

Noël Minet Fund Scholarship Report European Seminar for Choral Composers 2024

From 14th to 20th July I travelled to Aosta to participate in the European Seminar for Choral Composers, organised by Feniarco.

There were two composition groups led by Bob Chilcott and Giovanni Bonato, respectively. I was a participant in Chilcott's class, which involved several lectures where he spoke about his music, approaches to composition, inspirations, and his career as a choral composer. These classes provided a great insight into the world of composition, and also emphasised the importance of developing your compositional craft on a daily basis, finding your own voice and being true to yourself as a composer. The significance of communicating our own voice through our music was clearly evident in all the unique individual pieces produced by the class, some of which were performed in the closing concert.

I also had daily individual lessons with Bob Chilcott, in which I received feedback on my composition to be performed by the upper-voice choir, Mazì Ensemble, one of the choirs in residence during the seminar. These lessons focused on shaping a choral piece, creating a particular sound-world, and ensuring the key idea of the piece is understood throughout the music. I gained more confidence in my own compositional voice and approaches from these lessons as a result of Bob's encouragement, advice, and enthusiasm.

Three choirs were in residence throughout the week – a mixed choir, upper-voice choir, and children's choir. Rehearsals each day involved workshopping our choral sketches and bringing our compositions to life. These sessions allowed each composer to make the relevant changes to their piece before the next rehearsal. Having a resident choir and the time to trial ideas and get a clear idea of the progress of your piece and how it suits the voices was an invaluable experience. The composers were also given the opportunity to sing with the choir, allowing us to hear each other's works. This was very beneficial, allowing us to analyse and here the other composers' music and their individual approaches to particular texts and ideas.

At the end of the seminar, a final concert was held in the Teatro Splendor to showcase some of the music composed during the week. I was delighted that my piece, 'The Comet', was performed by Mazì Ensemble. It was also a great experience to sing with the mixed choir Arcova Vocal Ensemble in the concert.

I am very grateful to the Noël Minet Fund Scholarship, which allowed me to participate in this enriching seminar. I had the opportunity to meet other composers from across the world, gain valuable lessons, skills, and feedback from the composer-tutor Bob Chilcott, and produce a new piece, which I hope to have performed in the future back in Ireland. It was a wonderful experience to have the time and space to immerse myself in choral composition in an inspiring setting.

Laura Sheils



Questa settimana Arcova ha ospitato l'European Seminar for Choral Composers, una masterclass professionale biennale di composizione per coro. Docenti di fama internazionale hanno guidato i partecipanti con l'obiettivo di migliorare le loro tecniche di composizione e affinare lo stile di scrittura. Grazie al lavoro con i cori laboratorio, alcuni dei brani composti nell'ambito del Seminario verranno eseguiti in questo concerto finale.

Programma

Mazi Ensemble
direttore *Luigina Stevenin*

<i>Cariente</i>	Fiorella Monsorno testo di F. Garcia Lorca
<i>Old a Eskas</i>	Tomer Damsky testo di M. de San José Salazar
<i>The rain</i>	Morten Poulsen testo di W.H. Davies
<i>The comet</i>	Laura Shells
<i>Amare - Caritas - Love</i>	Emanuele Piras testi di autori vari con sezione femminile di Arcova Vocal Ensemble

Arcova Vocal Ensemble
direttore *Nicola Forlin*

<i>A world in a grain of sand</i>	Francesca Idini testo di W. Blake
<i>Last night, I had a dream</i>	Ayşegül Begüm Kurtman
<i>To the autumnal moon</i>	Marta Cellini testo di S. Taylor Coleridge
<i>O Onens</i>	Roberto Marchione
<i>Ite mi par esse deo videtur</i>	Fabio De Angelis testo di G.V. Catullo
<i>Yesterday I was the moon</i>	Joel Nilson testo di N. Unnahar

Coro Giro Giro Canto
direttrici *Cristina Asioli, Giulia Giovinazzo, Letizia Iacopetti, Carol Vaudan*
al pianoforte *Erica Pompignan*

<i>Ring a ring o' roses</i>	Cristina Ganzerla testo di anonimo
<i>L'acqua</i>	Zuzanna Koziej testo di R. Pezzani
<i>We are...</i>	George Rodwell