



### **VoCE 2014 – 2018**

**Voix et Chemins d'Europe / Un parcours artistique entre mémoire et création**  
**Voices from Citizens of Europe / An artistic journey of both memory and creation**  
**Eine künstlerische / Expedition zwischen Erinnerung und Zukunft**

With the patronage of

Mr Louis Besson, ex-minister, chairman of the Chambéry Metropolitan Inter-communal Authority

Dr Henning Scherf, ex-mayor of Brême. President of the German federation of choirs.

Recognised as part of the French centennial

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## Voices from Citizens of Europe 2014 – 2018

### An artistic journey of both memory and creation

#### The Europe of choirs

A few Europeans some from Berlin, some from Lyon, Grenoble or Savoy, some from Wroclaw in Poland have begun working together since 2010 in preparation for the imminent commemoration of the first world war.

They imagined “voices and paths” from which could rise up a impetus of friendship and justice out of the memory of those terrible times. This impetus has been given a name “human resolve.” They invite everyone to join the movement and together to create many encounters all through the years 2014 to 2018. These will be festive and joyous steps on a bridge of peace built with music: “the Europe of choirs”

“At the age of 14, in 1918, my father went with his father to identify the body of one of his uncles killed in 1915. It left a strong impression, and he concluded that such horror should not happen, and that the only way to stop it was to create good relationships between the peoples of Europe.”

(**Françoise Adam**, speaking of his father the mathematician Henri Cartan, 1904-2008)

“War drives us insane. In contrast to the aggressive view there is a **humane attitude which is a basis for hope**. It is this which must be cultivated. Europeans seem to have forgotten the founding message of the European union. This was made evident by the indifference to the awarding of the Nobel prize to the European Union. We need initiatives which bring hope.”

(**Louis Besson**, ancient Ministre, chairman of the Chambéry Metropolitan Inter-communal Authority)

“In our artistic approach **every voice counts**. In such a way that an exchange is produced between art and humanity. It cannot be any other way. As musicians then we must have an open mind. Within artistic encounters people find answers to their questions about a common European culture and its capacity for peace”.

(**Cyrille Colombier**, Artistic director and choir conductor)

“I had the chance of my life to meet men and women violated by misery.<sup>1</sup> From them I learnt that people survive thanks to their fight for dignity t their own and that of others. This lesson made me think that obviously during the war this spark of human resolve must have arisen. Thanks to this there is no need for resignation or to become cynical; on the contrary, we can take an interest in what other Europeans dream of”.

**Mascha Join-Lambert**, Initiatrice du projet

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□ Within the International movement ATD Fourth World

“We will be celebrating through our artistic and citizens’ journey. Each country has a great cultural reparatory. We want to find what unites us. The joy of meeting each other can blossom. In this way we will come to the major questions that are being asked in Europe: for example, what does ‘sustainable development’ mean to the inhabitants of our different countries”.

**Cornelia Keller-Kirst**, Berlin

“I am convinced that war is becoming impossible. **Peace is defined in relation to the imagination** and not to war. This project which brings together people from all walks of life will give ideas to the politicians who lack imagination.”

(**Richard Pétris**, Ecole de la Paix, Grenoble.

**Dr.Henning Scherf**, Ancien Maire de Brême, Président de l’Association Allemande de Chorales

“To free ourselves from the processes of violence and war and turn them back then it is necessary to live alternative experiences. From this can be built a **politic of friendship**.”

(**Patrick Viveret**, Philosopher, Dialogues of Humanity)

## **The memory of the first world war concerns and raises questions for us all.**

If there are no longer any living veterans there are vivid reminders. Not just the battle fields and the cemeteries<sup>2</sup> large and small, but also the war memorials in every village in all our countries naming the men, sometimes two or three from the same family who lost their lives. Each European bears this history through the stories of their grandfathers.

Behind these names are sketches of lives of whole nations caught up in human resolve. The attacks on universal justice brushed away<sup>3</sup>. The idea that the culture and faith<sup>4</sup> of one nation should be higher than that of the neighbouring states dragged them down into the abyss. With the emergence<sup>5</sup> of a thirst for modern power our continent became a factory for horror for demoralisation and for misery, dragging with it other nations beyond its frontiers and particularly those of the colonies.

In contemplating this horrible picture it is hard to imagine that the century would bring us another taste of the same medicine and that it would destroy even hope. By developing such industrial and military blights and cultivating hatred, European culture seemed ready for a verdict with no appeal.

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□ Except in Russia where they were largely destroyed during the time of the USSR.

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□ The German and French socialists stood behind their respective forms of patriotism; European pacifists, particularly women, were universally discredited. Intellectuals who opposed the propaganda were very rare: cf. *Albert Einstein, Max Liebermann « Aufruf an die Kulturwelt », 1914 (« Appel au monde civilisé »)*

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□ *For the Christian mindset, read for example Raïssa Maritan, « Les grands amitiés », DDP Paris 1949.*

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□ *This confrontation of eras is clear in Soljenytsine, « August 14 » Le Seuil (the threshold) Paris, 1972*

Spasmodic efforts at reconciliation followed the wars. But we can't relax. The remembrance of the Great War concerns us also because the pattern of events in the hearts and minds then should bring questions to each of us personally now.

**But what about our convictions and friendships relative to today's manipulations? Between Europeans, do we really know each other? Are we as citizens able to draw up a project of shared community with our partners and make it work? Can we put into words what we expect from Europe and what Europe expects from the world?**

## Human resolve can not be put down and can shape the way we live our lives today.

If it is important to remember the efforts at reconciliation after the wars, it is even more relevant to convince ourselves that in the midst and in spite of the worst there must have been good in the human relationships.

Clearly, whereas we know a great deal about the leaps of good faith and solidarity within the populations of each country<sup>6</sup> we are particularly aware of the reports of dehumanisation on the front.

But also, everywhere in the villages, on the roads, in the internment camps<sup>7</sup> as in the prison camps, in the international women's assemblies which were largely criticised, and even, according to reliable sources, on the eastern and western fronts, where there were outbursts of fraternity.<sup>8</sup>

It isn't possible to completely cut the links which pass good values from one generation to the next, from one social group to another and from one population to another. Even when mutilated and without trace then human resolve still exists. This is the conviction which has brought together the key players of our project. These common values are a source which is sometimes hidden but never dry. We would like to raise up these values and construct a project like a fine bridge from which all who wish can draw the water necessary for cultivating the fields of peace on either bank for ever more

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□ One of many examples: 68000 French nurses were recruited and trained by the 3 associations which preceded the French Red Cross, in 14/18. The patriotism of the women on the 'home front' is not to be confused with the way they were used as part of the workforce. See bibliographies of the role of women in the War.

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□ Les camps de concentration de la Première Guerre mondiale, Jean-Claude Farcy, Economica, Paris, 1995, and as a witness : Aladar Kuncz, « Le Monastère Noir », trad. du hongrois, Gallimard 1937

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□ Frères de tranchées (Brothers in the trenches) by Marc Ferro, Malcolm Brown, Rémy Casals et Olaf Mueller. Editions Perrin, 2013.

## **CONTENT AND FORM**

### **A proposition for Europeans to get to know each other in mutual encounters.**

We want to bring together choirs and peace camps in various European countries between 2014 and 2018 in a joint cultural and civic project with music as the common language. In November 2018 “Europe will Sing for peace”. Being open to a large number this project weaves closely together memorial, artistic creation and exchanges about the future of our societies. It will be spread over five years in different countries and will work like a long pilgrimage of peace. And there lies its originality.

## OBJECTIVES

### Knowledge and mutual understanding.

**Broaden the knowledge of the great war:** family souvenirs, peoples experiences in the west and in the east and south; the role of women; the involvement of the colonies; forging and innovating roles in the war; the ascension to independence of the people of Central Europe.

**Encourage learning and debate into the causes of the Great War:** How do different cultures remember? What are their expectations and concerns for the future in their country, in Europe and in the different populations?

## METHODS AND PROCEDURE

### “The grand people linking fair” instead of the “great people killing war”.

**Contact choirs** in the European countries that participated in the Great War;

**Organise 1 or 2 week long musical and communicative encounters** each year in the significant sites of the Great War with 4 to 5 choirs each time :

Bring **local associations and the upper classes of secondary schools** into the preparation of these encounters;

**Organise International Summer Peace Camps** as a way for young people to express themselves (in the manner of the Summer Camps of 1920/42).

## COMMON GUIDELINES

### We are looking for what links and brings together Europeans

The encounters will have a festive nature, the joy of sharing each others cultures. The participants will have a real experience and will not just take a passive role.

The **cultural and musical repertory** of each participating country will be brought to the fore, in particular the folk traditions with its rhythms, dances customs and memories. Each choir will prepare its own repertory representative of their country that they want to share; grouped sessions will enable a common repertory to be developed.

Sites of painful memories (destruction of cemeteries...) will receive special attention so that local people (schools, communes, associations...) can present their potential and their cultural success.

## **THE RESULT WILL BE A JOINT PRODUCTION OF A MAJOR WORK**

### **A musical creation**

The grand finale of the project should be a musical creation in November 2018, encapsulating all the encounters and sites elicited by the different choirs. A composer will be responsible for this creation.

### **OUTLINE OF THE ORGANISATION.**

#### 2014 **Launch of the project.**

- June: participation in the peace event in Sarajevo.
- July : Dialogues on humanity in Lyon enabling debate between the representatives of the colonised during the Great War : musical encounters and launch of the project
- July: first encounter of choirs in Sarajevo

#### 2015

- Spring: Encounter of choirs at Ypres.(Belgium with the participation of English and Irish choirs)
- Summer : International peace camp and encounter of choirs in Poland ( Lublin, Wroclaw)

#### 2016

- Encounter of choirs and International Peace camp in France (Historial de la Grand Guerre museum in Péronne) and in Romania
- Composition of a musical work.

#### 2017

- Encounter of choirs and International Peace Camp in Central Europe (Holland, Belorussia/Ukraine) and in Italy.

#### 2018

- Encounter of choirs and International Peace Camp in Germany
- November: “Europe sings peace” the same program in several European sites, with all the choirs that have participated since the beginning. With the presence of the media.

### **INITIATORS:**

The idea for the project began in Potsdam during a “Dialogue on Humanity” an encounter between France Germany and Poland in August 2010. Since then a group of initiators, led by Mascha Join-Lambert, have created the association which bears the project “voices from Citizens of Europe”

- **Berlin :** Cornelia Keller-Kirst, Barbara Winzer, artistic Manager, et le theatre troupe “HOR”

- **Chambéry** : Cyrille Colombier, Choir conductor, and two choirs from Savoie :  
“Ensemble 2021” ([www.ensemble2021.com](http://www.ensemble2021.com)) et “Vocalam”
- **Lyon** : Geneviève Ancel, for the Dialogues on Humanity  
([www.dialoguenenhumanite.org](http://www.dialoguenenhumanite.org))
- **Grenoble** : Richard Pétris, for the Peace Camps with a view to international “Peace camps”
- **Wroclaw**, Poland : Male voice choir “Cantilena”, with their President Artur Wrobel

This association is open to all who wish to contribute and work in the same spirit that drives the initiators.

Partnerships are being forged in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Poland, and are in preparation, including Belgium.

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