

European Choral Association | Weberstr. 59A – DE 53113 Bonn

**Press Release – Lyon/Bonn, 22/11/2021**

**The new Board:**  
(from back to front  
and left to right)

*Martine Spanjers  
Marco Fornasier  
Silvija Pročkytė  
Daphne Wassink  
Burak Onur Erdem  
Jeroen Beckers  
Dermot O’Callaghan  
Xavier Devillers  
Tamara Adamov Petijevic  
Raul Talmar  
Côme Ferrand-Cooper  
Josep Vila i Casañas*



**The European Choral Association elects a new Board and President  
and looks ahead to continuing the promotion of the benefits of collective singing  
and starting the new 3-year EU-funded project IGNITE**

The European Choral Association is happy to announce that Dermot O’Callaghan from Ireland was elected president of the association on November 21<sup>st</sup> 2021 in Lyon, France.

On November 20<sup>th</sup> the general assembly elected a Board of 11 people from 10 European countries which in turn, following open and wide-ranging conversation within the board on the needs of the association, elected the new Executive Board:

President: Dermot O’Callaghan (Ireland)  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President and treasurer: Martine Spanjers (The Netherlands)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Artistic Vice-President: Burak Onur Erdem (Turkey)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Vice-President: Raul Talmar (Estonia)



*Dermot O Callaghan, President*

Further members of the Board are:  
Tamara Adamov Petijevic (Serbia), Jeroen Beckers (Belgium), Côme Ferrand-Cooper (France),  
Xavier Devillers (Belgium), Marco Fornasier (Italy), Silvija Pročkytė (Lithuania), Josep Vila i Casanas  
(Spain) and Daphne Wassink (The Netherlands, co-opted as representative of the Friends of Choral  
Music in Europe).

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The General Assembly was preceded by a Membership Day at which the members discussed topics related to the projects the association is running and gave feedback to the board and team on plans for the coming years. The members discussed the future Regional Development Strategy and gave feedback on the networking, training and advocacy activities as part of the new project **IGNITE - IGNiting an Inclusive and sustainable future for collective singing Throughout Europe**, starting in December 2021 and co-funded by the EU Creative Europe programme. They also started reflecting on environmental sustainability and inclusion in the association, based on the results of the SHIFT project coordinated by the European Music Council and co-funded by the EU Erasmus+ programme. The programme of the weekend was completed by a conference presenting the results of the EPIC project, coordinated by the European Choral Association and co-funded by the EU Creative Europe programme.



The event was hosted by the French member association À Cœur Joie in Lyon who offered performances and concerts by La Cigale de Lyon (conducted by Anne-Marie Cabut) and Cassiopée (conducted by Laurence Faricier), as well as the conducting class of the Conservatoire National de Musique et de Danse and the Jeune Chœur Symphonique - Spirito.



The Membership Weekend of the European Choral Association took place when Covid-19 figures were rising fast in many regions of Europe. Taking extra precautions, the organisers were happy that the events were able to progress, in as safe a manner as possible.



The new Board will continue emphasizing the important role of collective singing for the well-being of people and calls on governments as well as institutions and organisations dealing with choral music that singing together, if done with precaution and following the rules in place, is not dangerous, but the Covid-19 virus is. Recent research confirms that singing compared to speaking in the same volume carries almost the same risk (we have included the link in our document with research and other Covid-19 information, see [www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/Covid-19](http://www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org/Covid-19) -> the document).

**The next Membership Weekend with General Assembly (18-20/11/2022)** will be hosted by the Serbian Choral Association in the city of Novi Sad, Cultural Capital of Europe 2022.

For further information please contact the General Secretariat of the European Choral Association, Haus der Kultur, Weberstr. 59a, 53113 Bonn, Germany, Tel: +49 228 9125663, info@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org, www.EuropeanChoralAssociation.org