of cultural heritage. At the



same competition, the choir also received a Gold Diploma, Silver Diploma, and Bronze Diploma. With its Grand Prize and Honor Award, an academic school from Türkiye achieved these distinctions with a children's choir for the first time.



Bahar Duransoy, aged 13, is a chorister of A Capella Fide. As part of the choir's 2025-2026 season project, in which choristers undertake conducting roles, she served as the conductor of the piece "Lal." In addition to her choral studies, she continues her cello training.

Feride Lila Kayrak, aged 11, is a chorister of A Capella Fide. Within the same season's young conductors project, she served as the conductor of "Viva La Vida." Alongside her choral work, she continues her cello studies.

Elif Defne Arslan, aged 11, is a chorister of A Capella Fide. As part of the project providing young choristers with conducting experience, she served as the conductor of "Shape of You." In addition to her choral studies, she continues her flute training.

Competition programme

Detské spevácke zbory do 16 rokov | Children's choirs up to 16 years

1. Fahir Atakoğlu, lyrics: Sezen Aksu - Lal
2. Ed Sheeran - Shape of You
3. Coldplay - Viva La Vida

Akademiska Sångföreningen /FI/

Conductor: Elisa Huovinen



The Academic Male Voice Choir of Helsinki (Swedish: Akademiska Sångföreningen) is a Fennoswedish (i.e. Swedish-speaking) male voice student choir based in the Finnish capital of Helsinki. The choir was founded in 1838 and is the

oldest extant choir in Finland. The musical history of the choir is deeply linked to the roots of the country of Finland, with the choir originating the national anthem and many other fully canonized classics. While steeped in tradition, the choir strives to remain ambitious, and regularly commissions new choral music for large projects combining multiple modes of artistic expression.

Elisa Huovinen has been awarded in several choir and choir conductors' competitions. In Finland, she was awarded Gunilla Josefsson prize for her work with young singers (2025) and Choral Conductor of the Year prize by The Finnish Choral Conductors' Association (2024). She has a master's degree from Sibelius Academy and and a music pedagogy degree from Metropolia University of Applied Sciences. Huovinen has taken part in

masterclasses and internships with renowned conductors and choirs (incl. Justin Doyle & RIAS Kammerchor, Paul Hillier & Ars Nova Copenhagen, Frieder Bernius & Kammerchor Stuttgart). She is artistic director of Somnium Ensemble, the Finnish Youth Choir, Male Choir Valkia and Akademiska Sångföreningen. During 2018-2024, she was the president of the board of the Finnish Choral Conductors' Association, working actively to improve the position of choral conductors and the interaction between conductors and choirs.

Competition programme

Mužské spevácke zbory | Male adult choirs

1. Ida Moberg - Skogsårn
2. Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy - Periti autem
3. Ester Mägi - Rahu
4. Leevi Madetoja - Soita, somer, helkä hiekka...
5. György Orbán - Daemon irrepit callidus

Súčasná hudba | Contemporary Music

1. Andres Lemba - Laulud ei löpe
2. Jaakko Mäntyjärvi - Cornish Lullaby
3. Sabrina Ljungberg - Fågeln
4. Ola Gjeilo - Ubi caritas



Childrens choir of Primary school dr. Jožeta Pučnika Črešnjevec /SI/

Conductor: Mateja Kuharič

Črešnjevec is a village known for its beautiful landscapes, kind people, and a school attended by 176 pupils. Dr. Jože Pučnik Primary School Črešnjevec is located on a green hill, next to a charming cherry orchard where pupils often spend their time. Music plays an important role in school life. Singing is a valued activity among the pupils, whose voices can often be heard in the school's children's and youth choirs. Both ensembles are well established and highly regarded in the local community, along with their conductor, Mateja Kuharič. The choirs regularly perform at school events and in community gatherings, where



they are appreciated for their contribution to cultural life. In spring 2025, the children's choir participated in a regional competition and received a gold award. Following this achievement, the decision was made to take part in an international choir competition. To prepare for this opportunity, a combined choir was formed, bringing together singers from both age groups. The ensemble includes children aged 8 to 13, who joined forces to perform in Bratislava. This marks their first experience competing abroad, and it represents an important step in their musical development.

Mateja Kuharič studied at the Faculty of Education in Maribor. After graduating, she worked at several schools. In 1999, she was employed by the Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities as a professional



advisor for musical activities, where she organized music events and trainings for choir directors. During this time, she was also the conductor of a mixed choir in her hometown. In 2012, she joined Dr. Jože Pučnik Primary School Črešnjevec, where she began working with the children's and youth choirs. After only a few years, the choirs started participating in regional and national competitions. In 2019, the youth choir won a gold award with distinction, which was followed by an invitation to the national project Potujoča muzika, which took place in Cankarjev dom in Slovenia's capital Ljubljana.

Competition programme

Detské spevácke zbory do 12 rokov | Children's choirs up to 12 years

1. Jani Šuligoj (lyrics Vanja Rajter) - Glasba - jezik sveta

2. Samo Ivačič (lyrics Srečko Kosovel) - Prošnja

3. Ubald Vrabec - Zjutraj

4. Enrica Balasso (italian folk song, traslation: Jože Humer) - Grajski strah

Ľudová pieseň s inštrumentálnym sprievodom | Folksong with instrumental accompaniment

1. Folk song from Bela Krajina, arr. Gašper Jereb - Igraj kolce

2. Folk song from Porabje - Trgaj mi rožice, delaj mi pušliček

3. Folk sing from Prekmurje, arr. Črt Sojar Voglar - Stara mati dober den

Classic Orchestra Academia de Música de Vilar do Paraíso /PT/

Conductor: Ernesto Coelho

The **Classic Orchestra Academia de Música de Vilar do Paraíso** has performed various presentations in several performance and concert halls, with emphasis on its recent participation in the Affettuoso Festivals, Praha Youth Festival, Neerpelt European Music Festival for Young People, as well as in exchange concerts held in the Azores, Madeira, Barcelona, Madrid, and Lisbon, and also in the Christmas concerts of Póvoa de Lanhoso and Vila Nova de Gaia. At the Neerpelt International Music Festival, it obtained a 1st prize cum laude in the 2023 edition, and a Silver Award at the Praha Youth Festival in 2024. Currently, the Classical Orchestra of the Vilar do Paraíso Music Academy is conducted by Professor Ernesto Coelho.

Ernesto Coelho commenced his musical education at the Vilar do Paraíso Music Academy, where he successfully completed the complementary Piano course. Subsequently, he pursued advanced studies, attending the Composition course at the Superior School of Music and Performing Arts in Porto. He furthered his qualifications by completing the University Conducting course at the Conservatório Superior de Música de Gaia. Furthermore, he holds a Master's degree in Music Theater Studies from the University of Sheffield and a postgraduate degree in cultural management from Lusófona University.

Professionally, he has conducted operettas with the Orquestra Filarmonia das Beiras and has directed various amateur and school choral ensembles for different associations. He has also instructed choir classes at ACE - Academia Contemporânea de Espectáculo. Presently, he serves as the conductor for the Choir of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Póvoa de Lanhoso and for the Classical Orchestra of the Academy of Music of Vilar do Paraíso. He is the founder and manager of Hymnus, his creative artistic productions company, and holds the position of artistic director for the professional choir Coro Génesis.



Competition programme

**Mládežnícké orchestre do 21 r. -
Symfonické orchestre | Youth orchestras
up to 21 yrs- Symphonic orchestras**

1. Soon Hee Newbold - Gravitas
2. Edvard Grieg, arr. Chris M. Bernotas - Peer Gynt Suite no. 1, Op. 46
3. Edward Elgar, arr. Richard Ling - Pomp & Circumstance March no. 1
4. Carlos Garcia - Ritmos Ciganos



Coro Juvenil da Academia de Música de Vilar do Paraíso /PT/

Conductor: Patrícia Quinta
non-competing ensemble

The Coro Juvenil of the Vilar do Paraíso Music Academy debuted at Teatro Rivoli in Porto in 1984 under the direction of maestro José de Castro, who led the choir for over twenty years. Since its foundation, the choir has performed widely in Portugal and abroad, participating in numerous festivals and concerts. Highlights include the European Music Festivals for Young People in Neerpelt, where it achieved two first prizes and a first prize cum laude, and the Neuchâtel Choral Music Festival, where it received an honourable mention. The ensemble has also taken part in major cultural events, international exchanges, and performances of works such as Requiem by John Rutter



and Bob Chilcott, as well as productions at Casa da Música and other venues. Between 2007 and 2018, the choir was conducted by Bruno Pereira, with Iryna Horbatyuk leading in 2009-2010. Today, it forms part of the academy's music curriculum, bringing together students aged 14 to 18. Since 2018, it has been directed by Patrícia Quinta, with Pedro Ludgero as accompanying pianist.

Patrícia Quinta, born in Porto, is a Portuguese mezzo-soprano with an established career in opera and concert performance. She studied Lied and Oratory at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, after completing



her vocal training at the Gaia Conservatory of Music. She has performed regularly at the São Carlos National Theatre, interpreting roles in operas such as Gianni Schicchi, Lucia di Lammermoor, Faust, and Die Walküre. More recently, she appeared in the premiere of It's Not Over Until the Soprano Dies at the São Luiz Theatre. Her concert work includes recitals and performances of composers such as Mahler, Wagner, and Strauss. In 2003, she received the Bocage Prize at the Luísa Todi National Singing Competition. Alongside her artistic career, she holds a degree in Psychology from the University of Porto and has been a singing and choir teacher at the Academia de Música de Vilar do Paraíso since 2009.

Hedda /NO/

Conductor: Bjørn Sigurd Skjelbred

Hedda is a women's choir based in Trondheim, Norway, and founded in 1969. With more than fifty years of continuous activity, the choir has built a strong musical tradition and a warm, inclusive community for singers of all ages. Hedda performs a wide and varied repertoire ranging from classical and sacred music to contemporary works, folk tunes, and popular arrangements. The choir regularly arranges and participates in concerts and other choral events, and maintains a high level of activity throughout the year. Over the years, Hedda has earned recognition in national and international competitions, including a gold diploma at the Concorso Corale Internazionale in Riva Del Garda, Italy (2016) and at Canta Al Mar in Calella/Barcelona, Spain (2019). At the National Championship for Choirs in Trondheim, the choir has achieved multiple



top-ten finishes, including 3rd place in the Sakral A category in 2023, highlighting their consistent musical excellence.

Bjørn Sigurd Skjelbred conducts three



choirs in Trondheim, and also teaches the junior choir of the Nidaros Cathedral Boys' Choir. He is widely used as an instructor for choirs throughout the region, known for providing musical inspiration and vocal guidance. In addition to his conducting work, he is a vocal teacher at the Trondheim Municipal School of Music and Culture. Bjørn Sigurd holds a degree in singing and vocal pedagogy from the Trøndelag Conservatory of Music.

Competition programme

Sakrálna hudba a cappella | Musica Sacra a cappella

1. Ivo Antognini - Agnus Dei
2. Mia Makaroff - Spes
3. Norwegian folk tune from Halså, Møre og Romsdal, arr. Henrik Ødegaard - Som den gyldne sol frembryter

Kinder- und Jugendchor Magdeburg /DE/

Conductor: Astrid Schubert

The **Magdeburg Children's and Youth Choir** was founded in 1955. It regularly participates successfully in national and international competitions and has won a "Gold Diploma" several times. In May 2018, at the 10th German Choir Competition, the choir received the rating "excellent" and the first prize in the girls' choir category, as well as a special prize from the Volksbanken and Raiffeisenbanken cooperative banks. At the "young2025bohemia prague" International Choir Festival and Competition in March 2025, the Children's and Youth Choir once again won a "Gold Diploma." The choir has been under the direction of conductor Astrid Schubert since 2006.

Astrid Schubert received her training in music education at the University of Music Franz Liszt in Weimar, alongside advanced studies in choral voice pedagogy and conducting. She has been a member of the faculty at Hegel-Gymnasium Magdeburg since 2000, where she teaches music and Spanish. In 2006, she was appointed Artistic Director of the Children's and Youth Choir Magdeburg. Her work includes extensive engagement with choral classes, focusing

on music history, music theory, and choral conducting. Her artistic work as a conductor has been recognized internationally, including the award of a Conductor's Prize



at the International Choral Competition in Verona. In 2023, she was invited to serve as a jury member at the German Choral Competition.

Competition programme

**Detské spevácke zbory do 16 rokov |
Children's choirs up to 16 years**

1. Siegfried Köhler - Konzert
2. Johann Hermann Schein - Frau Nachtigall
3. Deutsches Volkslied, arr. Alexis Hollaender - Die linden Lüfte sind erwacht
4. Anna-Mari Kähärä - Kuka nukkuu tuutassasi
5. Spiritual, arr. Kari Ala Pöllänen - Let It Shine!



Leo Fortis /SI/

Conductor: Gregor Klančič

The **Leo Fortis** Trebnje Mixed Choir is an active Slovenian ensemble, founded in the 2018/2019 season. The choir performs regularly at concerts and cultural events both in Slovenia and abroad, presenting a repertoire that spans classical, sacred, folk, and contemporary choral music. In 2022, it won a gold medal and the overall prize at the Zlatna Lipa Tuhlja International Competition, and in the same year reached the finals of the national Sozvočenja choral competition. The choir collaborates with various cultural institutions and takes part in numerous festivals and workshops. It is conducted by Gregor Klančič.



Gregor Klančič studied music in Nova Gorica and graduated from the Academy of Music in Ljubljana with degrees in music pedagogy and church music. He

was a long-standing member and assistant conductor of the Slovenian Chamber Choir and later served as artistic director of the Slovenian Philharmonic Choir. As an organist and conductor, he is a respected and internationally active figure in Slovenian choral and church music.

Competition programme

Sakrálna hudba a cappella | Music a Sacra a cappella

1. Iacobus Gallus - Media vita
2. Felix Mendelssohn - Psalm 42 - Richtemich Gott
3. Jake Runestad - I will lift mine eyes
4. Damijan Močnik - Dominus regnavit

Ludová pieseň a cappella | Folksong a cappella

1. Damijan Močnik - Zarja
2. Andrej Makor - Je lepa gorica
3. Hilarij Lavrenčič - Petelinček je zapieiu
4. Ambrož Čopi - Da lipa ma! Ke bėj na jě?



Odins Ravner /NO/

Conductor: Bjørn Hegstad
non-competing ensemble

Odins Ravner is a male voice choir founded in 1993, united by a shared love of singing, friendship, and musical enjoyment. With 28 dedicated singers under the direction of Mr. Bjørn Hegstad, who has been leading the ensemble since 2018, the choir promotes male voice singing through a broad and entertaining repertoire. Their program ranges from pop music, swinging jazz, and musical songs from the golden era of 1920 to 1970, to folk music and works of national or sacred character. Odins Ravner is at its very best when performing for an audience, bringing energy and inspiration to every stage. The choir creates its own unique arrangements and has actively contributed to the choral world by organizing festivals, choir gatherings, and concerts, as well as performing at international festivals in Estonia, Scotland, Poland, Ireland, England, and Italy.

Bjørn Hegstad is a choral conductor, singer and pianist based in Oslo, Norway. He studied choral conducting at the National Academy of Music in Oslo, as well as in Tromsø University where he also graduated with a bachelor degree in music pedagogy. As a musician, Bjørn specializes in understanding and teaching technique in terms of anatomy, and is a certified instructor of the Timani method from the Musicians Health and Movement Institute in Oslo. He regularly performs with his own choirs as a conductor as well as an accompanist, both in Norway and abroad in music festivals.



Prímadonky /CZ/

Conductor: Ondřej Štefáček

The Prímadonky Girls' Choir has been operating at the J. V. Stamice Music School in Havlíčkův Brod since 2013. The choir's repertoire is indetermined. Prímadonky like to sing a bit of each style. We've



had a couple of successful competitions, a fabulous tenth anniversary celebration and a CD release. But our main goal has always been to not be boring on stage and keep everyone entertained with our singing. Ondřej Štefáček has been the choirmaster since the choir was founded. Tereza Kotlasová accompanies the choir on the piano.

MgA. Ondřej Štefáček began singing in the Šumperk Children's Choir Motýli. He was introduced to solo singing by Mrs. Eva Bechyňová in Příbyslav. He continued his studies at the Prague Conservatory in the class of Prof. Jarmila Krásová and at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, in the class of Prof. Ivan Kusunjer. From 2002 to 2010 he was a member of the Prague Philharmonic Choir. He devoted himself to chamber singing in the ensembles Octopus Pragensis and Madrigal Praha. He is a founding member of the Martinů Voices chamber choir. He gained experience in

other musical genres as a member of Bobby McFerrin's vocal ensemble, or as a vocalist on the nationwide tour of the Concert of Stars, which featured Peter Dvorský, Eva Urbanová, Helena Vondráčková and Karel Gott. Since 2010, he has been teaching solo and choral singing at the J. V. Stamice Elementary School off Arts in Havlíčkův Brod, where in 2013 he founded and still leads the girls' choir Prímadonky.

Competition programme

Mládežnické zbory do 21 rokov (SA) | Youth choirs up to 21 years (SA)

1. Irena Szurmanová - Na kozaňu
2. Francouzská píseň z 15.st. v úpravě Philipha Lawsona - Veni, veni Emanuel
3. Pert Eben - Na našem sádku
4. Hebrejská lidová píseň v úpravě Gideona Kleina - Bachuri Le'an Tisa
5. Jaromír Vejvoda v úpravě Ondřeje Štefáčka - Škoda lásky



Primorski akademski zbor Vinko Vodopivec /SI/

Conductor: Jakob Barbo

The **Primorski akademski zbor Vinko Vodopivec** consists of students mostly from the Primorska region studying at the University of Ljubljana. It was founded in November 1953 after students spontaneously sang in a Ljubljana pub called Činkole. Over more than 70 years, the choir has toured across most of Europe, as well as North America and South Africa. They regularly perform at major national and international choral festivals and competitions. The choir has worked with many distinguished conductors throughout its history. Its first conductor was Anton Nanut, followed in 1958 by Marko Munih. The ensemble is dedicated to the tradition of male choral singing and renews about one third of its members each year. Its mission is to preserve a high standard of male choral music in Slovenia and educate young singers. In 2023, the choir marked its 70th anniversary with a celebratory concert in Vipava. Recently, they won a silver award at the Naša pesem competition.

Jakob Barbo (b. 1997) is full-time Assistant Conductor at the Slovenian National Theatre Opera and Ballet Ljubljana. He holds a Master's degree in conducting from the Academy of Music, University of Ljubljana

(Simon Dvoršak, Marko Letonja), and completed study exchanges at Mozarteum University Salzburg (Reinhard Goebel, Bruno Weil) and University of Music and



Performing Arts Vienna (Johannes Wildner). For his artistic achievements he received the Ljubljana Academy's Student Prešeren Prize. He is currently a PhD student at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana and, from 2026, a teaching assistant at the Academy of Music. Alongside his operatic work, he has led many choirs since his early youth. With Primorski akademski zbor Vinko Vodopivec he won a Silver Plaque at Slovenia's national choral competition Naša pesem (2024).

Competition programme

Mušské spevácke zbory | Male adult choirs

1. Lebič - Pesem od zarje
2. Gallus - Ascendit Deus
3. Pahor - Oče naš hlapca Jerneja
4. Hajdrih - Jadransko morje



Trønderkor/NO/

Conductor: Ketil Jule Bjørnstad Belsaas

Trønderkor, founded in 1987, is a well-established mixed choir with members from all over Trøndelag. As we live far apart, we gather once a month, alternating between northern and southern parts of the county. We like to sing various types of music, such as classical choral music, folk music and modern music. We enjoy participating in competitions and festivals both in Norway and abroad. Ketil Jule Bjørnstad Belsaas has been our inspiring and excellent conductor since 2020.

Ketil Jule Bjørnstad Belsaas holds a master's degree in Choral Conducting from the Norwegian Academy of Music, with further education from the Universities of Trondheim and Oslo and Hedmark University College. He serves as Head of the Department of Music, Dance and Drama at Heimdal Upper Secondary School in Trondheim and conducts Leinstrandkoret and Trønderkor.



His work spans from Renaissance polyphony to contemporary music, with particular focus on Nordic choral literature. He is a highly regarded workshop leader and vocal coach, regularly leading courses for choirs across Norway. Since 2006, Belsaas has served as a mentor for conductors and choirs in Sogn og Fjordane on behalf of the Norwegian Choral Association, and

also for NSF Trøndelag in 2020-2021. He runs a digital platform offering rehearsal



tracks and pedagogical tools for choirs and singers. He has also served as board member for four years and chair for six years of the Norwegian Choral Conductors' Association. Belsaas is recognised for his clear musical leadership, pedagogical insight and ability to create motivating and high-achieving choral environments.

Competition programme

Sakrálna hudba a cappella | Musica Sacra a cappella

1. Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina - Sicut cervus
2. Charles Villiers Stanford - Beati quorum via
3. Michael John Trotta - Lux aeterna
4. Michael John Trotta - Dies irae

Zmiešané spevácke zbory dospelých (SATB) | Mixed adult choirs (SATB)

1. Folk tune, arr. Per Ekdahl (Traditional) - Ack, ack om det vore dag
2. Johannes Brahms (text: Josef Wenzig) - Verlorene Jugend
3. Grete Pedersen (text: Anders Hovden) - Ned i vester soli glader
4. György Orbán (text: Anonymous) - Daemon irreperit callidus

Yonsei Music Academy Choir /KR/

Conductor: Woosung An

Yonsei Music Academy Choir is an amateur ensemble composed of alumnae of the Women Executive Leadership Program at Yonsei University. United by a shared passion for music, the choir has sustained over 20 years of choral tradition. The ensemble presents regular concerts and benefit performances for organizations supporting



people with disabilities, promoting cultural exchange and social contribution through music. In 2018, the choir received the Silver Prize and the Best Dressed Award at the Florence International Choir Festival. In 2019, it won the Gold Prize in the Senior Category at the Jakarta International Choir Festival. The Yonsei Music Academy Choir remains committed to sharing warmth, harmony, and inspiration through music.

Ahn Woosung serves as the Director of the cultural academy “Classic Woldam” and as Music Director and Conductor of the Yonsei Music Academy Choir, where he leads choral and classical music initiatives with artistic vision and educational depth. He earned both his Master’s degree and the prestigious Konzertexamen from the

University of Music Freiburg in Germany. His extensive European experience, including engagements with major opera houses and orchestras, has shaped his refined musical interpretation and leadership. He performed with the Bavarian State Opera’s Opera Studio in Munich and the Freiburg Opera, and collaborated with the Saarbrücken Radio Orchestra in broadcast performances and recordings. A prizewinner at several international competitions, he continues to pursue artistic excellence while guiding ensembles toward expressive and cohesive performances.

Competition programme

Zbory seniorov | Choirs of seniors

1. Heung-ryeol Lee - Seomjip Aegi (The island child)
2. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart - Ave verum corpus
3. Kim Dong-jin (Korean folk song) - New Arirang



Ženski pevski zbor Aglaja /SI/

Conductor: Kerstin Pori

The Aglaja Women's Choir consists of 23 singers from Slovenia. Since its founding, the choir has been led by professor of music Kerstin Pori and this year they celebrate their 15th anniversary. Since the beginning, the voices have changed little, becoming more mature and refined. The singers also made good friends. They are very proud of the awards they have received at all competitions since 2014: regional, national and international competitions, where they achieved silver, gold and gold awards with distinction. Their goal is primarily to progress in vocal technique and to perform the choir repertoire at a higher choir level every year. In recent years, they have organized quite a few thematically rounded projects, among which we would like to highlight the following: Afro-American Rhythms, In the Light of Broadway with the Radlje Big Band Orchestra, Aglaja with Slovenian Composers, where we presented some new works, and our most notable project by Karl Jenkins: Songs of Sanctuary: Adiemus with a string orchestra and percussion.



Kerstin Pori, a conductor, earned her degree in music education from the Faculty of Education in Maribor in 2013. During her studies, she sang in several successful vocal ensembles and, in 2010, founded the girls' choir Aglaja in her hometown of Radlje ob Dravi, now an internationally

awarded ensemble. She has received multiple awards for best conductor and most promising conductor. Kerstin Pori was a member



of the Academic Choir Maribor for eight years, serving as a rehearsal coach, and in 2011 co-founded the Vocal Quartet Rusalke, active in national and international competitions. Since 2014, she has taught music at OŠ Tone Čufar Maribor, leading four ensembles that regularly perform and compete. In the 2017/2018 season, she directed PU and Junior CS of the Choir School Carmina Slovenica, with Junior CS winning best children's choir at the 26th national competition in Zagorje ob Savi.

Competition programme

Ludová pieseň a cappella | Folksong a cappella

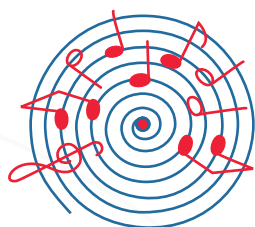
1. Marijan Lipovšek (Slovenian folk song from Carinthia) - So še rož'ce tam v vrtu žal'vale
2. Ambrož Čopi (folk song from Istria) - Jes ti bon kipila
3. Matic Romih (Slovenian folk song from Bela krajina) - Lepa Anka kolo vodi
4. Ambrož Čopi (folk song from Bela krajina) - Igraj kolce

Ženské spevácke zbory | Female adult choirs

1. Jacobus Handl Gallus - Pueri concinite
2. Johannes Brahms (antiphon in Veneration of the Cross) - Adoramus Te
3. Ambrož Čopi (Marian antiphon from the 4th century) - Tota Pulchra Es
4. Samo Vovk (translated into the Resian dialect by L. Jenče, S. Paletti and M. Šekli) - Ta na Solbici



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SLOVAKIA CANTAT 2026

XVIII. Medzinárodný hudobný festival 18th International Music Festival

23. - 26. 4. 2026, Bratislava, Slovakia

Festival sa koná pod záštitou primátora hlavného mesta Bratislavy Matúša Vallo.
The festival is held under the auspices of the Mayor of Bratislava, Matúš Vallo.

ŠTVRTOK / THURSDAY 23.4.2026

19:00 OTVÁRACÍ KONCERT FESTIVALU / OPENING CONCERT

Childrens choir of Primary school dr. Jožeta Pučnika Črešnjevec /SI/, Kinder- und Jugendchor Magdeburg /DE/, A Capella Fide /TR/, Prímadonky /CZ/, Coro Juvenil da Academia de Música de Vilar do Paraíso /PT/, Ženski pevski zbor Aglaja /SI/, Leo Fortis /SI/, Trønderkor /NO/, Odins Ravner /NO/, Yonsei Music Academy Choir /KR/, Hedda /NO/, Primorski akademski zbor Vinko Vodopivec /SI/, Akademiska Sångföreningen /FI/

**Jezuitský kostol/ Jesuits Church, Františkánske námestie/
Franciscan square**

PIATOK / FRIDAY 24.4.2026

SÚŤAŽ SPEVÁCKYCH ZBOROV A ORCHESTROV

CHORAL AND ORCHESTRAL COMPETITION

**Zrkadlová sieň Primaciálneho paláca/ Mirror Hall of the
Primate's Palace**

Kategória: Mužské spevácke zbory
Category: Male adult choirs

14:00 Akademiska Sångföreningen /FI/

14:20 Primorski akademski zbor Vinko Vodopivec /SI/

Kategória: Súčasná hudba
Category: Contemporary Music

14:40 Akademiska Sångföreningen /FI/

Kategória: Detské spevácke zbory do 16 rokov
Category: Children's choirs up to 16 years

15:00 Kinder- und Jugendchor Magdeburg /DE/

15:15 A Capella Fide /TR/

Kategória: Detské spevácke zbory do 12 rokov
Category: Children's choirs up to 12 years

**15:30 Childrens choir of Primary school dr. Jožeta Pučnika
Črešnjevec /SI/**

Kategória: Mládežnícke zbory do 21 rokov (SA)
Category: Youth choirs up to 21 yrs (SA)

15:45 Prímadonky /CZ/

Kategória: Ľudová pieseň s inštrumentálnym sprievodom
Category: Folksong with instrumental accompaniment

**16:00 Childrens choir of Primary school dr. Jožeta Pučnika
Črešnjevec /SI/**

Kategória: Sakrálna hudba a cappella
Category: Musica Sacra a cappella

16:10 Hedda /NO/

16:30 Trønderkor /NO/

16:50 Leo Fortis /SI/

Kategória: Zmiešané spevácke zbory dospelých (SATB)
Category: Mixed adult choirs (SATB)

17:05 Trønderkor /NO/

Kategória: Ľudová pieseň a cappella
Category: Folksong a cappella

17:20 Leo Fortis /SI/

17:35 Ženski pevski zbor Aglaja /SI/

Kategória: Zbory seniorov
Category: Choirs of seniors

17:50 Yonsei Music Academy Choir /KR/

Nesúťažné zbory
Non competing choirs

18:05 Odins Ravner /NO/

**18:20 Coro Juvenil da Academia de Música de Vilar do
Paraíso /PT/**

Kategória: Ženské spevácke zbory
Category: Female adult choirs

18:35 Ženski pevski zbor Aglaja /SI/

Kategória: Mládežnícke orchestre do 21 r. - Symfonické orchestre
Category: Youth orchestras up to 21 yrs - Symphonic orchestras

**19:30 Classic Orchestra Academia de Música de Vilar do
Paraíso /PT/**

SOBOTA / SATURDAY 25.4.2026

FESTIVALOVÝ KONCERT I. / FESTIVAL CONCERT I.

13:00 Kinder- und Jugendchor Magdeburg /DE/, Leo Fortis /SI/,
Ženski pevski zbor Aglaja /SI/, Hedda /NO/, Yonsei Music Academy
Choir /KR/, Odins Ravner /NO/, Akademiska Sångföreningen /FI/
**Jezuitský kostol/ Jesuits Church, Františkánske námestie/
Franciscan square**

FESTIVALOVÉ KONCERTY II. / FESTIVAL CONCERTS II.

15:00 Classic Orchestra Academia de Música de Vilar do Paraíso
/PT/, A Capella Fide /TR/, Coro Juvenil da Academia de Música de
Vilar do Paraíso /PT/

16:00 Trønderkor /NO/, Childrens choir of Primary school
dr. Jožeta Pučnika Črešnjevec /SI/, Prímadonky /CZ/

VŠMU / Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava, Zochová 1

**19:00 ZÁVEREČNÝ KONCERT A VYHLÁSENIE VÝSLEDKOV SÚŤAŽE
FINAL CONCERT A COMPETITION RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Jezuitský kostol/ Jesuits Church, Františkánske námestie/
Franciscan square**

NEDEĽA / SUNDAY 26.4.2026

Odchod medzinárodných speváckych zborov a orchestrov/ Departure
of international choirs and orchestras

Na všetky podujatia vstup voľný / Free entrance to all concerts
Zmena programu vyhradená / Programme is subject to change

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Spevácky zbor Apollo



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