

European Award for Choral Composers 2020/21

Jury selects the winners of the international composition competition, after pieces had been submitted from all over Europe. Two special mentions were also awarded.

The *European Choral Association - Europa Cantat* called upon their member organisations all over Europe to submit recently composed pieces of choral music to be entered in an international competition. A jury comprised of internationally renowned conductors and composers Josep Vila i Casañas (ES), Seán Doherty (IE), Karin Rehnqvist (SE), Tadeja Vulc (SI) and Ēriks Ešenvalds (LV) selected winning pieces and also awarded special mentions in both categories of the competition.

The European Award for Choral Composers has been organised by the *European Choral Association - Europa Cantat* since 2011, as the continuation of the former “Golden Tuning Fork” award that was run by the AGEC choral association for many years.

There was a total of 25 pieces by 19 composers entered in the competition, suggested by seven different member organisations of the *European Choral Association - Europa Cantat*. The following compositions were selected by the jury:

In **category A (works a cappella)**, the prize was awarded to “Amor, io fallo” by Belgian composer **Jan Van der Roost**, while Hans Helsen received a special mention for his piece “Sanctus Amor”.

In **category B (works with accompaniment)**, **Maarten Van Ingelgem** from Belgium won the prize for “Autumn Soils”, while Vigdis Hansa Elst received a special mention for her piece “How sweet the Moonlight”.

Jan Van der Roost’s composition was submitted by *Koor&Stem*, the other three distinguished pieces were submitted by the *Flemish Federation of Young Choirs (VFJK)*. The jury received anonymised scores without any information about the composers or their country of residence; all distinctions going to Belgian composers is therefore purely a sign of the quality of these pieces and their composers.

The award ceremony will take place in the frame of the 2021 EUROPA CANTAT XXII Festival in Ljubljana, in the presence of the composers and representatives of the respective choral organisations, as well as representatives of the jury, with each prize being worth a prize money of 300 EUR. The winning pieces will be performed during the festival.

Winner of category A.

“Amor, io fallo”, for mixed choir, composed by **Jan Van der Roost** in 2018. It is published with Euprint ed.



Jan Van der Roost received his musical education at Lemmens Institute, Leuven (now LUCA School of Arts), and the Royal Conservatoire of Ghent. At the Royal Flemish Music Conservatoire of Antwerp, he obtained first prizes for choral conducting and composition. Until 2016, he taught counterpoint, fugue, orchestration, and composition at Lemmens Institute.

Jan van der Roost is a sought-after adjudicator, guest lecturer and conductor, his educational and musical activities have taken him to over 50 countries on four continents. His over 150 compositions have been recorded by major labels world-wide and are regularly performed by some of the world's leading ensembles and orchestras, including St. Petersburg State Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Simon Bolivar Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo Philharmonic, the King's Singers, the Polish Radio Choir and most Belgian professional ensembles.

Special mention in category A.

“Sanctus Amor”, for equal voices choir SSAA, composed by **Hans Helsen** in 2019. It is published with Euprint ed.



Winner of category B.

“Autumn Soils”, for mixed choir, composed by **Maarten Van Ingelgem** in 2019. It is published with Euprint ed.

While studying piano and composition at the conservatories of Brussels and Antwerp, **Maarten Van Ingelgem** (b. 1976) caught the choir bug. In 2001, he started conducting the Ghent-based chamber choir for contemporary music *De 2de Adem*. So far, he has performed 40 premieres with them. Furthermore, he was one of the bass singers in *Aquarius* and is regularly invited to conduct or reinforce the bass section of ensembles such as the Brussels Chamber Choir and the



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Flemish Radio Choir. He shares his passion for creativity in his role as Professor of Composition at LUCA School of Arts, Leuven.

His oeuvre as a composer ranges from solo pieces to string quartets and from chamber opera to piano concerto, and has been awarded several prizes. Amongst others, Maarten has already been laureate of the *European Award for Choral Composers* twice. He was the composer of the compulsory pieces for the *European Music Festival for Young People Neerpelt* and the *International Choir Contest of Flanders* and is artistic director of the *2021 World Choir Games* in Flanders.

Special mention in category B.

“How sweet the Moonlight”, for equal voices choir SSA, composed by **Vigdis Hansa Elst** in 2018. It is published with Euprint ed.

