

BEHIND THE SCENES

Manual for the internal management of

choirs - bands - praise groups – ensembles - etc

BEHIND THE SCENES
How the internal management should be

choirs - bands - praise groups

With additions for children's choirs, teenagers' groups, mixed choirs and senior choirs

First edition, 1999
English edition, 2001
Corrected version 2006
ISBN: 90-76959-08-0

©

All rights reserved.

No part of this edition may be reproduced and/or published in printed form, photocopied, microfilmed, or in any manner whatsoever, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

© Continental Sound / Christian Artists
P.O. Box 18065
3009 GB Rotterdam
The Netherlands
Tel. + 31 10 4212592
e-mail: info@continentalsound.org
www.continentalsound.org

Editor: Leen La Rivière

With textual contributions from: Nellie Bolhuis, Henk Heykoop, Rob de Jong, Heidy Koning, Marcel Koning, Auke Mak, Charles Reese, Harold Schonewille, Erna Springer, Koos Vis, Cees van Vugt, Maarten Wassink, and others

Cover photograph: Leen La Riviere

Translation: Michael Williams

Text processing: Christa Scheepbouwer, Nancy La Riviere and Jolanda de Jong

Layout: Willem La Riviere

Published by: Continental Sound / Christian Artists, Rotterdam.
In co-operation with CAMM, Continental Ministries, Interart and the CNV-Artists Union.
With financial support of the Bestuursdienst, Rotterdam, and EZA, Königswinter.

Contents

2	Contents	
3	Foreword	
4	The contributors to this book	
5	A - introduction	
6	Chapter 1	Why a choir or group?
7	Chapter 2	Diversity
9	B - why?	
10	Chapter 3	Functions
14	C - organisation	
15	Chapter 4	Leadership: structure and management
19	Chapter 5	Mission Statement
20	Chapter 6	Motivation
23	Chapter 7	Meeting skills
27	Chapter 8	Timely renewal
28	Chapter 9	Judicial matters
31	Chapter 10	The position and function of the conductor or music leader
33	Chapter 11	Relationship with or separation from the church or fellowship
34	Chapter 12	Working together
35	Chapter 13	Organisation and P.R.
36	Chapter 14	Ideas
37	Chapter 15	Choice of repertoire
39	D - practice	
40	Chapter 16	Rehearsal structure
42	Chapter 17	The sense and nonsense of prayer, Bible study etc.
43	Chapter 18	Singing technique and warm-ups
47	Chapter 19	Ways of learning
49	Chapter 20	Choreography
53	Chapter 21	Position and production
54	Chapter 22	Sound and amplification
60	Chapter 23	Light
61	Chapter 24	Band and tracks
63	Chapter 25	Public speaking
64	E - highlighted	
65	Chapter 26	Children's choirs
72	Chapter 27	Teenagers' choirs
74	Chapter 28	Mixed choirs
75	Chapter 29	Senior choirs
76	F - miscellaneous	
77	Chapter 30	CD's
78	Chapter 31	Join the Continentals
79	Chapter 32	Fundraising and sponsors
80	G - useful	
81	Chapter 33	Join up
82	Chapter 34	Recommended literature
83	Chapter 35	Consultants
84	Chapter 36	Important addresses
	From the archives	

Foreword

Music is enormously important for personal development, for society (just think about the aspects of social cohesion), for the church and for communication. And not so long ago scientists have proven that making music makes you even think better....!

It is often painful to see so many choirs and praise groups are starting up, only to fail after about five years, and to see initiative takers and many participants left behind disappointed or frustrated. And if they do manage to continue for five years, a serious crisis confronts them around the ninth year. And if you survive that as a group, a further crisis looms around the fourteenth or eighteenth year. It will be clear that not many youth choirs, Gospel groups and praise groups ever celebrate their twenty-fifth anniversary!

We have experienced all these crisis situations ourselves. Yet the Continentals have now been in existence for over fifty years and Continental Sound for over fifty years too. Christian Artists exists over 40 years. If you analyse all the problems, every situation does appear to have a solution if you only know what to do.

In this book we explain the best way to set up a youth choir, band, ensemble or praise group and how this set-up can have tremendous musical and social impact. This know-how will not be able to solve every problem, but it will help you to keep on the right track, so that the youth choir, Gospel choir or praise group will be guaranteed a long life and be a blessing to many.

**Leen La Riviere
Chairman
International Association of Christian Artists
President Continental Sound**

The contributors to this book

- Nellie Bolhuis:** Among other things a professional conductress of children's choirs, a youth choir, a choir project for classical music ,and the Young Continentals. She teaches piano and organ.
- Henk Heykoop:** Active in music for almost 40 years, among other things as the headmaster of a school of music, Gehrelsvereniging and the CAMM (secretary).
- Rob de Jong:** Conductor of the Discipel national Gospel choir and of the Continental Kids. Teacher of AMB/OMB music studies at the Alkmaar Conservatory
- Heidy Koning:** Teaches warm-up and singing skills to the Continentals. Toured for many years, Continental conductor.
- Marcel Koning:** Conductor of the Young Continentals, the Discipel national Gospel choir, the Continental orchestra, directs several local choirs. Specialist in recording techniques.
- Auke Mak:** Head sound technician for all Continental groups in Europe.
- Huub Petersen:** Head light technician for all Continental groups in Europe.
- Charles Reese:** Studied music at the Tilburg Conservatory. Among other things he solo played works of Mozart and Haydn. Studied choir leadership in Den Bosch and Den Haag and took courses at the SNK. Among other things conductor of senior choirs.
- Leen La Riviere:** Active in music and the arts since 1969. Founder of Continental Sound, the Euro-Continentals, the CNV Artists Union, Discipel etc. Author of some 28 books about the arts and culture; speaker, teacher, advisor, consultant etc.
- Harold Schonewille:** Worked for 3 years in Continental's office as training programme leader, teacher and conductor.
- Erna Springer:** Associated with the Young Continentals and the Continentals as a choreographer since 1995. She studied and teaches dance.
- Koos Vis:** Active in Continental Sound since 1975, among other things with the Continentals, Discipel, the Christian Artists Seminar. Advisor to the management. Profession: organisation advisor and instructor in banking.
- Cees van Vugt:** Active in the music industry, Choral club.
- Maarten Wassink:** Has already been working for the Continentals for 10 years. He specialises in production, conducting and consultation. Director of the Choir Company

A

Introduction

Chapter 1 - Why a choir or a group?

Throughout history, experts have pointed out the importance of developing yourself musically. Even the Greek philosopher Plato said so! The Old Testament and the New Testament in the Bible, church fathers, educationalists and philosophers all refer to its importance and its usefulness.

The following major areas are mentioned:

Personal benefit

Your personal development is of great importance. Your talent must not lay dormant. Developed talent stimulates your personality and your character, and even helps developing your brain

Spiritual benefit

The early church fathers Christosomos and Augustine aid: 'Singing is praying twice'. The Old and New Testaments state clearly how important the sacrifice of praise (i.e. music and song) is in the service of the Lord.

But singing also has the effect of joining people together and promoting joint experience. It builds you up personally at the same time.

Social benefit

A person can only be a person when meeting others. A choir or group contributes to this important social texture, so that people can meet together and we can learn to motivate and to stimulate each another. We can learn to 'live together' and to be friends within a safe and positive environment. Standards and values are communicated within this environment and 'many are kept off the street'.

Renewal

People constantly need new impulses and challenges. Being a human being also means constantly attempting to push yourself further; you want to learn something new. This renewal is present in a choir: artistically, spiritually and socially.

Relaxation

Man also likes to play. We have a natural need of pleasure, relaxation and entertainment. A group or a choir provides this too.

In 1969, when Continental Sound began with the first Continentals concerts, there were hardly any youth choirs and certainly no Gospel choir or praise groups. The Continentals, Young Continentals, Discipel and the Continental Encores have been pilot ideas for many churches and fellowships, and they have been imitated in many similar initiatives.

There are now approximately 1,000 youth choirs, Gospel groups and praise groups active in Holland. These bring some 50,000 people - young and old - together, transforming them in a positive way. Almost every month sees the setting up somewhere of a new youth choir!

This book will contribute to their continued existence and the continued fulfilment of their important function.

In view of the demonstrated importance we should like to set a target: each church or fellowship should start a youth choir, Gospel choir or praise group.

Chapter 2 - Diversity

History - in the book 'MUSIC IN MINISTRY - a biblical perspective' we read on p. 80 a chapter on history: how did it all happen?

The origin of Gospel music is to be found in the revivals among the Negro slaves in the nineteenth century. They used white (Anglican) church music in much more rhythmical patterns and responsive - question and answer - song (see the films 'Bluesbrothers' and 'Sister Act' for example). That compelling pattern still exists in black churches in the USA.

Gospel songs are characteristically happier and have the New Testament Gospel and personal faith experience as their theme. Spirituals are much sadder and often refer to Old Testament events.

These styles of music have also found a place in ordinary life: Gospel music gave birth to soul music and spirituals gave birth to the blues.

It was only in the fifties, in the middle of the twentieth century, that the white churches in the U.S.A. began singing more rhythmically. Gospel songs were songs that were easy to remember: part of the heritage of the revivals among whites at the end of the nineteenth century.

Under the influence of the 'Jesus Revolution' in the sixties more styles started to be used to praise God and to witness through music. Under the influence of travelling (white) groups, white churches increasingly accepted these rhythmical styles of music.

This made the setting up of the Continentals possible, half way through the sixties. The Continentals came to Europe in 1969 and began their trail-blazing work there. Once this was accepted by the churches, many other styles and ideas were able to be accepted in their wake, resulting in the present colourful variety.

Gospel in stricter sense: is still the black Gospel singing of Mahalia Jackson, for example, or, in more modern times, of Bebe and Cece Winans.

Gospel in a broader sense embraces every style which has the Gospel or faith experience as its theme. This can include pop, rock, folk, country, jazz, techno-pop, rap, etc.

Youth choir

This choir obviously consists of young people. Age limits of 16 to 30 are usually applied.

- A youth choir can have all kinds of repertoire: beat masses, the music of the Continentals, praise music, church hymnals, Gregorian chants, etc.
- Youth choirs are often closely connected to one church or fellowship, in which case they have a clear liturgical association.
- An inter-church youth choir is ecumenical and is not tied to any one church denomination. This type of choir is less liturgically inclined and more involved in giving concerts (about ten a year).
- The size of a youth choir varies from 12 to 100 members.

Gospel choir

A Gospel choir differs from a youth choir by a less traditional set-up.

It often pays more attention to clothing and choreography.

- Its repertoire is directed more towards evangelism. This can be like the Continentals or like the Oslo Gospel Choir.
- Age limits: 16 to 60; there are several kinds of Gospel choir of course. In the seventies and the eighties their members were all young people. In the nineties those who were young then seem to have stayed on and also choose older people for the Gospel choirs' method of working and repertoire.
- A Gospel choir is seldom attached to one church.
- This kind of choir is mainly involved in giving concerts (about 25 a year).

- **Size: 12 to 60 members.** Above this number it seems to become top-heavy and it loses some of its characteristic dynamism.

Praise group

The first praise group was really Shehinah, which came to The Netherlands in 1974 and also brought a group of dancers.

The purpose of a praise group is to support the singing in a meeting or church service. This idea was born in Evangelical churches in order to teach new songs quickly and easily.

- **Criteria for participation are:**
 - Possessing a good musical ear
 - Being able to sing in tune
 - Having a feeling for rhythm
- People of all ages can participate
- They usually sing in unison. Often a member of the group leads the singing.
- The repertoire is usually that of Graham Kendrick, Scripture in Song, Hillsongs, Hosanna / Integrity, or something similar.
- **Size: approximately 10 members (men and women).**
- A praise group has no conductor but it does have a song-leader. The song-leader often has too little training. This is an area where there is a real challenge for improvement.

Praise choir

It is possible for there to be so much enthusiasm for the praise group within an (Evangelical) church, that it expands and in effect becomes a choir. It will not be long before its members will want to sing in parts and its leader's professional knowledge will be insufficient and its need for a good conductor increases.

- The repertoire remains mainly that of the Praise & Worship songbooks.

Other choirs

There are also other kinds of choirs and song groups of course:

- children's choirs
- teenagers' choirs
- mixed choirs
- men's choirs
- women's choirs
- senior choirs

Furthermore, there are also differences in (instrumental) accompaniment. We shall examine these in this book.

Each type of choir is discussed in a separate chapter.

And a new phenomena are project choirs. Such choir is formed for a short period of time to do **ONE** special project like performing a musical, doing the Young Messiah and such

B

Why?

Chapter 3 - Functions

What functions does a choir have? For some it is no more than an evening out at rehearsal. For others there is a whole set of advantages: from spiritual growth to social contacts, from personal growth to offering entertainment. All the functions of a good choir are discussed.*

3.1. Biblical function

A Christian choir must honour its 'C'! This 'C' is its base and its resource. This 'C' also supplies an important unifying factor: it has a strong unifying function! So how should this 'C' be considered?

The biblical foundation is explained in detail in the book *'MUSIC IN MINISTRY - a biblical perspective'*.

This gives a complete survey of the Old and New Testaments. All the relevant Bible verses are fully explained.

The Levites, whose calling was to serve with their sacrifice of praise, i.e. their music and song, serve as an example. The book fully describes the function of the Levites and explains what this means for present-day (Gospel) singers.

Another important little book is *'MUSIC & REVIVALS'*. This little book demonstrates that music and revival have always been closely connected throughout history. And another recent very important book is *'PRAISE AND WORSHIPPERS'*

Basis

A solid biblical foundation will need to be laid if a choir is to function well. And that does not happen automatically.

The following suggestions have proved to have a very positive influence.

1. Open the choir practice with prayer.
2. Close the choir practice with prayer.
3. Following the introduction:
 - Read a passage from the Bible followed by a short, encouraging explanation of the text.
 - Or read a meditation from another book. For example a chapter from the book *'MUSIC IN MINISTRY - a biblical perspective'*, a book of poetry, a book by Corrie ten Boom, or from a Bible based book of daily meditations. You could also use the Continentals' Bible study book: *'THE WAY'*. Or the book *PRAYERS*
4. Discussing a new song. What is its message, where do you read in the Bible about its theme or content? A Bible study committee within the choir can serve this goal well. Beware of fanatical situations. These damage the formation of the group feeling and your unity. This means that:
 - prayer is important, but that we should not burrow ourselves into one particular type of prayer; all forms of prayer are just as valid.
 - a life of integrity with God is important, but its form is not.
 - assurance of salvation and redemption is important, but not the manner of spiritual rebirth and conversion
 - baptism is important, but not the form of baptism;
 - the Holy Spirit's work and fruit in us are important, but not the way in which these are expressed.
 - the expectancy of Jesus' return is important, but not 'when'.

What we are expressing here is that which binds believers together and not that which separates us. Learn to respect others' opinions! Respect historical developments. It is better to accept these ecclesiastical differences than to deny them.

Make sure that everyone feels welcome!

5. Do you want to examine this matter further? There is a useful book: *'THE MESSAGE'* which talks about the message and the content of the Gospel. The second section of this book, discusses the practical consequences. Another good resource is the book *'THE WAY'* with Bible studies about discipleship.

6. Delegate: seek approximately 3 people to prepare items 1 to 4 and who will involve others in doing so.

Function

As mentioned earlier, the function of the choir of the group can be compared to that of the Levites.

The sacrifice of praise was not simply 'singing something'. The details showing how David re-established their ministry are important. The following is known about the Levites (see the book

"MUSIC IN MINISTRY - a biblical perspective"):

- They possessed great motivation.
- They possessed great consecration.
- They showed great commitment.
- They took care to be well prepared.
- They delivered quality.
- Not everyone was allowed to participate.
- Their activities were based upon great spiritual depth, i.e. clear conviction.
- Their ministry was strongly prophetic.
- They paid attention to detail.
- They ensured a good atmosphere and underlying foundation for the service of the Lord.
- They attached importance to training and practice.
- They were punctual.
- They themselves and their activities were in accordance with the will of God.

In almost every chapter of the Bible you will find a text about music, praise etc. This demonstrates how important our sacrifice of praise is to God. Place is also clearly given to the sacrifice of praise in the new heaven and on the new earth and in the New Jerusalem.

A very specific book about praise is '**WORSHIP**', written by Graham Kendrick.

But: be careful of one-sidedness in praise. Kendrick also states that 'worship' is not only our singing, but certainly also our lifestyle. See also the book '**IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH**'.

In other words: let us not make the mistake of the Levite in the story of the Good Samaritan! This Levite had his act together, but he had no time for the need of his fellow man and could not be bothered with him. His 'worship' was not his lifestyle.

3.2. Personal benefit

What is the advantage of your belonging to a choir/group? Is it just a flash in the pan, a way of spending time, or a hobby?

First of all we want to establish the fact that every person has received talents and gifts.

Although the parable of the talents refers to money, we are nevertheless intended to develop our gifts and potential! This is what God meant (see the books **CREATIVE** and **CHRISTIAN** formerly known as '**ROYAL CREATIVITY**' and '**THE KINGDOM IN DEED**' among others).

- There is therefore a biblical basis for self-development: it brings honour to God.
- The results of our development are a continuous sacrifice of praise.
This is of such importance that all these results - song, music, art and dance - will have a place in the heavenly Jerusalem. They are therefore of eternal value.
- Self-development trains you, strengthens your character and strengthens your identity.
In other words: 'You become even more, who you are.'
- Self-development gives pleasure and is an agreeable experience.
- Self-development is a voyage of discovery. You learn to push your limits ever further and to accept challenges. It promotes creativity, inventivity, perseverance, effort, patience and co-operation; it teaches dependency, working together, mutual respect etc.

The value of self-development is of enormous benefit.

3.3. Social Function

A choir or group also has a number of important social functions. This benefit is alas sometimes

forgotten. We mention a number of these functions here:

- Concentrating on the one common goal establishes relationships, i.e. a circle of friends.
- Friendships can be developed.
- It creates the basis for social tissue (social cohesion) in the local community: societies form the nucleus of the social midfield (civil society).
- You learn how to build bridges.
- You learn how to associate with people who think differently.
- It has a 'polishing' function on the diverse characters; this promotes social cohesion.
- You learn how to handle appointments, to compromise, to live together, to establish goals together, to establish and carry out something together.
- You learn to listen to each other, to tune in to each other, to work together. A choir is not a collection of 'soloists'.
- You learn how to find your own place in the group.

An additional remark concerning this inter-personal 'polishing'; it involves a whole learning process!

Certainly when you add the stress of performances, CD recordings etc.

How easily tensions occur! If you allow these to fester they will be the end of your choir. Or what

should be said about jealousy and envy? How easily do they occur? Each person needs to learn to

combat these in his or her own heart, but, on the other hand, the clear common goal needs to be

explained constantly, again and again.

As soon as choir members start to develop a competitive attitude towards each other, the end of the group is in sight. It is enormously important to learn to be thankful for others' talents. You should never surrender to feelings of jealousy. Because we are 'people', this is an area in which we constantly need to decide to support each other, to serve the choir as a group and not to be jealous, but rather to be grateful for others' talents, efforts etc.

- A choir or group lays the foundation for all kinds of management and democratic skills. Is the choir there for you or are you there for the choir?
- A choir also provides a lot of happy fellowship: lots of birthdays and anniversaries can be celebrated.
- And ... how many people have found their spouse in the choir?

It is important that the conductor and the leaders be alert to the social aspects and group processes.

It is advisable to organise a party or an excursion once a year, possibly with spouses.

3.4. Renewal function

A number of factors were mentioned in the previous chapters, which contribute to renewal:

Spiritual renewal

This concerns individual choir or group members, but it also involves the church or fellowship.

Conditional thereto is the regular rehearsal and performance of new repertoire. As long as you continue to perform the same items, they will lose their sheen of inspiration and renewal.

Artistic renewal and content renewal

We find an important aspect of renewal in the artistic field and in the area of content. The music form can also be regularly renewed. This continues to be the case up to the present day as far as Discipel and the Continentals are concerned.

Social renewal

New members need to be welcomed and integrated into the group. Creating growth is a very important aspect of renewal.

Leadership renewal

There also needs to be a constant flow in the management area. This promotes continuity. Constant cultural developments require continuous adaptation of leadership principles, in order for the choir to be able to continue to function amidst all these changes.

3.5. Entertainment function

Do not think of all kinds of Las Vegas scenarios in this respect. There are two sides to entertainment:

1. The public/the listener

Listening is also being visually active. A choir member's wrong movement, a dropped folder, and the conductor scratching his ear: all such things immediately destroy the listeners' concentration and ruin their enjoyment. Their capacity for enjoyment appears therefore to depend on very small details. This is just as strongly applicable to a praise group: there are gestures which strengthen the effect and those which have the opposite effect! Attention has to be paid to the unity of music, text and gesture. A good choir performance is a well-prepared and well-timed show!

2. The performers

A rehearsal, performance or church service should also be relaxing for the performers, and give them pleasure and enjoyable fellowship. If you, the conductor, are always hitting your choir members over the head and if the rehearsals become dreary, heavy experiences, there is something fundamentally wrong (among the leadership!). You get a lot further with humour than with venom.

C

Organisational

Chapter 4 - Leadership: structure and management

How do you usually begin? A few enthusiastic people get the idea of starting a youth choir, Gospel group or such like. So they go looking for candidates, write about their idea in church magazines, recruit and... : three months later they commence! With great enthusiasm. The most competent choir member temporarily fulfils the role of conductor or music leader.

Nothing untoward happens during the first year. All problems can be solved: no mountain is too high, no valley is too deep, for there is great enthusiasm. They have to start up again after the second summer. The recommencement is slow and difficult! Why? This year the problems do not seem so easy to solve. The third year often brings a few real problems. There are strong differences of opinion among the leadership concerning important matters. And the old, hardened nucleus is starting to accuse the new recruits of not being as committed to "their" choir as they are.

By the fourth year the varnish has faded. Everyone returns after the summer break. But there is disappointment among the members. Some of them would like to sing something else sometimes than what the old guard dictates. Quarrels surface and people take sides. The conflicts climax during the fifth year. Either the old, hardened nucleus is going to throw in the towel or the later, newer recruits will leave. In both cases this will lead to the cessation of the choir, leaving behind a whole lot of disillusioned or hurt people. And if they do manage to survive the first five years, an enormous crisis will probably loom around the ninth year. Or around the fourteenth year, or around the eighteenth or nineteenth year. Very few choirs celebrate their twentieth anniversary!

Completely different

The choir in our example should have arranged a number of things in a totally different way. Enthusiasm is good to begin with of course, but it is no basis for management and structure.

How should it be done?

First of all we would recommend reading the book '*LESSONS, LEADERS AND LIFE*' published by Continental Sound. In this book there are many examples of both good and bad leadership. There is also a detailed discussion of the different kinds of group and leadership crises, their causes and their remedies. Also to be recommended is '*THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER*', a nice little book, which gives suggestions concerning leadership styles.

The first year

The first year begins with enthusiasm. Keep that enthusiasm going and hold on to it. Use the second half of the first year to arrange a number of matters:

- Formally appoint a chairman.
- Formally appoint a secretary.
- Formally appoint a treasurer.

Request the group's agreement for these appointments. There is now a provisional board. This trio is made responsible for:

- The official arrangement of day-to-day matters.
- Preparing the choir to become an association. (A non-profit foundation can occasionally be better.)

The provisional board trio can best be expanded by the addition of two extra board members. Take care to ensure that a couple of these three or five people consist of founding members of the choir (the hardened old guard) as well as a couple of the new recruits.

The second year

- The choir becomes an official association.
- The provisional board steps down following an official election. Members of the provisional board may present themselves as candidates for the permanent board. It is strongly recommended that two to three members of the old guard, who started the group in the beginning, and at least two members of the provisional board should be included in the new team in order to ensure continuity.

- Size of the board: 5 people.
- The term of their mandate is 4 years, during which one member of the board resigns each year and an election is held. So one member of this first board resigns after one year and another in each of the following years, according to a 'resignation rota'.
Members of the board are re-electable and they then serve for four years.
- The responsibilities are shared out. Each member of the board is given a number of responsibilities in his portfolio. But be careful: if a member of the board wants to burn out, he must mainly do everything himself! No, assistants and helpers are sought among the choir members.
- Committees have therefore to be formed, consisting of a number of people, under the leadership of a member of the board. It would be fantastic if every choir member would participate in a committee.

What are the tasks?

The chairman:	Opening, conducting and closing of board meetings and members' meetings. Taking care of official representation to the outside world. Together with board colleagues: drawing up Internal Regulations and rules of behaviour.
The secretary:	Minuting the meetings. Writing and sending out invitations to the meetings. Drawing up and distributing the rehearsal and concert programme. Writing a report on each rehearsal and each performance. Looking after promotion and public relations: making and maintaining contacts, sending out invitations, maintenance of archives, files etc.
Treasurer:	Responsible for the finances, making payments on time, drawing up the annual financial report, collecting contributions, collections and income from concerts. Drawing up a sponsor plan.
Board member A:	Areas of supervision: logistical matters, technical matters, management, transport, dress and rehearsal rooms.
Board member B:	Areas of supervision: spiritual policy, musical policy, membership growth, recruitment, auditions and quality.

This list is incomplete. The responsibilities can also be shared out differently among the members of the board. Always look for the right person for the right task!

Committees

The following committees can be formed:

Publicity Committee:	Ensures that the choir becomes as well known as possible by means of articles in newspapers, posters etc.
Choir Magazine Committee:	Regular internal communication is absolutely essential. Announcements are quickly forgotten; give them everything black on white. This also avoids any misunderstandings.
Reports Committee:	Several members can write reports about all the events.
Finance Committee:	This committee can also serve as a cash committee.
Technical Committee:	Looks after the piano, instruments, sound and lighting equipment. The equipment must always be present and working at each rehearsal and concert location.
Transport Committee:	How is the choir to travel to the place where it is to perform and back? Also: the organisation of loading and unloading of all the equipment which has to be taken with them.
Vestments Committee:	Looking after the choir vestments. The decoration of the rehearsal room. The decoration of the concert hall. The choir or group's styling etc.
Facilities Committee:	The rehearsal room, setting up the rehearsal room. Judging the suitability of, and setting up the concert location. Stage

management and management of the dressing rooms.

Food and drinks committee: The organisation of food and drink during rehearsals, performances and trips. Also: arrangements for the necessary chores.

Internal Regulations and Rules of Behaviour Committee

Musical Policy Committee: Drawing up the choice of repertoire. The music leader or conductor will usually be a member of this committee, but he or she may never force the committee to accept his or her taste.

Spiritual Policy Committee: How do we start and finish the meetings? Who does so? Responsible for spiritual input into the choir or group. Providing (relevant) Bible study. Arranging care, welcoming, counselling etc.

Growth Committee: Concerns itself with membership growth, recruitment, auditions, quality and termination of membership.

Contact Committee: Responsible for mutual care within the group. Provides presents for birthdays, births, anniversaries etc. Takes care of sick visiting etc.

Many other committees could be thought of, of course. You can moreover choose to combine committees. What is important, is to keep them affective and workable. Hold the first members' meeting during the second year!

The third year

The pioneer phase ends after the first two years, which constitute the start-up period. In the third year the whole streamlined structure should be getting to work. Everything depends on a few people during the pioneer phase. We have now entered a consolidation phase, in which the choir or group must be borne through the efforts of as many people as possible. Working together democratically has its ups and downs, but if the rules of the game are learned well, it unleashes great new dynamism. And: don't forget the members' meeting.

The fourth year

Routine begins to set in. Are you going to allow the dip to overtake you or do you have a solution? It is smart to plan a CD-recording around January, or a big concert in February and a big concluding concert at the end of May or the beginning of June. If the choir started with an amateur music leader it will be apparent by now that his limited capacities have reached their limits. Either this person takes courses and gets schooling, so that the choir or the group can continue to grow, or a professional conductor will have to be sought. In this case organise the changeover during the summer recess and without any kind of emotional situation affecting the outgoing music leader. Thank him very politely however: the choir's existence is partially due to him. Or you decide to do nothing, you accept your music leader as he is, but the choir or group will remain mediocre in that case. And: don't forget the members' meeting.

The fifth year

Congratulations: you have succeeded. You have conquered the first crises. Plans for celebrating the first anniversary are taking up all your attention. Celebrate the anniversary around the month of May. After the anniversary celebration everyone usually falls into a deep hole. It is good for that to take place during the summer recess! And: make the members' meeting a party this year.

The sixth year

It will be difficult in the beginning, but quickly blow new life into the committees! Then life in the beehive will continue serenely.

The duration of a committee

Yet another important observation concerning the life of the committees. Research shows that

only a few people are motivated over long periods. You therefore ask people to serve on a committee for the period of one year! They then all retire. Thank them on the closing evening.

And in September new committees are formed. Continuation is thus guaranteed. You can "park" non-functioning committee members in this way and people with the correct qualities can be brought on to the right committees.

From the management and policy point of view: the board appoints and retires committee members - even during their mandate if they are dysfunctional.

The members' meeting

The members' meeting, which must be held at least once a year, can call the management to account. The members appoint the board, approve the financial statements etc.

Chapter 5 - Mission Statement

At present almost every company and every organisation and movement has a so-called 'mission statement'. Why do we need a 'mission statement'? It sums up your basis, goal, idea, call, future vision etc. Developing such a mission statement is a very creative and also a difficult process. However, stating your goal in this way is a very strong directional principle for management, committees and members.

The following is the *mission statement* of Continental Art Centre. The boards of Continental Sound (CS) and Christian Artists (CA) worked for a whole year (!) on this! This *mission statement* provides for unity among the six organisations represented by CS and CA.

"Being called to participate in the Kingdom of God means: putting love, mercy, freedom, solidarity and righteousness into practice, with the result that culture is influenced and formed in a creative and/or proclamative manner."

A mission statement should only be drawn up after a few years. Prior to then the statement of the basis and the goal in the association's statutes is sufficient.

Chapter 6 - Motivation

One of the biggest problems for those in leadership is motivation and de-motivation. When we look back on the early years of our movement, we thought that 'people experienced maximum motivation, if there was a good bible study or a long prayer meeting'. Nothing proved to be less true! How come? Studying the motivation process, reading about it and applying what we found, resulted us the following (This chapter comes from the book "lessons, leaders and life"):

Motivation curve

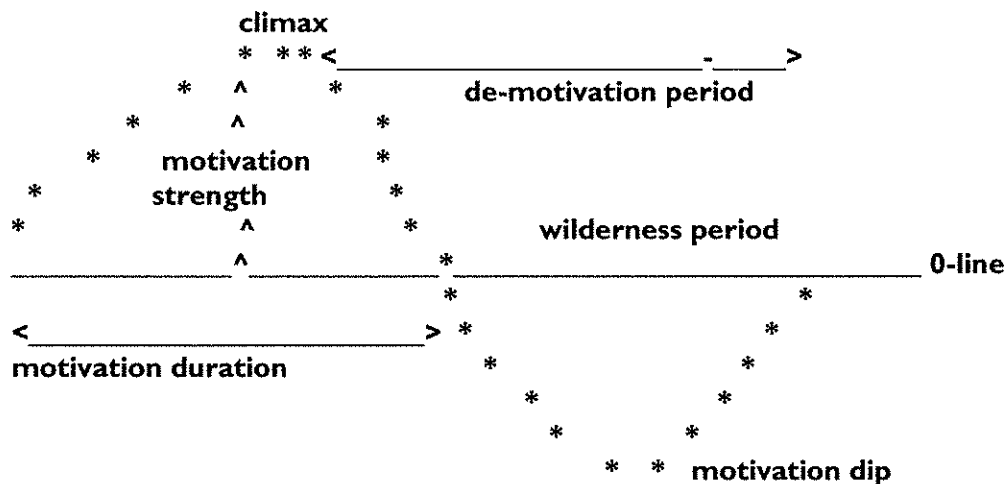


Fig. 1 Motivation curve ✱

One can see that there is a motivation duration. Note: this is of short duration for most people.

Only a few have a longer lasting motivation. There also is a motivation strength. Note: it is weak in most people. Only a few have a strong motivation. Then there is a motivation cycle: something begins with enthusiasm, reaches a climax, disappointments follow and the de-motivation process starts. Eventually the motivation reaches nil and you fall into a hole.

The stronger and longer-lasting the motivation, the deeper and stronger the hole. It could even turn into a complete wilderness experience. Such a period does cause people to grow stronger, to grow deep roots. When disappointments and de-motivations also become part of the total process, they in turn generate energy for a new motivation and a new growth. Good leadership knows this curve and prepares people for de-motivation and teaches them to understand the wilderness period.

A few remarks about the duration. Some things were noticeable:

- Young employees (18-24 years old), motivation duration: maximum 2 years, then they start looking for a different job.
- Volunteers in church work organisations, motivation duration: on average 3 months. (So it makes sense to take people on for a limited period of time. This prevents burnout.)
- Members of choirs/bands (these have a longer motivation duration: around 9 months per year): after 5 years a problem phase arrives (partly also concerned with leadership and maturity).
- Leadership of congregations/churches (elders, house group leaders): after 5 to 7 years a problem stage (also concerned with leadership and maturity).

Burnout and extinguishing

If maximum input is required for a longer period of time (i.e. longer than the duration of their motivation), this results in tired and completely worn out people who can't or won't do anything else. Leadership means recognising everyone's differing motivations and handling them wisely.

Leadership and motivation

How we lead will significantly motivate or de-motivate people. Influencing factors are:

1. Our conviction.
2. Our enthusiasm.
3. Our own input.
4. How we support others in their task and needs (facilitating leadership).
5. Human resources management: acknowledging of gifts, people's strengths and weaknesses. Do we know how to maximize on them?
6. Recognising periods. This is a fairly complicated process. Very important is: where leaders need to give leadership differently at a certain moment.

It will be obvious that a pioneer phase needs a leader who commands his army like some kind of general. But when that army goes to battle, the soldiers acquire abilities and gain knowledge.

Corporals and captains develop. Maturity takes about 5-7 years. If the general continues to 'command' his troops in this manner, increasing conflict with the subordinate carriers of responsibility will occur: the corporals and captains want to be heard. If they are not heard, such conflict will result in that groups will divide, people will leave and much damage is done. This could have been prevented. When a leader sees that his people are becoming 'mature', the leadership will need changing. The pioneering phase is past and it is time for consolidation. The 'power' now rests with the upper layer (of corporals, captains and the general). Democratic structures need to be put in place. Teach these people how to govern. A consolidation phase of 3 years is very healthy. Scrutinise everything: what has meaning and what hasn't? Is the correct person in the correct place everywhere? Can talents be developed?

The pioneering leader is at this time at the most the 'primus inter pares' (first among equals).

After such a consolidation a new closeness develops, a new motivation grows, new vitality occurs and a new movement is born. Who then gives leadership and how is a matter for democratic discussion. It could possibly, but not necessarily, be the old general.

This takes us to the recognition of everyone's type of motivation. There really should be a spectrum analysis for all the different strengths of motivation.

0		100 (max.)
Just for pleasure	-	The 'holy calling'
Leisure / hobby	-	Strong enough to move mountains, even that is stone by stone
Fast 'tiring of it all'	-	Enables 'top performance'
Of (very) short duration	-	For long(er) duration
Most people	-	Few people
Amateurs (even with an artistic education, remain amateurs)	-	Professionals (e.g. those who continue artistically, it's their 'calling', even if it does not earn a living)

Then the next phase of the analysis:

- A. Self analysis: where do you rate yourself (and others) on the above scale of 0-100?
- B. Goal analysis: what do you (and others) want to achieve?
- C. Possibilities analysis: which possibilities and (trained) talents have you got? What professional knowledge? Rate others too.

Realisation

These three together determine the duration and completion of the project or the goals set. If they don't coincide, adjust your goals and don't over-burden people or set unrealistic expectations (e.g. we will reach the whole world). That kind of disappointments are better avoided right from the start.

What is definitely a 'no no' is the manipulation of people in order to achieve those goals. Phrases like 'God tells me that you all need to come and evangelise this Saturday' are totally unacceptable. Don't manipulate, just encourage everyone to use their gifts.

Sources of motivation

There appear to be various sources from which people can draw motivation. It is good to know what they are and to employ them at the right time in the right manner.

Firstly the wrong sources:

- **Manipulation**. This can definitely motivate people. But it is a negative energy and it evaporates after a while. People who are manipulated often get seriously harmed so that ultimately nothing is achieved. People can even lose their faith and their trust in all people. (Only good counselling can help then.)
- **Looking for profit**. For example: 'I want to get rich as...' Even in the Christian sector people are motivated by money instead of by a desire to serve. Greed for money is a motivation source of negative energy. That type of person creates enormous stumbling blocks and will walk all over others.
- **Fame**. E.g.: 'I want to be as famous as Amy Grant or Billy Graham'. So long as we look at, and compare ourselves to, others, we will develop negatively (you will never be Amy Grant or Billy Graham). Competition is a negative energy. We should not be motivated by competitiveness but by a desire to build something.
- **Fear**. Example: 'If you don't practise now, Dad will be very angry!' If you don't do this or that, God will be angry. There is no blessing because you... and so on. Fear can motivate for a while, but not for very long.

What are the positive sources?

- **Being (or being made) aware of one's own abilities and talents**. That will form a strong fundamental motivation.
- **Understanding God's will**. He deliberately gives us talents, gifts and abilities. He wants to develop and use them.
- **God has a unique plan for my life**. I have a unique purpose. There is a goal for my life.
- **Evaluation**. It is very motivating to regularly assess and evaluate the process, the project: 'Look, we've already got this far! We are well under way and can correct any mistakes'.
- **Meditation and prayer**. God can empower and motivate us through his Word and Spirit.
- **Sharing / experiencing**. Sharing something together is very motivating. It can vary from a struggle to survive to an evening of praise.
- **Clarity of meaning and ideal gives purpose**. The 'idea' is the greatest motivator.
- **Reward is a good motivator**. This could be money, every worker should be reasonably paid. But it could also be appreciation, telling the person or the group that you appreciate their effort (much more profitable than reporting what has been done wrong).
- **Celebrating achieved goals**. The beginning of something is a very special moment - ending should be equally special.
- **And last but not least: leadership has an enormous influence!**

To finish: let's not forget that working together toward a common goal is a very noble, educational and purifying process. It is a path of stumbling and getting up again, of obstacles and progress.

Chapter 7 - Meeting skills

Wherever people work together it is necessary to consult each other from time to time: are things going according to plan, are there still problems, are changes on the way, are we going to undertake new projects etc.

Usually, at the beginning, when the group is smaller, everyone is very motivated to regularly meet and share (just an informal get together at which the fine choir is discussed enthusiastically) so that the need for official meetings appears somewhat exaggerated.

Things certainly become more complex when new people join the group, and people do not always meet each other away from the group or the choir, so things can become more difficult and misunderstandings can arise: 'I thought that he/she would do that', or 'Of course I haven't paid the fee: you always receive a bill for it ...', and 'I couldn't care less, they'll do what they want anyway ...'

In short: it is necessary to speak to each other in a structured manner: a meeting.

If the group or the choir has a *judicial status*, e.g. that of a (non profit) association, the law requires meetings to be held and stipulates the minimum frequency with which they are to take place.

In this chapter a number of matters will be discussed to help you to run meetings in an efficient manner and the most dangerous volcanoes will also be dealt with. It is an illusion, of course, to imagine that you will become a 'hardened meeting tiger' just by reading a few pages. This is why good training in meeting and discussion skills is advisable if you occupy a board or leadership position. There is a Training Institute for Skills in every large town in The Netherlands, and otherwise ask the trade unions to help you to find a reputable institution, or ask EZA, Königswinter (Germany) or the Christian Artists in Rotterdam (Holland).

Participants in the meeting

There are two kinds of meeting:

- With small groups of people, e.g. board meetings.
- With large groups of people, such as the general members' meetings.

There are more kinds of discussion of course, such as special committee meetings, but these also take a form similar to that of a board meeting.

Three functionaries are present in all meetings:

1. The chairman. He prepares the meeting, calls the participants together, leads the meeting and makes sure that the agreements reached during the meeting are carried out. The chairman also assumes a few other tasks, such as representing the group to the outside world.
2. The secretary. He supports the chairman in his activities: i.e. the secretary carries out the administration, knows the regulations of the group or choir, gathers the necessary information together in preparation of the meeting, often takes minutes during the meeting and therefore preferably sits to the right of the chairman and the secretary assists the chairman in the follow-up to the meeting.
3. The participant. i.e. everyone who takes part in the meeting, either as a member or as a guest.

The treasurer is a member with a specific task, i.e. looking after the group/choir's financial interests.

In general, it is usual for the general members' meeting to elect a management team to deal with the daily running of the affairs. You cannot call all the members together for every little item if you have a choir consisting of some 50 members. This would be possible in a group of up to about 10 members, but even then problems can arise due to full diaries.

The members' meeting should ensure that the group or choir is evenly represented in the board and that the treasurer and e.g. two members next to the chairman and the secretary speak for a large proportion of the rest of the group or choir.

This management team will be working together during the coming months and it is responsible for ensuring that the group's goals are achieved. They therefore give periodical account to the general members' meeting, for, at the end of the day, this has the final word!

The meeting

As stated earlier, the chairman prepares the meeting. The secretary usually assists him in this task. What do the minutes of the previous meeting say, what incoming mail is there, what new items need to be added to the agenda, and why?

The agenda is a very important aid in the meeting. Take sufficient time to draw it up. Things too often go wrong in meetings of volunteers because the meetings go on too long and become too complicated due to hidden agendas, too much and too unruly discussions and too little vision of what now really needs to be discussed.

Think about each item: what do I want to achieve with this item? Does it involve the formation of an opinion and do we therefore need to discuss it? Am I aiming at a decision? Do I want to communicate something without having to discuss it? Always make this clear in the agenda, so that each participant in the meeting knows the status of the agenda item and what is expected of him/her!

An example of a meeting agenda

1. **Opening and closing.**
State who is going to do this. The opening is the starting signal for the meeting, but it can also include prayer or a reading.
2. **Agenda.**
State what is on the agenda. This is the sole area in which the participants have an opportunity to propose additional subjects for the meeting or to react to the order. Have additional items been proposed? See whether there is time and room to include them in the agenda and whether there has been sufficient preparation time for them. Otherwise, place them on the agenda for the following meeting.
3. **Announcements.**
A question to all the participants. Who has something to say? This can only be an announcement, not a point of decision-making or discussion! If this is the case, make it an agenda item. Incoming and outgoing mail can be mentioned under this agenda item. Does this need to be discussed in greater detail? Make an agenda item of it!
4. **Previous minutes.**
First run through the minutes textually, asking yourself: is this a faithful report of the meeting and is it correct in what it says? Thereafter all the items arising out of the previous minutes are dealt with, after which a (short!) report is given on the developments per item. Do they need to be discussed further? Place them on the agenda! The action list is gone through: what has been taken care of and what not yet?
5. **Agenda items.**
Inform the participants beforehand of the reason for each item on the agenda. All prior available information can be included in the agenda (or as a supplement to it). This saves considerable time in the meeting! Indicate what you want to achieve during the meeting with respect to each agenda item: the formation of an opinion, the taking of a decision, and the giving of information?
6. **Questions and remarks at the end of the meeting**

This refers to whether anyone has anything else to ask or to contribute ('whatever-is-placed- on-the-table'). Be careful of the so-called 'embers'. Don't discuss them, but place them on the following agenda if necessary.

7. Conclusion.

After the agenda has been drawn up, the secretary takes care of its further progress such as sending out the invitation to the meeting and the minutes of the previous meeting, if these were not sent out earlier. The members can thus prepare themselves well for the meeting. It is essential that the members prepare themselves well before the meeting in order for the best result to be achieved: why is this point being discussed, is the item I proposed also on the table, what happened to this or that decision, etc.

In the meantime the chairman and the secretary continue their preparation: they collect the necessary information per agenda item. This is necessary in order to be able to judge or formulate suggestions. They also draw up a plan with respect to their own contribution, - such as questions or remarks in connection with different items -, and the global timing of the meeting, so that less important subjects do not take more time than necessary and important subjects are given sufficient time, in order to permit good decisions to be taken. The chairman takes the chair at the meeting, he announces the subjects under discussion and on which decisions have to be made, and he allows the members to speak. If he sees an opportunity to conduct the meeting in a disciplined manner, each participant will experience it as a good, highly profitable meeting.

Tips

- Prepare a short introduction per agenda item of maximum 3 to 5 minutes. Explain why the item is on the agenda, what its salient points are, what needs to be decided and who must do what.
- Allow the members sufficient time to have their say.
- Prevent endless arguments repeating points of view.
- Take a decision which can count on the support of the majority of those present at the meeting.
- Make a short summary of the discussions and decisions for the benefit of the minutes.

By doing all this the chairman ensures that the meetings do not go on for ever and he also has the opportunity of ensuring a pleasant, openhearted atmosphere, within which everyone feels called to really participate in the meeting, this also improving the result.

After the meeting

After the meeting the secretary looks after the drawing up of the report: the *minutes*. This is the most detailed form of report: in principle you experience the meeting anew when you read it. A shorter form is a *list of decisions*: this mentions only the decisions taken, as well as who is responsible and the deadline for implementation. This is sometimes called a list of action, because under certain circumstances all kinds of actions are expected from people. The report of the meeting is sent to the meeting's participants by the secretary and serves as a preparation for the following meeting.

Traps

If you read all this, meetings are in fact simple affairs which should always be pleasant. This is not always the case, however, because many fall into traps! Traps or irritations during a meeting can be:

Failure to take decisions

No decision is taken.

Reason: serious division among the members, they do not really know which decision to take.

Solution: provide good information beforehand, break the decision up into smaller sections and let decisions be taken on these, and explain clearly what decisions need to be taken.

The meeting is chaotic

What are we talking about, who is speaking now?

Cause: the chairman has no control: he wants to be friendly or he has clearly not prepared himself (sufficiently).

Solution: better preparation and you cannot be everyone's friend. You are chairing the meeting and everyone has therefore to submit to your rules!

The chairman and the secretary do everything

The chairman asks a question, the secretary answers and the others just sit there like prunes.

Or: the chairman carries out every decision.

Cause: lack of trust in others or exaggerated enthusiasm that cools off later, after which the whole affair becomes clogged in the mire.

Solution: the chairman clearly needs to learn to delegate and to confront people with their actions. This also increases the participation of the members of the meeting and will increase creativity.

The agenda is rushed through

In any case the chairman runs into lack of time at the end of the meeting.

Cause: poor preparation as far as the timing of the meeting is concerned. It is also possible that the chairman has been unable to keep his hand on the meeting by allowing people to speak at too great length.

Solution: draw up a good time scheme, interrupt in time if the meeting looks like being drawn out and ask the people to keep their contributions short and to the point. This also makes it more interesting.

Although the above traps are not an exhaustive list, for there are very many more, they do nevertheless provide a good impression of what you should look out for during a meeting. If you leave a meeting with an unsatisfactory feeling, it is recommended to go over the meeting once again in your own mind, asking yourself what went wrong and how.

Finally: good preparation delivers a good meeting!

Each little word 'he' can be replaced by 'she' without difficulty!

Chapter 8 - Timely renewal

If a choir or group wants to continue to exist, renewal will have to be worked at, at several levels. It is very naive to leave this to coincidence or to the 'Spirit'. No, renewal follows a plan, recognises a strategy.

A number of factors have already been mentioned in previous chapters. We mention them here again briefly and add to the list. Through continuous renewal

- the choir or group remains very inspiring for itself and its listeners
- the choir or group retains its attractiveness and its charisma.

Which renewals?

Musical renewal!

1/3 to 1/2 of the repertoire should be new each year. This keeps rehearsals and performances interesting.

Board renewal in the leadership

Each year one member of the board retires and is replaced by someone new. This both ensures continuity and gives new ideas a chance.

Technical renewal

If you do not do this on time, sound equipment, lighting equipment and instruments will eventually seize up. Technical equipment wears out after 3 to maximum 5 years if used intensively. All cables etc. need to be fully repaired or replaced every half-year.

Performance renewal

The way we stood, moved or whatever we did 30 years ago no longer obtains today. Much more attention therefore needs to be paid to choreography, dress, the arrangement and decoration of the stage, the position of the singers, production etc. Use video from time to time: it is very instructive to see yourself again and it allows you to see clearly where you can improve and renew yourself.

Spiritual renewal

Find subjects for Bible study, prayer, the choir magazine etc. This can also assist motivation renewal and quality improvement.

Leadership requires looking ahead. A good board looks ahead and takes effective measures in time.

Chapter 9 - Judicial matters

9.1. Rights of authorship

You use music so you have to be in order, otherwise you are committing a serious crime. In fact, only private use is tax free, apart from that you *always* have to abide by the law with regard to the use of music! The law makes no difference between music used for rehearsal, for a concert or for a church service! The motto is: *make sure you are legally in order for the use of music: ALWAYS and ON TIME!*

9.2. Sheet music

You want to sing so you need sheet music of the songs. Do *not* copy, this is punishable by very heavy fines. Several choirs now no longer exist as a result of their illegal activities! In order, but how? You purchase sheet music from the publisher in question, the details are usually given in the songbook.

If you don't know, contact Continental Sound (tel.: 010-4212592, e-mail: info@continentalart.org) for help!

N.B. churches, fellowships, organisations etc. can pay these copyright fees via CCLI, Chantry House, 22 Upperton Road, Eastborne, East Sussex BN21 1BF, UK.

You order the sheet music you need and you pay the bill!

May you now sing? No!

9.3. PRS (Buma, Gema, Suisa, Sabam, etc.)

The law requires each use of music to be paid for *separately*! This is difficult and annoying, but alas not to be avoided. To sing music live, i.e. both in rehearsal and performance, you have to pay so-called performance fees. This is regulated by a PRS (Public Rights Society) as a legal monopoly. You can arrange the payment directly with the PRS in your nation.

N.B.

If the choir or the praise group only participates in the worship service to accompany congregational singing, only the church needs to fulfil the PRS requirements. The choir or praise group does not need to do this as well.

But as soon as the choir or the group starts performing separately in the service or performs elsewhere, even if free of charge, PRS requirements have to be met!

And may you now tape such a performance on a cassette and produce copies of it? No!

9.4. PRS - mechanicals

If you want to produce something on cassettes or CDs you have to arrange this via the PRS as well (section mechanicals). You need to request the form from your PRS in time.

Be careful: you may not produce your master copy until you have fulfilled the PRS's requirements! This takes about a month, so be in time!

Practice cassettes

A choir or a group can tape their music or singing on cassettes to give to its members so that they can rehearse at home. You may copy these cassettes yourself in a limited number (no more than the number of members) and they must be free of charge. But: you may never copy an existing cassette or CD published or made by someone else! That is definitely theft!

9.5. Video

No, even simply recording a little concert is *forbidden*! This is only allowed for the purposes of rehearsal and with a maximum of the number of the members. Furthermore, videos encroach on people's personal rights and the neighbouring rights of the choir. If the choir also makes use of dance or choreography, the maker thereof also has his own rights. You even need the choreographer's permission to make a video! This means that:

1. all choir members have to give written permission for a video recording.
2. the choir, as a judicial body, also has to give its permission. As a choir or a group you have the

full right to refuse any form of audio or video recording. You have the right to say: 'Either that camera/recorder is taken out of the church/hall, or the performance does not take place.'

With groups of the Continentals, Young Continentals, Continental Kids and Discipel the group is the sole owner of all *audio, choreo, video and performing rights*. Permission can only be obtained from the Continental Art Centre and this is subject to very strict requirements.

9.6. Only text

There are choirs, such as children's choirs and some senior choirs, which only use text and no sheet music. In that case no sheet music needs to be ordered; in some countries you need to pay the CCLI for using the text.

9.7. Finance

Groups, bands, choirs etc. need to arrange their finances well. And do not forget, that you *certainly need to preserve everything for 10 years*. So please keep a good cashbook, with income and expenses, right from the very beginning. And remember to hold on to cash tickets etc. for everything!

As a (non profit) association you can purchase instruments and equipment after some time, and even produce a CD for example, finances permitting. Ensure in the last instance that the sale brings in more than the recording and production costs.

An annual financial report has to be drawn up at the end of the year! Two members (not members of the board) must check the correctness of the books and the cash and report their findings in writing. If you have become a large organisation, let an accountant/auditor draw up these annual reports.

9.8. Notary

How do you become a (non profit) organisation? You do this via a notary! Standard texts exist for this. The law regulates the running of (non profit) associations. You must describe:

- The basis
- The goal
- The first board members or founders.

9.9. Chamber of Commerce

Each year you receive a form from the Chamber of Commerce requesting you to inform them of changes in members of the board or in the official address.

9.10. P.O. Box

We strongly advise you to rent a P.O. box. This P.O. box is also useful for your giro/bank account. Every administration office gets mad at frequent changes of choir addresses. Contact is all too often lost. Therefore: as soon as you are in possession of your act of association, apply for a P.O. box and, later, a giro/bank account.

9.11. Sponsors

It is sometimes still possible to find sponsors on a local basis. But you also need a legal status to do this. Do not write to Shell or Unilever. They receive 100 requests a day and do absolutely nothing. Sometimes sponsors sponsor in kind (materials), e.g. by giving notepaper or envelopes. Additional info on sponsors and subsidies can be found in the booklet **EVANGELISTIC CONCERTS**

9.12. Subsidy

Once you exist officially you should go and talk to the Department of Culture and Welfare at your town hall. You have the right to a kind of basic subsidy, which every amateur association can obtain. Even if you are a Christian choir, this basic subsidy should not be refused. At the same time, you can sometimes also apply for a subsidy from a national funds to acquire instruments or choir vestments.

9.13. Membership fee

If you want to stay in existence all your members will have to pay a membership fee! This makes it possible to purchase sheet music, pay for the rehearsal room, acquire choir vestments, organise a concert, and pay the PRS and the membership fee of your professional organisation.

9.14. Your professional organisation

Yes, it is necessary. Your choir or group does indeed have to be a member of your own professional organisation (like an artists union, a national choir organisation, etc.). There are so many situations and questions that it is impossible to deal with them all in this book. Continental Art Centre, where the Christian Artists Association is also housed, receives at least 25 calls a day with members' questions. Approximately 3,000 choirs, groups or individuals are already members!

9.15. Responsibility

Those who are in leadership need to realise that they are responsible for both the good and the bad things that happen to *what* (e.g. the association) and *who* (the persons) they lead. Poor management (e.g. of finances) or lack of security (allowing too many risks to be taken) can be severely punished. As a leader, even if you are not a formal manager, you are responsible and accountable for:

Just a few examples

- Driving 300 km during the day, then setting up the stage, giving an evening concert and then driving 300 km home. Imagine that a car with six members of your choir has an accident because the driver is over-tired, you, as a member of the board, can be held responsible.
- You too often allow your choir members to move heavy boxes. Someone has an accident or a hernia as a result. You can be held responsible. Health and work-regulations are equally applicable to volunteers.
- You are putting up decoration and a lamppost falls on someone's foot, so that he can no longer walk. As a manager or person responsible you are responsible and accountable for this.

It is sensible to insure your association against this kind of responsibility, even though this does not cover conscious irresponsible behaviour, such as taking technical risks with electrical current through injudicious misuse of equipment and transgressing speeding restrictions and travel times.

Chapter 10 - Position and function of the conductor or music leader

If you do not arrange the situation around the position and function of a music leader well, this will certainly become a source of great frustration and conflicts.

Regulation

If the choir is a choir belonging to a church or a fellowship, the church or fellowship will have to participate in this regulation. The position and the function of the conductor/music leader must absolutely be definitely be regulated black on white if the choir or the group has become a (non profit) organisation.

Who decides on the repertoire?

- The conductor/leader? All input comes from him. Is this wise?
- The conductor/leader together with a few members as a kind of mixed committee?
- A repertoire or music committee?

In both the last two cases the conductor is more a technical and artistic executor. The board can of course establish a different form or other principles each year, following consultation with the members.

Terms of service

- Is the conductor/leader in the service of (employed by) the choir or the group?
- Is he paid for his services?

An agreement must always run from 1st September (the beginning of the season) to 1st July (the end of the season). Stipulate that you can cancel the agreement in time, 2 months in advance.

What are you going to pay the conductor or leader?

Many choirs float on the enthusiasm of such a leader in the beginning. But you will have to arrange something eventually, if you want to avoid him becoming irritated.

- Pay all his travelling costs certainly, in this case, as well as what he spends on music material etc.
- If your conductor/leader is an expert it is also reasonable to give him an hourly stipend.
- If this person is a professional you will certainly have to pay him a reasonable amount for his time and services. The labourer is worth his hire. The Levites were also paid normally.

Solving disagreements

If you are a member of a professional organisation like an artists union, they have a mechanism for mediation in the solution of conflicts.

Functional conversations

Hold a meeting with the conductor or leader once a quarter to discuss the functioning of the choir, and minute your conversation! This maintains good relationships and ensures the continued functioning of the choir. Talk through problems, clear up problems in time, otherwise your management team, conductor or choir will suffer.

Preparation

The functioning of the choir also depends on several preparatory steps which need to be taken in the areas of spirituality, music, art, content and social context.

This also means that a management team, choir, group, fellowship or church needs to understand that a conductor/leader has a lot more work to do than just standing 'waving' his hand for an hour or so.

In general, an evening's rehearsal requires a whole afternoon's preparation. If the conductor/leader also has to rehearse with the band this will require an additional part of the day and if the conductor/leader also has to write musical arrangements for some of the instruments this will easily absorb another day of extra work.

The question is therefore: what do you expect of your conductor/leader if you only want to pay him a paltry weekly sum? Professionals quickly stop doing volunteer work. The more you request, the more time something requires. So you will also have to pay more for it!

This is also valid as far as church song leaders are concerned. It is fine if the preparation demands 1 to 2 hours of volunteer time. But if the song leader is busy preparing several evenings or parts of the day every week, the church will really have to arrange something. The Bible insists that we not withhold both pastors' and Levites' salaries.

Training of the conductor/leader

Even if you have already learned a lot, you still eventually become empty. It is important to get regular new impulses and to freshen up. Here are a few possibilities:

- Attend a special study day
- Attend the Christian Artists Seminar
- The CA-Academy organises a special course lasting 10 Saturdays every spring and autumn. You should always attend these if your knowledge of music and your knowledge of choir leadership are only mediocre. Follow-on courses are also organized, furthermore.
- Become a conductor/director within the Continental Singers, an incredible inspiration and motivation and learning-process.

Chapter 11 - Relationship with or separation from the church or fellowship

It is remarkable that a number of choirs have had big quarrels between the leadership of a church fellowship and the leadership of the choir. The Christian Artists Union has mediated in some of these situations. In general these kinds of conflict are the result of unclear agreements and unrealistic expectations.

This is why it is very wise to have a meeting (e.g. 3 to 4 times a year) with the leadership of the church or assembly if you are part of a local fellowship.

Subjects which need to be agreed clearly are:

- The spiritual policy of your choir or group. What does the choir or group leadership do in this respect; what input is expected from the church or assembly leadership; how do you tune the choir's spiritual policy to that of the church; what special extra input is needed for the special needs of your choir or group; what is the level of freedom of your choir or group in its own policy-making?
- Possible contributions from the church or assembly to your choir or group. For example are there financial contributions available for the purchase of instruments? Is there a contribution, for example, in the provision of a rehearsal room free of charge? And what does the church/assembly expect of your choir or group in return? Do they have to be there every Sunday to support the congregational singing? Is a concert expected twice a year? And how much room is there for them to make their own music policy?

Your choir or group will probably have a much looser relationship with one particular church or assembly or you will probably choose to be inter-church. This has consequences regarding the different relationships and the support which the parties expect from each other. Declare this clearly and establish what you actually agree with each other! It is strongly recommended that an inter-church choir have a regular, meaningful meeting (e.g. once a year) with all the churches and assemblies represented by choir/ group members

Cocksure cases are known of where the choir or group leadership thought that they knew better and took no account of the local churches/assemblies. Such opinions usually arose from unfortunate conversations with elders responsible for the youth or with youth-leaders or pastors. Even if you sometimes run into walls of misunderstanding when you are involved in music, always re-open the conversation. An inter-church group can be such a blessing to *all* local churches and assemblies, because it forms an essential bridge. An inter-church choir does not draw people away from any church or assembly - on the contrary: it is an important support of, and an addition to the work of the church. So: separation? No!

Whole conflicts have been fought over organs. There appear to be organists and cantors who wish 'that modern Gospel music and band' to hell! It is also recommended in this case that you try to discuss the matter but not to withdraw. And take care that choir or band members refrain from warlike remarks about the 'dictatorship of the organ'. If necessary, ask the church leadership to mediate if the discussions are really getting nowhere. It is your perfect right as a choir or band to want to use tracks and this will definitely have to be respected by 'the organ' etc.

Whatever all these relationships should be, they are the result of a growth process which requires time and effort on behalf of all the parties involved.

The relationship also depends upon the *function* of a choir or group as a whole and that depends in turn on the kind of choir/group you are! Questions that need to be answered are:

- Are you only supporting your church, e.g. as a liturgical choir or praise group?
- Are you active in evangelism and is your home base one particular church?

- **Are you completely aiming at putting on concerts, do you never take part in services and do your members come from different churches?**
And you will have to put this into a form of words referring to the kind of choir you are: a children's', teenagers', band, youth, or Gospel choir, a mixed choir, a men's or women's choir, a specific type of choir (e.g. barbershop, musical operetta), senior choir or band.

Chapter 12 - Working together

*As already explained in the previous chapter, working **TOGETHER** is the key! And this is certainly the case for people/churches/ organisations which invite you to a concert or performance or to participate in a church service.*

Discuss in time which sections of your repertoire are to be used and how the choir is to be used.

- Is it for evangelism?
- Is it for a service?
- Is it for congregational singing or a praise evening?
- Is it for a special liturgy?

Whom do you discuss all this with? Is it the pastor, the liturgy committee, the song leader, the organist, the evangelism committee, the youth leader, the elder responsible for youth etc.?

Moreover, arrange all other matters at the same time, such as finance, dressing rooms, how many songs are to be sung or how long the performance should take, technical requirements, dress, food and drink etc. Confirm this black on white!

Who is it meant for, in other words, what is the target group? Will there be many older people coming? Or just a lot of young people? Adapt your repertoire accordingly; a church full of older people will not really appreciate a Gospel rock concert.

Further: read the little book '**EVANGELISTIC CONCERTS**'; this contains many valuable tips and suggestions for organising events.

Chapter 13 - Organisation and P.R.

There will come a time when you will want to work at getting known or when you will wish to organise a special performance or concert. How?

First of all we recommend reading the little book **'EVANGELISTIC CONCERTS'**. This explains very clearly all the tasks, planning and activities and how, when and what you have to do. This little book guarantees success.

There is nevertheless a warning, however: fame is *not* trying to get an article in Times, Paris Match, Frankfurter Allgemeine, etc. You should build up your *local* fame, and develop a relationship with local newspapers, especially the house-to-house papers.

Yet another suggestion:

You are definitely recommended to invite the Continentals, Young Continentals, and Continental Kids once a year. Setting up their concert and possibly providing a warm-up programme can be especially educational!

Chapter 14 - Ideas

Working creatively is suddenly 'in', especially since the 'Willowcreek model' has attracted so much interest. But there is nothing new under the sun.

We recommend you to read:

- **'REVIVALS & MUSIC'** - All of history demonstrates that spiritual revival and artistic renewal go hand in hand and form a joint growth model.
- **'PRAISE & WORSHIPPERS'** A great study what real praise and worship is.
- **'CREATIVE & CHRISTIAN' (=ROYAL CREATIVITY)** - The biblical basis for creativity.
- **'THE CREATIVE CHURCH'** - Even before Willowcreek had ever been heard of this little book described a number of models showing how a local church can work with music, dance and art, and thus will grow.

Following these fundamental concepts, which first need to be understood, creative concepts and themes can begin to be taken on board. But lay your foundation first!

Creative concepts

Thematic programmes

For example choosing songs around a certain theme, a special event or celebration.

Musicals

A musical is a continuous theme where unity in the programme is achieved by means of acting, text reading etc.

Musical theatre

The emphasis here is definitely on the theatre and play aspects, with the music and the theme serving to bind the elements together.

Many people can take part in setting up and thinking through and preparing and working out the technicalities; even the whole church or assembly. It is extremely agreeable to do this sometime. But: take enough time to prepare!

Write a scenario which includes a clear job distribution list. Do not do everything yourself, but dare to delegate.

Can you work together somehow and tune in to other groups, organisations, and committees?

Chapter 15 - Choice of repertoire

How do choirs establish their repertoires?

In many cases it is the conductor or music leader who comes along with a new song. In other cases the conductor delegates such tasks to a repertoire committee. In some choirs different choir members bring new songs from time to time.

When you see a choir performing, make a note of some of the songs ('This would be a fine song for our choir'). Songs by temporarily much loved artists or from very successful cinema films are added to the repertoire very enthusiastically. The conductor, who is already pressed for time, has the thankless task of arranging the song for the group, because we are not yet able to do anything with the sheet music.

If there were no alternative to the above situation we would not have written this chapter. It is important to ask yourself a few questions beforehand:

- 1) Who are you working with?
- 2) What is the goal?
- 3) Where is the work to be performed?
- 4) Who is going to carry it out?

15.1. Who are you working with?

This has to be your first question!

You must judge the quality (and its expected improvement) as honestly as possible and seek out your initial material from this basis.

How many members do you have?

Large groups (e.g. more than 60 members) will find very quick songs difficult; small groups can have problems with close harmony and songs which require 'mass choir sound'.

What is the range of each voice group?

Are the sopranos really sopranos, or are they those who can sing the highest notes and do you therefore have to take account of the 'highest attainable note'?

Are all voice groups present?

E.g.: is it possible to split up the men's voices (T B; tenors, basses) or do you need an arrangement for three voices (S A M; sopranos, altos, men)?

How well are rehearsals attended?

The more faithful the members, the better the quality, and the more possibilities there are of expanding the repertoire.

15.2. What is the goal?

What do you want to achieve with your song? In which situation does it have to be able to be sung? Are you going to evangelise? Are you supporting the liturgy? Do you want to create a musical production? In which kind of church does it have to be performed? Is the music a goal (tonal art, quality promotion) or a means (an expression of opinion, a demonstration of personal faith, a contribution to an anniversary)? What is fantastic about music - especially if texts are added to it - is its communication possibilities. Those who consciously want to make use of it, need to continuously ask themselves what their goal is and how the 'message' can best be communicated! Research in this field is recommended, e.g. by means of a questionnaire to be filled in by your choir members and visitors to your concert.

To sum up: make sure you know what you want to achieve; that you know which repertoire enthuses and motivates your choir members best and that you know who your public is!

15.3. Where is the work to be performed?

Where is the performance to take place? If most of the performances are likely to be in great cathedrals this will have consequences as to the choice of the works to be performed; fast and rhythmical works will give rise to problems.

Do you give concerts on Saturday evenings or do you take part in worship services? In what context is the repertoire performed? Can you connect into themes? Can you bring logical order to your production?

15.4. Who is going to carry it out?

Who is responsible for the choice of repertoire? They need to be people who fully support the goal of the choir. Furthermore, they need insight into the interests and preferences of the choir members themselves. They have to clearly defend their (especially new style) choices within the group. Finally, they have to be (a few) people who are capable of judging the repertoire from the musical and technical points of view, e.g. whether it is within the voice range of the choir, whether the band (and the composition of the band) are capable of playing it - quality in relationship to the choir's capabilities. The conductor or music leader must certainly be a member of the committee; his vote must carry a lot of weight!

15.5. Homemade repertoire

Many gifted conductors or choir and band members compose their own material. A great advantage of this is that the song can be completely dedicated to the goal and the capacities of the composition of the group at the time. Arranging existing material is also possible. But take a moment to ponder the copyright requirements! Bring homemade work to a publisher, have it registered. Many do this via Continental Sound. Fees have to be paid even for works which you have arranged yourself; moreover, the composer's and text writer's names have not changed; not even when the texts have been translated or undergone considerable alterations! *Never* copy protected repertoire. See more on this subject in chapter 9. Anyone who writes material must continue to look critically at his/her work and remain very alert to the relationship between text and music. Literature: **Words and Music - A Guide to Writing, Selecting and enjoying Christian Songs**; Jimmy and Carol Owens, WORD Publishing Co., WACO (Texas).

15.6. Final remarks

Anyone working towards quality improvement will notice that repertoire possibilities will increase dramatically. Maintain movement in your choice of repertoire. Continue renewing and refreshing.

Make use of the extensive help which the organisations listed below are able to offer:

- Continental Sound library and archives. These contain all the works performed by Continental Singers, Young Continentals, Discipel and Continental Kids, in total some 600 titles, music and tracks for which are available! Continental Sound: P.O. Box 81065, 3009 GB Rotterdam, tel.(+ 31)(0)10-4212592
- Unisong: music publishers with organised national rehearsal days (learning new material by singing it under expert leadership). Unisong, Hilversum, The Netherlands

* Choral Music/Koormuziek. NL Dordrecht The Netherlands

D

Practice

Chapter 16 - Rehearsal structure

The set-up of the rehearsal is strongly influenced by the group's goal. Where are the emphases: fellowship, spiritual, exhibitive art?

Each group develops its own particular atmosphere, which you should try to maintain (as long as it does not become artificial).

You will continually have to defend your reasons for doing things the way you do them. Why do we warm up? Because we have to, or in order to warm up and train our vocal chords?

Why do we start with prayer? Because we have already been doing so for the past six years, because the chairman is so very religious, because it is such a clear starting signal, or because it really means something to you as a group?

What are we doing? Do we have a concert or a performance in view, or are we in a period during which we have to learn much new repertoire?

Maintain the general set-up and adjust it when necessary.

In general

1. Welcome, by someone from the management team or the conductor. The word of welcome can consist of mentioning those who are absent, a little poem, a Bible passage and/or a prayer.
2. Warm-up and getting involved. Ensure that everyone takes part in this exercise. This is not the ideal time to make coffee for the break or a time to miss if you do not want to hurry from home. So make it interesting! The length of this part of the rehearsal varies, but take enough time for it! It can certainly last for 15 - 30 minutes if people are enjoying it!
3. Sing well-known items from your repertoire so that everyone will feel at home and can sound really good.
4. Study time. Rehearse the things you learned last time first to refresh your memory. Then teach new things. Interrupt this after some time if desired in order to discuss the theme. This is also the time to rehearse in sections.
5. Announcements. A member of the management team runs over all current items. Think in this respect of approaching performances and their organisation, mentioning who is sick, having everyone sign cards for the sick etc., the evaluation of the previous performance, management announcements etc.
6. Break. Decide beforehand at what time the second half begins.
7. The repertoire taught before the break is repeated in its entirety.
8. The rehearsal is concluded with well-known and well-loved repertoire.
9. End with a word of thanks, the announcement of the latest appointments, perhaps a poem, meditation or prayer.

Specific remarks

Children's choir

- Provide a pleasant theme for the warm-up. If possible let this theme also relate to the rest of your rehearsal programme.
- You can choose to rehearse without a break, because a break brings a lot of extra activity and running about. On the other hand children also need a break! Moreover, a pause is an ideal time to celebrate a birthday. The break does not have to be too long.
- Children enjoy learning new things, but be sure to take time to sing the 'choir's favourites' as well!

Teenagers' choir

- Getting together is more important for teenagers than for children. Give ample opportunity for this, but make it clear in advance when this opportunity is available (preferably not while they are learning new songs!).

- Give sufficient opportunities for improvisation and trying things out. They are very interested in discovering their own vocal capabilities and in pop instruments.
- Teenagers get really excited about certain songs for a certain time. Give these sufficient space in the rehearsal programme.

Youth choir/Gospel choir

When 'older youth' are involved, rehearsal attendance is sometimes a problem. Your work means that you cannot always be present; your children are the reason why you can only arrive after the warm-up period; etc. Set yourself a goal for the rehearsal meeting and work at it at the time that everyone is present as much as possible: before the break.

Praise group

- This group often starts up against the background of a spiritual goal. This will often be apparent during the rehearsal. The introduction can be replaced by an extended prayer time.
- This kind of group often does without any warm-up: give this a permanent place in your rehearsal programme!
- Do not only play the pieces on your list, but take a critical look at all aspects of the rehearsal: singing, tunefulness, use of parts, use of instruments, arrangement, sound technicalities, phrasing etc.

mixed choir

- Rehearsal attendance can vary because of family commitments, work, involvement in other associations, meetings, sport etc.
- As the members get older, the fact that their voices and their stamina are ageing will have to be taken into account during the rehearsal.
- A pleasant atmosphere will provide for a longer break in most mixed choirs.

Senior choir

- The rhythm and intensity will have to be adapted to the members.
- The social aspect is very important: considerable attention will have to be paid to the welcome, the break and the departure.
- The emphasis of the rehearsal will have to be on the joint musical experience.

Chapter 17 - The sense and nonsense of prayer, Bible study etc.

However important a good spiritual basis is, many things must not be exaggerated. You can pray what you wish, ask the Holy Spirit to come, study the Bible for hours etc. but this will not necessarily help your group/choir to progress. Super spiritual behaviour can even lead to division. And that does not have to be the case.

It therefore depends on your point of view, the rhythm you choose (and pay attention in that case to the speed of a new choir member), how much you transmit and the correct time.

Spiritual deepening requires much wisdom on behalf of the leadership and should not be gone at like a bull in a china shop.

Start with prayer: do it! But not longer than a minute or so.

A word from the Bible to kick off with: do it! But do it after the warm-up and for no longer than a few minutes (maximum 5).

An explanation of a song: do it! But no longer than for 1 to 2 minutes.

If Bible studies or text studies about a particular subject really are necessary, it is probably a better idea to hold them on a separate (attendance voluntary) evening. If your choir/group is attached to an assembly/church this should not be done without first having talked about it with the pastor.

Sense and nonsense is also applicable to other aspects:

too much choreography is not good; too many singing rehearsals are not good, etc.

N.B.

You will find useful Bible studies for choirs, praise groups etc. in the books '**MUSIC IN MINISTRY - a biblical perspective**' and '**THE WAY**'.

A great book on prayer is: '**PRAYING - 251 PRAYERS**' recently published by Continental Sound/Continental Ministries Europe

Chapter 18 - Singing technique and warm-ups

Singing starts at a very early age. You sing together in nursery school and you learn songs by heart. It all sounds 'nice', as is often said. But much more is needed when you go to sing in a choir and if you want to create a beautiful sound.

A little theory

Before you want to learn to play a speech/singing instrument well it is important to have some basic background knowledge.

18.1. Breathing

The lungs constitute the central part of the breathing apparatus. The lungs are in the chest cavity and are surrounded by the chest. This is enclosed by the collarbone (at the front), shoulder blades and vertebrae (at the back), breastbone (front), the diaphragm (underneath) and the ribs (above, behind and in the front). Between the ribs lie the interrib muscles.

18.1.a. Kinds of breathing

- Shoulder or collarbone breathing (clavature). The shoulders and the upper ribs are pulled up to do this.
- Chest or rib breathing (costal). The chest cavity is broadened. This requires a great amount of energy.
- Abdomen or diaphragm breathing (abdominal). The diaphragm is flattened using the abdominal muscles and the chest cavity becomes deeper. The ribs do not contribute to this.
- Combined diaphragm and rib breathing (costa-abdominal). The diaphragm and the ribs work together.

The latter is suitable for singing. The interrib muscles and the diaphragm play an important role when breathing in and out. When you breathe in the interrib muscles automatically lift up the ribs as your body expands, at the same time the diaphragm is somewhat flattened so that downward expansion also takes place. The lungs follow this expansion and in this way diastolic pressure is created in the lungs as a result of which they can suck in (outside) air.

When the breathing muscles relax afterwards, the diaphragm springs upwards and the ribs descend again. The chest cavity contracts again. This causes overpressure and the air is expelled.



Fig. 2 - The movement of the ribs during breathing

To produce voice we tense the abdominal muscles while breathing out, so that the diaphragm and the ribs do not immediately drop back. The abdominal muscles give support to the sound, they are the driving force for the determination of the tone.

18.2. Position

Good position is essential for good singing results. It is necessary to find the right balance between too much and too little tension.

18.2.a. Building up the correct position

- The feet slightly apart. One foot apart as it were.
- The knees slightly bent, not locked.
- The hips slightly bent.
- The abdominal muscles relaxed.
- The shoulders relaxed and allowed to hang straight above the hips.
- The arms allowed to hang down the side of the body, i.e. not behind the back.
- The neck long and relaxed, loosened up.
- The head tilted upwards from the back towards the crown.

Mistakes which are often made include: standing bent over or just too straight (hollow back). Do not stand too rigidly, sway or stand on one leg.

It is important to take your choir through these steps leisurely the first few times so that everybody automatically stands correctly while singing. Take care to correct their position, if necessary, during the warm-up session.

18.3. Articulation

Articulation is the precise formation of speech and singing sounds by means of changes in the shape of the body parts producing the sound, such as altering the position of the tongue, lips and cheeks. Vowels are formed by the cavities in the voice channel. The sound of the vowels can be changed by the positioning of the body parts producing the sound.

Vowel classification:

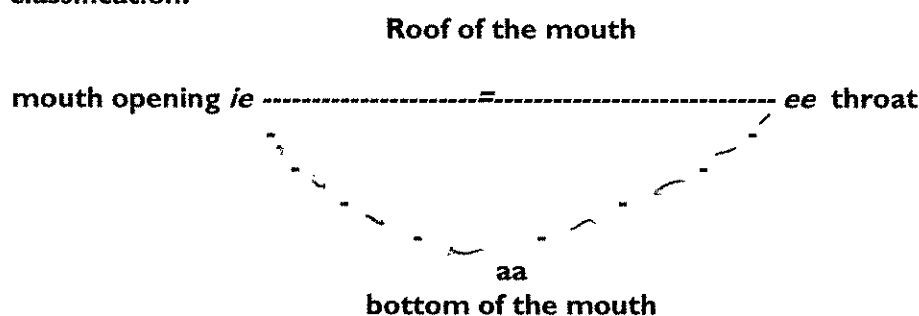


Fig. 3 – Vowel classification

The 'aa' has the largest cheek angle, the 'ie' has the highest tongue position in the front of the mouth and the 'oe' has the highest tongue position at the back of the mouth.

Consonants:

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------|
| unvoiced: | t f k s ch p |
| voiced: | b d j l m n ng r v w z |
| explosives: | p b t d tj dj k g |
| sliders: | f v s z zj sj s/ch g h |
| nasals: | m n ng nj |
| rolled: | r |
| labial: | l |

18.4. Resonance

Resonance is the vibration of air within a certain space or the strengthening of vibrations within a certain space. The unique thing about voice is its use of resonance. Every other instrument leaves its resonance unchanged. If you leave the resonance space unchanged, your sound quality is always identical. And if a voice has poor resonance, much of what it sings is lost in the background music. Resonance practices are generally an important part of all voice training and also need to be undertaken regularly even by 'advanced' singers. Good resonance is important for beautiful choir sound.

In practice

We give below a framework for building up a warm-up session.

- a. Position
- b. Breathing
- c. Giving voice, 'loosening up' the voice.

ad a. Position

The position and the building up thereof has already been explained, I shall therefore not now discuss it further.

ad b. Breathing

Always start the breathing exercises by breathing out.

Exercise 1

During the first exercise it is important to be conscious of where the (breathing) movement is taking place. You can do this by placing your hand on your abdomen and your other hand for example on your side or on your chest. Feel whether any movement is taking place.

Exercise 2

Sit on a table or a stool. Get hold of a knee with both hands and let the weight of your body hang on that knee. Start now to sway slowly forwards and backwards. Observe how the breathing movement follows the movement of your body. When you are breathing in you will be mostly moving backwards and when you are breathing out you will be mostly moving forwards (this is Coblenzer's shuttle exercise).

Exercise 3

- a) Do not let the air escape immediately after breathing in. Breathe out first, therefore, and then breathe in, hold that breath by blowing onto the back of your hand without allowing any air to escape, keep the abdominal muscles tensed. Feel the tensed up abdominal muscles and breathe out (relax).
- b) Repeat the exercise explained under 3a, but when you relax your abdominal muscles breathe out slowly with an sss-sound. When you feel no more tension, let them go and breathe out further.

ad c. Giving voice

'Loosen up' the voice with the help of little exercises, beginning from a pleasant position (e.g. d-sharp) downwards and then upwards from a pleasant position. Nasalisation is a good method. We list a few nasal exercises below. As well as the so-called obligatory constituent parts there are also other parts which can be expanded. Some of these are: resonance, articulation, legato exercises, height and depth.

Exercise 4, nasal exercises

- a) Keep the lips loosely closed, let the tongue lie flat at the bottom of the mouth. Allow the lower chin to drop slightly without feeling as if it is being pushed down

(relax). Now sing an 'M' in a low voice. If you are doing it right you will feel vibrations in the larynx, the throat and mouth cavities and even the nose cavity may vibrate at the same time.

b) Now hold on the 'M' for a few seconds and change the tone slightly. Make sure you are maintaining a relaxed position.

c) Sing an 'M' in a relaxed, easy tone and form a short vowel in the midst of the voice sound. Ensure that it still sounds nasal and that not too much air is lost.

- mmoommmoomm

- mmoemmmmoemm

- mmaammmaamm

d) Repeat exercise c) but change the consonants.

- noomzoommjoomm

- zoenntoennboemm

- bommbammdomm

If good resonance is produced in the different vowels you can then also make use of toneless vowels. In this case you must pay attention to maintain the good resonance already learned with the vowels.

Exercise 5, legato exercises

Legato means that the notes to be sung have to flow over into each other. Good breathing support is important to achieve this. In the initial phase it is important to sing the notes softly and almost joyfully and to join them lightly to each other.

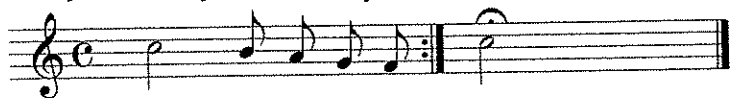
a) Join series of notes to each other with a one second interval, without emphasis.



Noe oe Noe oe Noe oe
Noe aa Noe aa Noe aa

Repeat this exercise, but this time with a third interval (e.g. a sharp to f sharp).

b) The following exercise within a fifth requires a lot of concentration. The upwards fifth jump has to be made softly, whereas a slight crescendo can be made with the descending notes. The lowest notes may definitely not be emphasised.



Exercise 6, staccato exercise

a) a) 

Noe, noe -----
Mie, mie -----
Laa, laa ----- Noe.

In this rhythm we bounce syllables with changing vowels with little elastic diaphragm thrusts (the abdominal wall is drawn in slightly).

Hahaha hahaha hie hie

Hohoho hohoho heu heu

Hoehoehoe hoehoehoe ha ha

Huhuhu huhuhu ho ho

Hehehe hehehe hoe hoe

Etcetera.....

b) A canon which also contains a good staccato exercise. Suitable canons are to be found in songbooks and other publications, which are available in book or music shops.

Chapter 19 - Ways of learning

Some find learning a new song wonderful, for others it is terrible to do so. Some come to have a good evening out and enjoy themselves and want to sing the old, well-known repertoire with gusto; others like the challenge of struggling with new things and prefer to work hard through the whole rehearsal so as to get the song completely under control by the end of the evening.

It is indeed hard work. Sometimes also difficult work. The sopranos who have the melody line are sufficiently instructed after having sung it a couple of times; the altos have greater difficulty with the logic in their part and one of the two men cannot follow his part and so the men have to rehearse much longer just for him. How do you make it pleasurable? How can you draw attention away from the weakest link.

Traditionally?

The most traditional manner is to group the choir around the piano. Each voice group sits separately and practices its part in turn.

Advantages of this method

- You work towards a joint product.
- You learn each other's part.
- From time to time the different parts which have been taught can be sung together and thus performed as a whole.

Disadvantages of this method

- You have to wait a long time for each other.
- The conductor or rehearser cannot divide his or her attention.
- It takes a long time to go through the whole fragment with all the voice groups.
- The accompanying band has to wait silently and patiently or organise an activity on their own.

Sectionals

Sectionals make it possible to treat the different voice groups (sections) individually. There are choirs which choose to rehearse with 1 or 2 voice groups on one rehearsal evening and to give them the other evening off. This way it is possible to work specifically with one group, but the choir sound with all the groups together cannot be practiced. This is especially a disadvantage if you want to end the rehearsal by singing well-known material 'just for the fun of it'.

The most ideal situation is to work with a rehearser for each section (including the band), each section practicing in a separate room so that they can do so undisturbed. The rehearser sets to work with a voice group in accordance with guidelines agreed with the conductor beforehand.

Be careful, as a rehearser, not to effect changes in the part or concept yourself. This creates lack of clarity and even leads to irritation with other groups/rehearsers or with the conductor. Make a note and discuss it with the conductor later.

Advantages

- This enables speedy work.
- Everyone has something to do.
- It is possible to work, accompany and coach on a very individual basis.
- Someone's individual voice or sound is noticed more easily: when distributing split parts (e.g. 1st and 2nd sopranos) or when choosing soloists it is very good to be better acquainted with the voices.
- It is refreshing to work with someone else than the regular conductor;
- Each voice group works at their own speed;

- The material which has been studied can afterwards be tried with all the groups together.

Disadvantages

- You need a lot of people and equipment
- You do not learn each other's part as quickly: listening to each other (and thus creating a choir sound as beautiful as possible) can thus become more difficult.

Teaching

a) A proven method is to sit the choir or the section in a circle around the rehearser/the piano. The rehearser sings a verse or another fragment once and teaches it by having the group copy him line by line. The blocks being sung are gradually lengthened until the whole piece can be sung. Concentration is higher when sheet music is temporarily unavailable and memory is more definitely involved and what has been learned takes root in the memory longer and better.

b) Another method is to distribute sheet music in advance. The music is followed according to the 'see-and-sing' principle and mistakes are corrected. You have to be able to read music to do this though!

c) A cassette tape on which the singing part has been recorded can provide very important support. Watch for traps however: something once learned incorrectly is difficult to correct; be sure that the recorded part is sung correctly; a choir recording is no use, only a very clearly sung part gives sufficient support. Not every choir member has sufficient time or self-discipline to listen to the tape at home; large differences can therefore occur.

Preparation

Learning a song stands or falls with the preparation and the attitude of the conductor/rehearser! He/she must be able to sing the song faultlessly in front of the choir. The breathing pauses have to be studied beforehand, which pieces require extra attention as far as articulation is concerned, and where there are difficult parts. It is often agreeable to teach the easiest part first (e.g.; the chorus or the last lines), so that the singer suddenly recognises something after a difficult part and is motivated to continue singing. The conductor has to stimulate, challenge, compliment and teach. Anyone who begins teaching without this conviction will not achieve the desired result!

Set-up

Singing in a circle improves the choir sound: the individual singers hear each other, listen to each other, adjust their own volume to the sound and feel unity in the music. Singing with voice groups together facilitates the feeling that the song 'belongs'. Singing with a mixed set-up (not next to someone of your own voice group) improves the sound (blending). Mixing boys and girls/women and men together often looks good too. This furthermore improves concentration and self-confidence (you can no longer lean on your neighbour). This is a disadvantage for those who have weak voices.

Listening

Listening is a matter of life and death when learning a part as well as for the choir sound! You learn your part quicker by listening. You sing more correctly by listening. You sing with more feeling by listening. It is good to do a few listening exercises beforehand.

1. Strike a ride cymbal and listen to the dying sound. Put your hand up when you really can no longer sense any more vibration. (After the silence you can start 'blanco' with the piece of music; like a painter can begin on a piece of white linen.)
2. Strike a note on the piano and then another one. The choir members state in turn whether the second note was higher or lower. Shortening the intervals increases the difficulty.
3. Begin a canon with as many separate parts as possible (e.g. 'To Stop The Train' or 'Ding Dong Bell'), tell the group to walk around and to seek out those with the same part.

Chapter 20 - Choreography

Choir choreography should strengthen the song's meaning. The Continentals and the Young Continentals are still great pioneers and examples of this development.

Energy and expression

The (Young) Continentals' inspiration, motivation and efforts give them enormous energy. Through this energy they are able to work towards very high standards. And this expresses itself in movement and choreography which makes a convincing impression on the public. The inner conviction and force of the people on the platform is so great that it should be visible. The expression and the intent of the movements are full of energy. This does not mean that it is always joyful, but it is always forceful and convincing. The choreography must 'agree' with the message of the song and may never contradict it. For example: *'It's a wonderful life' (from: 'Get a Life - Young Continentals)*, a joyful song, is accompanied by lively, joyful movements: heads raised and arms lifted up. And the rhythm invites everyone to clap and dance along. The tempo is quick and the movements are loose and rhythmical. You point your arms to heaven or towards other people as you sing: *'All of this, and heaven too, a life worth livin' for'. We want to share this and give it to our fellow men.*

'Now's the time to celebrate' (from 'Faith in Motion' - Continentals), a very happy and joyful song, as the title already says, becomes a real celebration on the stage with jumping, clapping, springing, horns and bells, even cartwheels and a polonaise. All the stops are pulled out to draw the people into the atmosphere and 'build a party'. Joyful choreography belongs to joyful songs. Energy is at a climax, there's a lot of enthusiasm and movement. The motion has to be maintained right up to the end, the movements must remain clear and sharp. And it is important that this not only be seen in the dancing, but also on the facial expressions.

Set against this are numbers with deeper meaning and content with heavy subjects such as Jesus' death and forgiveness of sins. You cannot sing and dance as joyfully about these topics. The expression of these numbers is therefore somewhat deeper and slower. Tension and heaviness reign. There is indeed the same desire and intention to express the feeling of this song. The muscles and face need to work just as hard, or maybe even harder, to hold on to and to transmit the tension or the subdued mood. Two examples of this are *'Cross of gold' (from: 'Change Your World' - Michael W. Smith. Also performed by the Young Continentals)* and *'There's a green hill' (from: 'We Don't Get What We Deserve' - The World Wide Message Tribe. Also performed by the (Young) Continentals)*. The first number speaks about wearing a little cross on a chain as a sign that you believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus. It is a very powerful, strong number with a low, threatening under beat. It begins with everyone sitting cowering down on the ground, in the form of a cross. When the first words are sung everyone gets up slowly. And following the beat of the music everyone makes a cross with his or her fists, very powerfully and with a lot of tension. Many of the movements are directed towards the floor and are slow and drawn out, heads are often hung, in contrast to the quicker songs.

'There's a green hill' is a slow number which depicts the crucifixion of Jesus. The choir stands still, watching: very moving. It makes one very slow arm movement. The scene is played out in front of this with Jesus being carried to the cross and Mary discovering that her son has died. The guards carry Jesus away slowly and Mary falls despairingly on her knees. The faces tell the story. It fits the sad, despairing story. The heaviness is also seen in the expressive movements and the facial expressions.

Important points

When developing and using choreography we need to pay attention to:

- Feeling for the body, this includes, for example: the co-ordination of the different limbs. For example: stepping aside and turning your head to the right at the same time. You need to be conscious of where you are standing and where your hand, arm or foot is. This is not easy for many people!

- Feeling for rhythm, sound and space: the dancer's musicality. First of all you must be able to keep and move in time of course. Secondly you must be able to keep to the rhythms and pick them up and take in the atmosphere of the music and the sound. All these elements together must enable the dancer to deliver a good performance which fully interprets what is in the choreography for the public. There is a good communication between the dancer and the public i, everything harmonises well.

Part of a whole

The whole of the choir should express unity with choir choreography. We see this in a ballet group too: male and female solo dancers and so-called '*coups de ballet*' behind them. There has to be complete uniformity in their movements. If the choir and a number of people have to make the same movements simultaneously, they have to do this at precisely the same time. Everything must be synchronised and form a single unit. Only then will it have a powerful effect on the public.

Everyone needs therefore to listen very carefully to the music and to know on which count, on which word you have to move your arm sideways or take a step backwards. If everyone does so when they think best, it becomes very chaotic and messy. The message is no longer transmitted, just as when everyone is talking about something else at the same time. You don't know what they're talking about, you can no longer understand it.

It has to be precisely synchronised, so everyone needs to pay real attention when it is being taught and continue to listen carefully to the music. Repeat it also for yourself in your free time, so that you do not constantly have to think what you are doing during the concert.

Form and structure

Creating a dance and giving form to the message is the work of a choreograph, who creates choreography. The word '*choreography*' comes from Greek and means: the art of creating dances. It is a combination of two Greek words: '*Knoreia*', which means 'choral dance to music' and '*grapía*', which means 'to write'. Thus: writing choral dance to music.

Many things have to be considered when making or designing a dance. You have to take account of the available space, the number of dancers, the music and the text of the song which is being sung. Other factors contributing to the final result are: light, costumes and decoration. All these elements have to be in tune with each other and complement each other.

And we have then again arrived at the essence of choreography. It adds an extra dimension to the performance and increases the public's attention. It immediately attracts attention through the form it takes and the energy it expresses. This is what makes it so valuable at a Continentals concert.

Aesthetics

It is good to attract the public's attention by means of choreography. Dance expresses beauty and aesthetics; it is often a very colourful visual experience, sometimes even a whole show to watch. Its is a means of keeping the public glued to the performance. A sensible point to be alert to from a personal point of view: you do this not because you consider yourself to be so good at it and you want to hear other people say so, but because you want to devote your own talents to giving a very good performance and because you want to share your own feelings with other people.

Emotions

Dance is a very intensive expression of emotions. You can say a lot with gestures, e.g. by raising or dropping your arms, stepping forward, cocking your head backwards. You place yourself, your own body, or more people in a position which expresses an emotion.

Upwards is happy and hopeful and a backward movement expresses withdrawal, anxiety or distance.

Fists are despair or anger, jumping is joy, etc. We could think of another fifty movements which speak for themselves.

Dancing does not dominate choir choreography, but the text occupies the foreground. The movement should accentuate the text. The text is usually expressed very concretely and literally: 'strong' is a clenched fist and 'the sea' is a waving movement with your arms. The whole progress of the song is usually precisely followed in the choreography. For example when the same text is repeated in the chorus the dance steps are also repeated.

The form of the song is visualised in the choreography. This is a form of recognition and is attractive to the public. Not only the dance steps, but also the whole stage scene, the total visual effect is very important and determines the atmosphere. This is also relative to the 'production': where the choir is placed on the stage. It is in relationship with the choreography. The placing of the choir expresses a lot about the song. For example: the singers are standing close together in one group or they are spread out over the whole stage, or they stand in rows or in little groups, or one or two people stand at the front with the rest of the choir behind them. Every variation is possible. The same applies to heights. Singers usually stand up, sometimes differences are made. Half of them stand, others sit or kneel.

Variety holds the spectators' attention. Not the same thing all the time, but changing, sometimes slowly and sometimes rapidly. sometimes lots of dancers, sometimes just a few, on the spot and away from the spot, differences in use of high and low levels and space.

Space

The space determines the choreography. The choreography must be adapted to the space where the dancers are standing and vice versa. There is no room to turn or to jump if two of you are standing on a small raised platform. The more space there is, the more powerful and greater the expression will impact. A lot of energy is set free and this impacts on the public. Dance will literally take an increasing share of the Continentals' programme; the choir leaves the stage more often. And there is a solo dance or a so-called '*dance break*', a small group of strong dancers performs a difficult dance to a 'break' in the music. The remainder of the choir continues singing into the microphone. Such a quick dance is tremendously popular with young people and this fact has been gratefully acknowledged in recent years: jumping, hip hopping, swinging and powerful dances are included in the programme. This is the stimulus and the challenge that 'grips' the young people. They see here that the dancing they see on TV can also be used in the service of the Gospel message. And this is a whole new discovery for them.

Position

If you dance you need a very neutral attitude at the beginning. No unnecessary tensions, very open and receptive. Your face must be alert, but not overly concentrated. If so, it takes on an angry expression, your neck is too tense, your forehead makes frowning eyebrows or your lips are pressed together. This is the danger of being tense. You should also not get stuck with a smile or 'looking emptily': you do look, but you see nothing.

Too little tension is not good either, you then look stupid and weak. It is best to look straight ahead of you at eye-level and to really look (or to imagine that you are being blinded by the light).

Body position may not be too tense. There must be no unnecessary tension in the body, in order to use energy as economically as possible. So a long, straight back, all joints one above the other (knees, hips, shoulders and head), the weight of the body pointing slightly forward, legs solidly on the ground, arms hanging loosely at the side of the body and head straight up with the crown towards the ceiling. The spine is well positioned and the shoulders are dropped.

The danger of excess concentration often results in tension in the neck and raised shoulders, as a result of which your neck and your breathing are blocked. Whereas when you relax, your breathing also becomes much more restful and you have more volume and peace in your voice and movements.

Warm-up

A good warm-up session using a series of exercises is of great importance before you begin the 'real work', the muscles need to warm and loosen up otherwise you will hurt yourself. Most of the (Young) Continentals are absolutely not used to dance. In 'normal life' they are not in good condition. They soon discover that it is hard to suddenly dance and move for so many hours a day. Already on the first day, or just after the first day, most of them have pain in their back, legs, arms, and calf muscles and in the strangest of other places. Repeating the movements so often is very intense for untrained muscles. But after a few days they are already much better and their condition and strength improves constantly. This is the reason why it is so important to warm up each day, ensuring better blood circulation through the muscles, so that the waste products can be washed out of the muscle pains and to loosen up the muscles and the joints and to stretch them and avoid stiffness. When a muscle contracts it becomes stronger and thicker, but also shorter. It is important to persevere in doing the stretch exercises every day, to avoid your muscles stiffening up.

Finally

Choir choreography is not a goal in itself, but presentation is the expression of the subject. If this does not succeed, do not use choir choreography, for it will only produce the opposite effect.

Do you see potential? Then seek out someone who is knowledgeable in this field and who can coach the choir and may even be able to design the choreography himself. Continental Art Centre has consultants who can be asked for advice.

If you are only able to use a choreograph from time to time it is advisable to give the responsibility to one of the best dancers to lead the warm-ups and to coach the other choir members during the choir rehearsals.

'Do not imitate the Continentals' is also applicable in this area. These choreographies are protected. It is far more motivating to develop something of your own which fits in with your own choir!

Each type of choir will want to make use of dance, choreography, and movement to music, production and presentation in a different way. Dare to try it out!

Chapter 21 - Position and production

Standing in your own voice group produces a lot of solidity and safety: you support each other! It is ideal for a conductor to indicate the different instructions per voice group in an established direction. This means that the choir always stands in the permanent, proven order: ladies at the front and men behind. Sopranos to the left and altos to the right.

If you dare to do more, you will achieve greater public attention to what you have to sing and to say! The programme becomes more dynamic. This is something we are seeing in society in everything around us: in the layout of magazines, in flashing TV pictures, in quick spots, on billboards, etc.

Each choir will recognise its possibilities and its impossibilities in this respect, but possibilities do exist in this respect!

A few tips which are worth trying out:

1. Set the choir up no longer according to voice group, but mixed together (men and women too). Those with weak voices can best be placed next to people who sing the same part, moreover in this set-up, no one knows which part you are singing. A pleasant side effect, as well as the visual one, is the development of the choir sound through this change: the mix is better.
2. Work with raised staging, e.g. platform furniture, little tables or gymnasium benches. It is obvious of course that the choir has to be set up with the lowest level at the front and the highest at the back. But with a bit of variety in the placing of the raised sections, simple means seem to be able to be used very creatively and surprisingly. Examples: the sides high, low in the middle; the middle high, the sides low; asymmetrical; back centre two up, both sides at the back three up, one up in the centre at the front, other choir members at floor level, etc. The possibilities are almost limitless! Does the stage have steps? Make good use of them when setting up the choir!
3. Vary the set-up. Suppose the choir is going to sing three times during a church service, two songs each time; choose a different set-up for each time they get up to sing! The people see a different choir each time. Ensure that the set-up is symmetrical: this is the most restful in the eyes of the spectator, otherwise his attention is diverted. See which members are approximately as tall as each other and place them so that they mirror each other, and, the tallest does not always have to stand at the back!
4. If you dare: arrange a different set-up for each song. Ensure that the change in position can take place quickly and silently! This can be done during an announcement or an introduction for example.
5. With respect to the visual aspect: attention can be given to the use of vestments, shawls, accessories, objects etc.
6. What is important in the performance is mimicry (let them see what you are singing!), the attitude and the power of conviction. Do you believe what you are singing yourself?
7. Choreography can very positively support and lend its effect to the 'picture'. See chapter 20.
8. Make use of theatre techniques: decoration, lighting, effects, backdrops etc. And make use of the creativity and the input of the members! Dullness can be combated with simple means. It is recommended to pay sufficient attention to this. But be careful of 'overkill': never exaggerate! Always keep in mind what your goal is, who your public is and what possibilities your repertoire offers. Develop your own image: don't copy the Oslo Gospel Choir or the Continentals!

Chapter 22 - Sound and amplification

This survey gives a general view on the amplification of a choir and, possibly, a band. It is not possible of course to examine all aspects sufficiently, but the main areas are discussed.

Introduction

Sound seems very normal to us. Everyone who can hear, has his own experience of sound. What everyone shares, is a limit above which it is perceived to be too loud. Everyone also has a lower limit, below which the sound is considered to be too soft. Everybody has certain preferences for certain kinds of music. Each person is unique in the manner in which he processes sound, through the ears to the brain.

When we talk about a choir, with or without musical accompaniment, everyone among the public needs to be able to hear all the voices and instruments at the right balance and at the right sound level, and performing in the right way.

This is absolutely impossible!

There are too many different people and there are far too many different spaces (distances from the source of the sound) for the public attending a performance in a hall or outside.

The goal

The sound of the singing, speech or music coming from the stage must reach everyone:

- In the right mix.
- At the right volume.
- With the right words and sounds, but that is a subject which lies outside of the confines of this chapter.

To achieve this goal as well as possible a large number of points need to be addressed. There are also a number of technical accessories to help make this possible.

Points to which attention should be paid

- 1) The acoustics of the stage
- 2) The way in which the singers and the musicians are arranged depends on a number of factors:
 - The acoustics of the hall
 - The size of the hall
 - The layout of the hall
 - The materials covering the walls
 - The kind of floor covering and the type of chairs
 - The number of people in the hall

Technical accessories

- Amplification of the sound of the choir and/or band
- Adding extra effects (echo) to the choir and/or instruments
- Adjustment of the sound level of some frequencies (equalizer)
- When amplifying in very large spaces: correction for delay due to sound speed

If the hall is not too large and the stage has reasonable acoustics a choir with little musical accompaniment can often perform well without any amplification needing to be used in the hall. The musicians are then able to adjust their playing to the level of sound of the choir.

It remains necessary of course for (almost) everybody in the hall to hear the music/singing at reasonable volume and with a reasonable mix.

Sound amplification in general

The goal is therefore that everyone should be able to hear everything at the right volume and with the right balance. We use amplification if almost no sound comes

into the hall from the stage. Sound is captured at source by means of a *microphone*. The sound goes from the microphone to an *amplifier* which is connected to a *loudspeaker* in the hall. That is the principle. One microphone is almost never sufficient. If a number of microphones are used, a *mixer* will have to be used to send all the signals at the right balance via the amplifier to the loudspeakers in the hall. All the signals coming from the stage are usually fed to the mixer via a *multicable*.

The means

The accessories referred to above will now be described in more detail.

Microphone

A microphone 'captures' the sound of singing or music and sends it further via a signal cable. The distance to the microphone needs to be kept as short as possible to 'capture' the sound which is to be amplified as well as possible.

There are many kinds of microphones. It is not possible to discuss them here. The main thing is to be aware that in each case a few kinds are suitable and a very large number are absolutely not.

There are dynamic microphones and condensator microphones. There are microphones which are sensitive to their surroundings and there are microphones which only pick up direct sounds. There are mikes for high volume sound (percussion etc.) and there are very sensitive mikes which can be pinned onto an actor's lapel for when he is whispering in a scene. Condensator microphones need electrical current. This current can be supplied by a battery or from the mixer with phantom feed, via the normal microphone cable.

A microphone of some quality costs from 100 to 300 Euro. Better microphones cost 400 to 2,000 Euro and even more. Dropping a microphone can damage it irreparably, so great care is advisable.

A line exit from a keyboard, for example, can theoretically be sent directly to the mixer via a signal line. To reduce the sensitivity to interference as much as possible a D/I-box, a separation box with impedance adjustment, is usually used to convert the unbalanced 2-wire cable signal from the instrument to a balanced 3-wire signal. This signal is many times less sensitive to interference. At the same time the signal has the same signal strength as a microphone. The advantage of this is that the standard microphone input can be used for all inputs into the connected mixer.

Multicable

A multicable is used to transmit all signals (sometimes as many as 30) from the stage to the mixer. A multicable has a number of separate, 2 wire connections, each of which is provided with separate insulated protection. A stage block is situated on the platform, to which all the microphone cable plugs can be connected. The return lines, to the amplifier and the monitors, also run through this multicable. New technology: instead a multicable you can connect via WIFI

Mixer

A mixer is necessary to be able to mix all the signals from the stage and to transmit them in amplified form into the hall. There are very many types, kinds and designs. Most mixers are suitable for 'normal' work. Price and size, together with the desired number of channels (inputs) usually determine which mixer is purchased. The number of channels must be sufficient, otherwise making-do will occur quickly. New Technology: You can have your mixer on an Ipad, connected via WIFI

Amplifier

An amplifier is necessary to amplify the signal coming from the mixer. Most amplifiers have 2 channels, left and right. There are very many different amplifiers, from 400 to 4,000 Euro and even more expensive. And their output varies from 100 Watts to 10,000 Watts. An amplifier must be chosen which *is well suited to the loudspeakers* which are being used.

Loudspeakers

Again, there are very many kinds of loudspeakers. There are passive and active loudspeakers. An amplifier is ready built into an active loudspeaker (combination). There are full-range speakers, so that one loudspeaker at each side transmits good quality sound throughout the whole of the area in which it needs to be heard. There are also separate bass, mid, and high systems. This means that a set of three or even more loudspeakers will be set up at each side. It may be necessary to set up even more than two sets of loudspeakers if the hall is very large.

Monitor

It is often necessary to place a loudspeaker (monitor) on the platform in order to enable the choir to sing well to the music, so that they can hear the accompanying music. Musicians sometimes also need monitor sound from other instruments in the group or from themselves. New technology: monitoring can go via earplugs.

Equalizer

Because sound sounds strange in some spaces, an equalizer is used to carry out amplification corrections in areas of low frequency. Precise correction can often adapt distorted sound so well that a well-known CD once again sounds like you are used to hearing it.

An equalizer is also used to combat feedback, which can occur when microphones are used. See below: Eleven ways of preventing feedback.

Effects

An effect processor is used to create an echo effect in the singing, and sometimes also for the instruments. This is very recommendable when singing has to be heard in a strongly muted, dry hall. Given a good amount of the right echo it sounds as if it is being sung in a well sounding church. The amount and type of the effect applied to the singing can make or break a song. Very reasonable results are already achieved with a 'chorus' or a 'vocal-plate' with slight delay and not too many repeats (decay).

Model amplification plan
See Figure 4.

Typical connection sheet

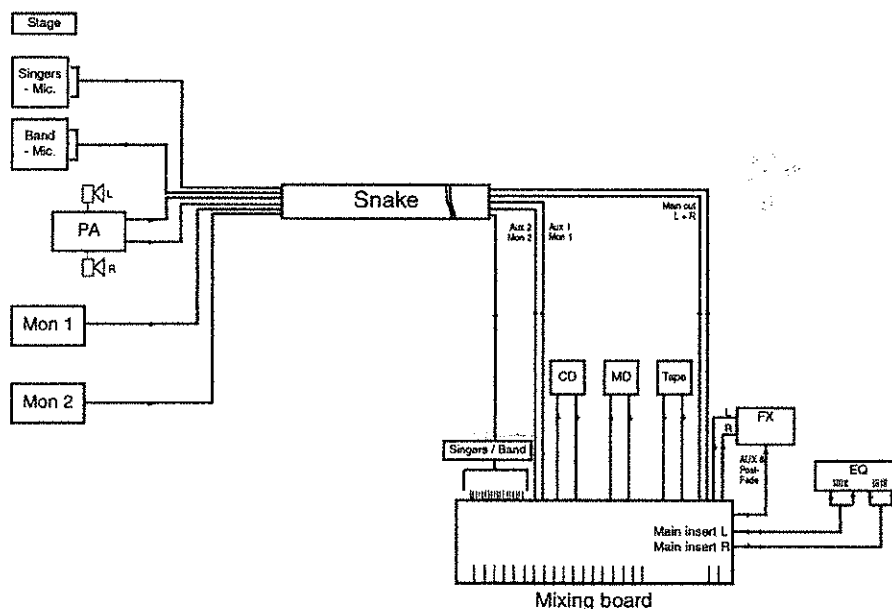


Fig. 4 - Connections

Fig. 4 - Connections

The position of the components in the hall and on the stage

One third of the distance from the wall is a good theoretical distance in order to distribute the sound in the space well. In practice loudspeaker(systems) are often placed nearer the side so as not to unduly hinder the public's view of the platform. Ensure that a loudspeaker is *never* placed closer than 2 meters from a wall or some other solid construction. Otherwise very annoying reflections will be the result.

Typical set-up, location

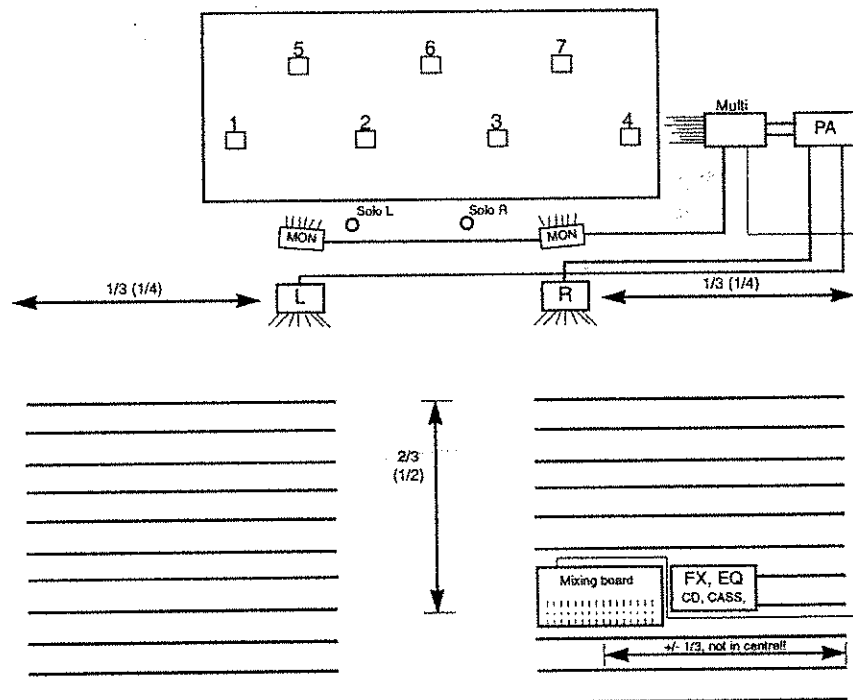


Fig. 5 - set-up

Practical remarks with reference to live amplification

Miking methods

To amplify singing through a microphone one person can use one microphone or several people can stand around one microphone. If one person is using the microphone it can be placed on a stand or held in the hand. In both cases *constant distance* to the mouth is very important. Three to five centimetres constitute a good distance. Ensure that a hand held microphone is not rubbed or touched in any way which could give rise to interference noise.

If several people are standing around one microphone, fifteen centimetres is an ideal distance.

Singers with strong voices should keep a slightly larger distance than the less loud singers in the cluster.

Monitoring methods

Monitors can be placed on the floor or on a stand. Both methods have advantages and disadvantages. It is important the monitor noise be as soft as possible on the stage. A monitor may never be turned towards the hall!

Always ensure that monitor sound is directed straight at those for whom it is intended, i.e. certainly not behind them!!

Equalizer use

An equalizer can be very useful for the sound in your hall. Do not forget that incorrect use affects your sound more adversely than you think. If you have the use of two stereo equalizers, one of them can be used to transmit the sound to the hall as you think that it really does sound. To test this you can play a well-known CD and walk through the hall listening to whether all the sounds are well audible. The second equalizer can then be regulated as a feedback eliminator for the choir microphones. The regulation is done as follows:

Normally speaking, feedback correction should be carried out at maximum two or three frequencies!

- Turn the monitor signals off (aux)
- Close the master fader(s)
- Set all microphone faders at 0 db (regulate gain first!)
- Push 1 master channel (L or R) open very slowly, until you hear feedback.
- Seek this frequency and reduce it by 3 to 5 db.
- Continue to push the master open until the next feedback frequency.

Withdraw two or three frequencies in this way (on one side if you have a stereo equalizer) and do the same thing with the other channel. This can be done very quickly with a parametrical equalizer. Do not withdraw more than 3 to 5 db if possible, otherwise the total sound will be influenced too negatively.

Both functions are combined if there is more than one equalizer present. Then, when the feedback control has been carried out, the previously mentioned well-known CD needs to be listened to, to check that there is not too much correction. Seek a workable compromise.

Use of effects

If an effect processor is used, ensure that the different kinds of effect of the relevant instrument are tried out at leisure beforehand. If a certain effect then needs to be achieved live, an adjustment which comes reasonably close to it can be chosen rapidly. Even if a well-known number is being performed, it is a good idea for example to listen to the CD of a performed version. A lot can be learned by listening to the kind of echo or other effect.

However, the set-up for a particular number will have to be decided upon by trying it out.

Setting up, taking down, storing, insurance

Always ensure that equipment is handled with the utmost care. Connectors especially can easily become defective if they are pulled out. A good plan is to always have the same people connecting certain components and disconnecting and putting them away afterwards. The tasks are then much clearer and there is also one person responsible for a certain task.

It is a good habit to immediately unpack and put equipment in its place as soon as it is brought in. The empty flight cases can then be removed immediately and that saves a whole lot of mess and prevents the possibility of extra damage.

The correct storage of expensive sound equipment is very important. The room may not be too damp or too cold.

If the storage area is cold or damp, the equipment will first have to be unpacked and left for a considerable length of time in the room where it is going to be used. Sensitive electronic equipment must first acclimatise (warm up and allow condensation to vaporise) before it is plugged in.

If the stage in a strange environment needs to be arranged differently, ensure that it is returned precisely to its original state before leaving the hall. Do not break anything or damage the floor covering.

Good insurance of the equipment is important. There are almost no insurance companies which insure instruments and equipment in a good and workable manner. Many insurance companies do cover theft from a locked dwelling, but if (expensive) music instruments or equipment are taken to a performance, little cover remains, apparently.

Extra (fringe) equipment

There is an enormous amount of extra equipment on sale. You do not need more than what is described above to begin with a set for the amplification of a choir and possibly also a band.

Eleven steps to prevent feedback

- 1) Minimise the number of microphones used. Each extra microphone used in the same space as the loudspeakers increases the chance of cross talk. The likelihood of feedback is directly dependent upon the number of microphones and each microphone's amplification factor. In other words: several low amplification factor microphones or a few relatively high amplification factor microphones can be used.
- 2) Hold the microphones as near as possible to the desired sound source. If this is done only a lower amplification factor is needed at the mixer and this reduces the likelihood of feedback.
- 3) If possible, turn off microphones which are not in use (fader closed). If there is no sound to be amplified it is not necessary to turn them on.
- 4) Use unidirectional microphones as much as possible. This type of microphone is much less sensitive to feedback than omni directional microphones.
- 5) The loudspeakers must be placed in front of all the microphones. Each microphone pointed in the direction of a loudspeaker will quickly cause feedback.
- 6) Extreme opening up must be avoided when regulating tone adjustment. Equalising mainly by means of shutting off instead of opening up lowers the likelihood of feedback through separate microphones.
- 7) If a signal normally has very low energy within a certain frequency range, it is advisable to shut off this frequency range completely. With a bass drum for example there is very little high frequency signal, so in this case the high note area should be completely turned off. In the case of a cymbal there is absolutely no natural bass, so the bass has to be adjusted out.
- 8) If it is necessary to amplify electronic instruments via the mixer table, a DI-box will have to be used to capture the signal instead of using a microphone. This will eliminate any chance of feedback.
- 9) If there are many microphones in use and these can be divided up into groups, these must be set up as a sub master to ensure better control over total amplification. By this method the amplification of one group can be adjusted with just one fader if necessary.
- 10) Use graphic equalizers to compensate for space influences or resonance highs. Graphic equalizers are not meant to solve feedback problems. They are primarily intended to optimise tone quality. An equalizer must only be brought into use after the above rules have been followed.
- 11) The higher the quality of the microphone, the lesser the likelihood of feedback.

The expression:

'You get what you pay for' is definitely applicable as far as the feedback and microphone phenomenon is concerned.

Chapter 23 – Light

What obtains generally for sound (see chapter 22), obtains also for light. The effects envisaged depend on your budget, but also upon your technicians' knowledge. But: are all these frills really necessary? No, you can also use simple means.

Point of departure

What is really important, is that the group be 'lifted out' of its environment. By lifting the group out you achieve different things:

- The public's concentration during the concert increases.
- Public and group fatigue due to bad lighting in the hall is avoided.
- Colours increase in intensity.
- Everyone can better see what is going on.
- The group concentrates more, because the public disappears 'into a black hole' and their reactions (such as Auntie Amy's waving) can no longer divert you away.

Simple means

Do not go out and buy a 10,000 Euro set of lighting equipment right away. What you are looking for can also be achieved with 2 lamps with a pink or a gold filter, connected to a dimmer which you can purchase for 20 Euro in a do-it-yourself shop. Professional lighting equipment only becomes increasingly important if you are going to perform very often and if your concert contains many different elements.

You can therefore make a lot yourself. But be careful:

- The building's fuses (circuitry) must be able to take the current you require, otherwise they will blow.
- All your equipment should be earthed. If you can, make sure that lighting and sound make use of different circuits (for noise, clicking and tapping).
- Make sure that power cables do not lie parallel to microphone cables or the snake. They may cross over each other however.
- If you use spools, always completely roll them out. If you do not, the reel will function as a broiler, producing heat resulting in possible fire and short-circuiting. Nowadays spool labels indicate their maximum wattage load. But roll them out completely nevertheless. If someone suddenly plugs something in additionally the spool can be overloaded.
- If Spotlights require quite a lot of current. Plug them into a separate circuit if possible. The spotlight should highlight the soloist from one angle, i.e. it should never be directed towards the church's axis nor should it be at the same level as the soloist's face. Only use spotlights to highlight a speaker or soloists. Leave secondary spots switched off.

Colour

There are some lighting boffins who become more and more enthusiastic the more and more coloured lamps or spotlights they have. This is a completely wrong viewpoint. The colour of the dress and good make-up (including that of the men) should be sufficient. If you suddenly start to add all sorts of bright colours the happening on the stage collapses. Just watch good theatrical performances or a TV drama: all sorts of shades of *white* are used. Colours are used at the very most to touch the colour up a little. You steer emotions by dimming and increasing colours. Blackouts are seldom used. Never throw the switch suddenly thereafter to produce 100% light. A peak like that blows all the fuses too. Increase the amount of light gently. A heavy rock band uses no make-up. But with a musical it is different. Rock bands use much and different coloured and white lights.

Think about this

Do not be misled by pop groups' massive light shows: they are prohibitively expensive, but also unnecessary.

Consider also that you can have a superb installation, but if the choir has no quality and the lighting technician has no feeling, a great debacle will be the result.

N.B. Consider too that you can hire lighting equipment (with or without a technician) for special occasions. Prices are currently very reasonable!

Chapter 24 - Band and tracks

Accompaniment of choir singing - every kind has a right to the best possible accompaniment. This does not mean that the mixed choir always has to be accompanied by the organ, the senior choir by the piano, the children's choir by the guitarist and the youth choir by a keyboard and a flute.

First: ask yourself the following questions:

What type are we talking about and which instruments/sounds belong to this?

- Which instruments are available?
- What level is needed and can be supplied by the musician?
- What is the goal?
- How big is the budget?
- Is there score music available?
- Can they rehearse together?
- What is the balance between singing and accompaniment?
- What sound equipment is available?

A few more considerations:

- More is asked of a conductor if he is expected to work with a band or an orchestra.
- Tracks can only be used if there is an electricity supply.
- Tracks can appear very static and 'unreal' to the public.

Instruments

When do you choose to use an instrument?

1. If you want live music.
2. If it adds to the quality.
3. If there are possibilities which can be used satisfactorily, in other words if satisfactory answers can be given to the above initial questions.
4. If you want to create variety by using musical ideas.

Rehearsals

- Accompanists who accompany individually and only from time to time (organists, pianists, solo instrumentalists) need to receive their music on time.
- There will need to be a few joint rehearsals prior to the concert or performance, preferably with the instruments which are going to be used at the concert and in the concert area itself. Musical arrangements, management techniques, balance, ideas etc. will need to be examined critically.
- Bands/combos can best rehearse apart from the choir and join the choir when they have more or less mastered the arrangement. Quality, balance, impression, musical arrangements and set-up need to be examined critically.
- Larger orchestras need to receive their music on time. Come to clear agreements, contractually too. Rehearse extensively before the concert.

Tracks

Tracks are orchestra parts recorded on CDs, minidisks etc. which can therefore be played mechanically through the sound equipment.

When do you choose to make use of tracks?

1. When there are no instrumentalists, because:
 - insufficient quality can be offered
 - there are no financial possibilities to recompense instrumentalists
 - there are no instruments available which are suitable to the type of music envisaged
2. If there is no part music or if there are no suitable arrangements
3. If you are looking for a particular kind of sound.

4. If you always want to work with exactly the same arrangement and never want to be confronted with surprises.

How do you obtain tracks?

You can make tracks yourself. Use a midi-keyboard, a good computer programme (there are several good programmes: obtain plenty of information in a better quality music shop) and good recording equipment. What do you need to pay attention to?

- The tracks serve as accompaniment! Do not make them nicer or fuller than they need to be. Remember their role is to serve.
- Establish a clear rhythm, especially during introductions and when supporting ritenutos and other tempo changes. The tempo has to be clear to everyone during the performance! The tempo is clear when percussion or a very clear little theme is used. But slow chords become problematical. Use a soft triangle, hihat or tambourine beat for example: take care that these sounds do not become irritating!

An alternative solution is to give them a more rhythmical bass part.

- Build in musical points of 'recognition'. Demonstrate the beginning of the chorus, the end of the final bar etc. musically.

You can order tracks from Gospel Music Centre, Dordrecht,

Chapter 25 - Public speaking

Speaking and singing have much in common, which is why attention is also paid to speaking in this book. Furthermore, many choirs want to announce their songs. Here are a few tips:

Tempo

A speaker will seldom be told: 'You can speak more quickly'. The brakes often need to be applied to a speaker. This depends on reading speed, if the speaker is using notes, on tension and on the fact that what is being said is evident for the speaker, but not for the listener. Think of the listener and adapt the tempo to the audience!

Variety

Vary the tempo, rhythm and dynamism (both tone height and volume). This keeps the listener's attention. Articulate consciously. Make use of short pauses.

Position

Good body position (see also Singing techniques - chapter 18) ensures that the sound can be well produced. Breathe from the stomach. Good body position ensures also that the listener will follow your speech more easily.

Presentation

Divide your attention between your paper and your public.

Look around restfully, ensure that you use all directions. Do not look over the people, they do not like that.

Pay attention to your facial expression: support your story with it. The larger the hall, the more expressive your mimicry has to be. Do it naturally; tricks detract from your story!

Movements detract, only use them if they are useful.

Don't worry about mistakes. Most mistakes come about through reading text or through making long (and therefore often clumsy) sentences.

Try not to be tied to your paper! It makes your story more believable.

Ensure that the microphone is well placed. Do not adapt your position to the microphone, but adapt the microphone to your position.

Practice your speech in front of the mirror first and then before a few people. Ask for comments and profit from them. Time the length of your speech exactly. Can it be shorter (this is not the same thing as quicker!)?

Content

Try to have a story which is attractive as possible. Begin with a short introduction, use a little humour where possible; especially if you are going to be speaking for a long time, humour approximately every 5 minutes can sharpen concentration. End with a good conclusion.

In the case of testimonies: be careful not to hurt anyone! There is a great danger of doing so.

An example: 'God rescued me in a car accident, because I believe in Him.' That is something to be eternally grateful for, but what does such a declaration mean for family members who lost a loved one (where a believer or not) in an accident?

When?

When announcing songs it is better to join a few songs together than to announce each song separately.

You need to be especially careful, during a church service or meeting, not to preach an extra sermon.

Be sure that the announcement adds something to the song; otherwise drop it.

And in conclusion : Do not forget one of the most important lessons of communication: *how* you say something is important!

E

Highlighting

Chapter 26 - Children's choirs

A few thoughts about children's choir singing

The best age to start with children's choir singing is 7 to 9 years. An earlier start can be made of course (each person begins his or her life partially screaming and partially singing), but the fact that children can read reasonably from the age of 7 and some take preparatory music education at that age and thereafter learn to play an instrument, tends to make them consciously start to sing in that phase. There is another reason: at that age children are ready for a musical challenge which they were emotionally able to take on board earlier, but which they were unable to realise because of lack of cognitive schooling. The very important fact that children from the age of 7 are able to read simple song texts, the music of which they already heard and experienced inwardly, can be a reason not to allow them into a children's choir prior to that age.

A whole new world opens up to them musically: they sing, they can now handle the texts better, songs which in many ways mean a jump forward. The broader framework of the melody, longer intervals, texts in other languages (especially English, but also simple German and even simple Spanish form no problem), greater differences in tempo, minor and even church keys, as well as texts which further develop their emotional life. The latter is of eminent importance: they become strongly conscious of what is going on around them and of what happens in someone's heart. Broadening and deepening emotional life is the reward of every singing/playing child. Music offers him a worthy answer to the economical and financial ambitions of the world around him; no striving for money and power, but seeking beauty, together with others, that is what he finds in singing, as a child and later too.

It is important to offer a repertoire 'from all over the world'. The first-class songbook: *'Wij willen muziek'* by Ad Heerkens, published by J. Muusses, Purmerend, 1962, is to be recommended. The material brought together in this book has lost none of its value and liveliness after 35 years. The book contains songs for every time of the year (New Year, Easter, Christmas and much more besides) and from many countries of the world (the Spanish/South American world, North America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Israel and even New Zealand). There are translations accompanying the texts.

Why is this songbook recommended? Because, as well as the characteristics mentioned above, it satisfies a fundamental requirement: it contains both spiritual and worldly songs. Nothing is actually so fatally monotonous as a uniquely spiritual repertoire, children do not accept it. The kind of texts and music from worldly material often demonstrates a form of emotion which also enriches the interpretation of Christian songs. Let a child play on a recorder or another instrument in between! The harps in Revelation 5 surely do not only serve to fill the hall?

If possible, add some dance songs also to the weekly singing menu, preferably with a strong beat and with a good dose of 'spirit'. Furthermore, 'spirit' is also developed if musical accompaniment is available: preferably an old-fashioned piano or acoustic guitars. Preferably not an organ, that has the disadvantage of insufficiently supporting the 'beat'.

Canons are very much appreciated by children, as long as they are not too difficult. Teaching them to sing in several parts is often a problem. It succeeds best when one group sings the tune and the other group sings a kind of buzzing, lower part. A lower part in the form of an alternating tonic dominant is successful sometimes, especially if instruments support the voice production. Another possibility is the use of thirds.

Much of this book is also directly applicable to a children's choir (age 4-12 years). There are a few differences and additions to be mentioned however. Here they are.

Concerning prayer, Bible study etc.

Spiritual introductions are also important for young children! A children's choir is so much more than 'singing'. Bible studies can quickly become 'too heavy'. Work with good stories to transmit the essence of the message. You will find a whole new manner of being occupied musically, socially and spiritually in the 'OP REIS' method of instruction for Continental Kids (published by Continental Sound).

Leadership

Even though many children's choirs are also started by conductors, a formal, democratic set-up will have to be worked out.

- This can be achieved by forming a management team from among the parents, for example; if your child leaves the choir, your management responsibility also ceases.
- Ensure regular change in management team membership.
- Parents can be asked to serve on the necessary committees as well as on a management team. A lot of help and support is needed in a children's choir.
- Chaperones or escorts are needed when the children's choir is going to perform somewhere.
- You can choose to include children in the leadership. Establish beforehand what you expect from this, in which areas their contribution is desirable, when you are going to meet, etc.

Judicial matters

- Children's choirs also need to pay PRS.
- Be careful: There is a limit on the number of performances. The labour laws contain very clear limits concerning the number of times children are allowed to perform!
- Rehearsing is allowed.
- Taking part in your own services is allowed.
- There are strict limits on concerts etc.

Choice of repertoire

Shop / ask around at the music publishers.

Songbooks

A whole new series of children's songs has been published by Continental Sound under the title Continental Kids. These songs are so written that they really can be 'performed' with choreography! The series consists of a CD, a music book, and a book of instructions for the conductor, teacher or Sunday school leadership, and instruction video and the backing tracks. The series 'Continental Kids' can be seen as a separate renewal (only in Dutch!).

Ways of teaching

- 1) Circle: The children sit or stand in a circle. The conductor sings the new song all the way through, after which the children repeat the song line by line.
- 2) Half circle: The smallest children stand in front of the bigger ones so that everyone can see the conductor clearly.
- 3) Several circles: A conductor, assistant or one of the leaders stands in each circle. The children have to listen to each other carefully. For example: let each group sing a number of lines, that increases their concentration. Working with several circles is also to be recommended when singing in parts, place the children who are singing the same tune part next to each other in that case.
- 4) Leading in song: if the conductor notices that an interval, a line of a word is not being performed correctly, it is possible to have a child or a number of children show

how it should be sung. Never spend a whole hour with the whole group, but alternate! Take care not to spend too long with just one child.

What is most important is for the conductor to prepare himself well! He or she must be able to sing the song faultlessly and conduct and have ideas about articulation, breathing, performance, rhythm etc. Children find it especially fascinating to have a conductor for themselves, who challenges them and who has something to tell them. So be creative. If you are not so by nature, make sure you learn to be so! Be critical about yourself and work at your way of asking questions, your attitude (yes, body position too) and even your dress is important!

The rehearsal room

- 1) Ensure that you have enough room. A hall where 35 children can just fit in, sitting in a circle, is too small. There needs to be room for each child to be able to move and to dance.
- 2) If possible, try to find two rooms, so that the choir can be split up to study voice parts, a dance or solos for example.
- 3) There must not be anything in or outside the rehearsal room that detracts the children. Think of windows, open doors, people walking in and out, noises.
- 4) Too much acoustic is a hindrance to understanding the conductor and amplifies sounds and noise.
- 5) Too little acoustic is oppressive and tiring. Always try to find a good room.
- 6) Ensure that the hall is ready when the children come in and that it is tidy. No jackets, pullovers, boots, skaters etc. in the rehearsal room, - the conductor's neither!

Singing technique and warm-up

Voice training is extremely important because, as the conductor, you are handling others' voices and thereby accepting responsibility for the function of a part of someone else's body!

Although most children do not sing much, both at home and at school, this does not mean that they have unspoilt voices. Their voices have survived all kinds of external influences which affect their voice development to a greater or lesser degree. And do not forget: children learn most by *imitating*. The conductor has to adapt to the child. The more resonant and expressive the conductor's voice is, the more the child's will sound strange to the ear. The sound of a child's voice is clear and sharp and lacks great expression until it breaks!

Voice training is not a goal in itself but a means of training voices.

Singing involves

- I position
- II breathing in and out
- III resonance
- IV voicing
- V articulation

I position

When considering position you need to pay attention to body position and basic position.

Basic position:

- Be relaxed.
- Have a positive attitude to singing, the group and the conductor.
- Be open for instruction.

The body position is usually good if it is good inside too.

Body position:

- Stand and head straight.
- The body stands tall, present yourself.
- Feet slightly apart.
- Find a good balance on two legs.
- Let your arms hang next to your body.

Examples:

1) Relax exercise

The conductor pretends to be a weight lifter. He breathes in through his nose and picks up the weight while holding his breath, all his muscles are tensed, he hold the weight up for 10 seconds and then drops it, breathing out with a sigh of relief!

2) Spiritual relaxation

Have the children close their eyes, play a tune (e.g. in 3/4 time) and have them move to it. Play instrumental music and have the children copy a number of movements.

II breathing

The breathing process has 3 phases:

- breathing in
- breathing out
- rest

These are carried out in a three-part rhythm. It is important for the conductor to be aware of this because this is also how the exercises have to be given: in a rhythmical, good balance!

Working at breathing involves the following:

- 1) Breathing in and holding the breath
- 2) Breathing out slowly
- 3) Correct tensing of the diaphragm before breathing in again
- 4) Breathing support

The most important thing is that the child must learn to relax and to breathe deeply using breathing support. Do not talk a lot while you are leading the exercises, but give a good and convincing example yourself. Also, it is not important to always come with something new. Not much is good but good is much!

Examples and exercises

a) Stand up straight, bending the upper body forwards while breathing out. Take time and

straighten up while breathing in.

b) Sit like a coachman on the coach-box. Feet solidly on the ground and spread apart. Elbows on the upper legs. Breath out through the mouth and in through the nose.

c) Place the children in a circle. Stand in the circle yourself too. Say 'Pfff' to your neighbour, with a look of 'Him again!'. Take on a challenging demeanour immediately and breath through your nose strongly, as if inviting him to 'come and get you!'. This can be copied around the circle.

d) Sing a well-known song. Sing the song afterwards in thought and breath out as long as it takes with an 'ssss' or an 'ffff'. Half of the group can sing and the others can hiss.

e) Let them sing relaxedly without talking about breathing:

- f) Draw a spiral from the inside to the outside and say that it is a snake. The snake acts as follows: breathe out with a slight and constant 'ssss' and trace the spiral with your finger until you reach the middle. At that moment the breathing stops.
- g) The panting of a dog. The dog has been running fast. As he pants his tongue rests on his lower lip.
- h) Say consonants: p, t, k, - p, t; k or f, ss, tsch.
- i) Say consonants to the rhythm of well-known songs.
- j) 'I held my breath out of fright'. As follows: fight for breath on 'Ha!' and hold your breath. Then breath out with a sigh of relief.
- k) In the event of a tremendous surprise! You have an unexpected and very pleasant meeting. Breathe the 'hhh' with surprise. Then wait before breathing out. Breath out to 'Prrrh' with pursed lips, the conductor must really show how to do it well!

III resonance

Resonance is the process of amplifying the sound. The causes of the amplification are called resonators. These are spaces of body parts which vibrate along with the note. The influence of resonators is active in the start-up area consisting of the mouth cavity, nose cavity and throat cavity.

- Important:
- 1. Let the children experience good resonance
 - 2. It has to take place relaxedly (otherwise you get overstretching of the throat and cheek muscles which cause constriction).

Exercises

- a) Yawn: - Just show them how to do it, don't talk about it
- Open chest, neck, throat and mouth areas
- b) Jaw:- Shake your head saying 'no' dropping the bottom of your jaw (= relaxation).
- c) Sing to the vowel 'oe' from 'a M g'.
- d) Buzz or hum: To the consonant 'm' - >; to 'n' - > nose cavity; to 'ng' - > throat cavity.
- e) Lay l hand very loosely on your mouth and do exercise d), the vibrations can be clearly felt.

The conductor has to give a good example!

- Speak and sing resonantly and softly.
- Allow for a lot of vocalisation.
- Have the children who have a good natural voice use sing on their own.
- Exude rest and relaxation yourself.
- Seek out exercises which are inviting and support them with sideward movements of the arms.

IV voicing

Voicing is the sound produced by the voice by making voice lips and vocal chords vibrate to exhaling air. The most important thing in this respect is to avoid unnecessary muscle tension. The first thing that has to be developed in every children's choir conductor is a good ear to be able to discern the difference in sound between the *full voice* and the *marginal voice*.

The full voice: children use this mainly for low notes and it is recognisable by its full, sometimes powerful sound.

The marginal voice: this is light and thin and is almost automatically used for high notes. You often hear this in children's choirs when a high note suddenly appears in a song. The sound deviates strongly from that of the previous and the following notes.

If a child can only sing with a full voice, you can act as follows:

- 1) Have him sing softly or hum

- 2) Discover marginal voice: have the child sing a well-known song within the range of 'e to top c'.
- 3) Discover marginal voice: legato exercise from the octave top c'' downwards.

If a child can only sing with a marginal voice act as follows:

- 1) Sing very low; from high to the lowest note the child can sing to vocal 'a', sung at least *mf* or *f*.
- 2) From low to high when the full voice has been discovered.
- 3) Sing 'swell notes low down (c' - f').

V articulation

Articulation is the formation of vowels and consonants. Good balance between sound and articulation is the ideal of a good performance. The manner in which a child articulates depends closely on the child's personality. The more extrovert types can be an example to the others when participating in articulation exercises.

Remember the following when articulating vowels:

1. Teeth never on top of each other.
2. The mouth cavity as large as possible.
3. The soft pallet is normally lifted upwards.
4. The tongue flat and relaxed in the mouth.
5. The position of the lips remains unaltered when the tongue rises with certain consonants (dental consonants).

Exercises

- a) Practice vowels first, thereafter in combination with consonants, e.g. ach - > pa - > hap.
- b) Practice voiced consonants which are closest to the vowels: l, m, n, ng. Combining them with a vowel improves resonance.
- 3) Unvoiced sliders: f, s, ch, h. Good to train in combination with breathing exercises. (For example: locomotive.)
- 4) Explosives: b, p, d, k, t. These consonants ensure natural relaxing of the diaphragm and this facilitates correct breathing. Practice these consonants each time the repertoire needs you to do so. Give a lively example and the children will be enticed into livelier articulation.
Call out: pieff, pafff, poefff.
- 5) Read together in a choir rehearsal. Read the text to each other.

Choreography

Everyone knows several children's songs with their different well-meant actions. The fact that it can also be done otherwise has been demonstrated in the mini-playback-shows on TV. Children seem to be especially fascinated by learning a real 'performance'. How this can be done can be seen by visiting the '**CONTINENTAL KIDS**'.

Position and production

By position we mean the set-up of the choir during rehearsals. The traditional set-up is the one you see at classical concerts: a number of rows behind each other, depending on the size of the choir. This works very well, but it is very boring for a children's choir.

There are very many other possibilities! The purposes of varying positions are:

1. Accentuating the song's content;
2. Obtaining a more dynamic effect;
3. Holding the public's and the choir's attention;
4. Artistic performance.

Things to consider with reference to positions

- Place the tallest children at the back and the smallest at the front.
- The use of staging is recommended to avoid the same children always standing at the front or the back. Another advantage of staging is that you can 'build' with it, e.g. a so-called ark in a song about Noah and pile up. You can also have the children sit or dance on it.
- Remember that too many changes are annoying. Ensure good balance in the programme in this respect as well.
- The use of accessories can accentuate the music. Think for example of using confetti or bubble blowers in a party number and of using a bar stool for the soloist in a restful and attractive number.
- The combo can also be included in changes of position, like a guitarist who comes running onto the stage during his solo. Consultants are available via Continental Art Centre to help you on your way in the area of position and production.

Concerts

Children and children's voices move people quickly. You notice this if you are among the public sitting listening to the performance of a children's choir. They do not usually discuss afterwards how the children sang but only talk about the fact that they sing. There is a danger that the children are not challenged to perform music at their own level, but often at a much lower one. This testifies to too little care and feeling of responsibility towards tomorrow's generation at a time in which children should nevertheless be taken seriously.

Reaction of a conductor: "In December 1998 I gave 3 concerts on 3 consecutive evenings with my Vivace children's choir. The children's choir consists of 35 children aged 7 to 11. The reactions of the public were very positive and to my surprise continually mentioned how the children had sung and how they had danced. The children were also tremendously enthusiastic and they still are."

The following is important:

- We learn a new repertoire of 10-15 number in \pm 3 to 4 months.
- We pay attention to the matters described in ch. 18 about singing technique and warm-up during the rehearsals.
- We devise choreography for a good half of the numbers and we have either all or a number of children dance. This also makes the rehearsals very varied.
- The style of music varies from tap, ballades, dance to classical (preferably a capella)!
- In December 1998 the accompaniment consisted of eight musicians: piano, keyboard, bass, guitar, drums, percussion, violin and flute.
- We worked with a professional light and sound set and technicians. The children are very interested in the technical side of things!
- Changes of position on the stage, getting on and off in differing sequences, radiance, concert dress, make-up, sparkle, use of microphones, attitude among the members of the choir, praying together, talking together and afterwards crying together because it had all been so cool!
- Everything does not have to be undertaken in such a big way. We are now getting ready to put on an number of performances in the children's departments of several hospitals. The intention is the same: to make music which will challenge children at all levels.

A few more practical considerations:

- Ensure that there is a separate hall available in the building where the children are to perform, where they can be together beforehand and during the pause.
- There must always be 1 adult with them and preferably also an assistant. Children have lots of questions just before a concert!
- Agree whether to allow the parents into the hall where the children are waiting.
- If the children have to wait a long time, ensure they are kept occupied with video, games etc. for example.

- Teach the children to be disciplined and responsible for their own and others' gear. If this does not succeed, make clear arrangements with them.

Participate in Continental Kids.

It is possible! (Kids training exists now in Dutch, German, Romanian, Hungarian and Slovak.)

For children from 8 to 12 years old, who like singing, dancing, acting, drawing, painting and performing. It helps them in their development in the areas mentioned. It can moreover be an impulse for the work of the local choir!. In this manner creative children can be coached specifically.

We refer to a camp week, in which the children are trained, and following which a concluding concert is given. Thereafter a number of performances are given throughout the country.

It is possible for a local choir to sing too during the concerts; in this way other children can also get experience in this way of working.

Enquire via Continental Sound & Continental Ministries!

Chapter 27 - Teenagers' choirs

In the previous chapters of this book we have really already sufficiently recounted how you can technically run a teenagers' choir. There is very little difference between a teenagers' choir and other kinds of choir. The difference lies more in the material you are working with. For 'teenagers' appear to have a few specific traits. That is what this chapter is about. We want to present a model which the reader can use to judge for himself what effect his or her teenagers' choir is having. Before doing so: a general remark.

A teenagers' choir is a *teenagers'* choir: with teenagers and usually also for teenagers. The term 'teenager' is typically a term which a teenager does not like to hear. It is sometimes more of a mark which we, the 'leaders' stamp on them, than a title of something which they themselves can identify with. But we are not talking about titles. What we are talking about is that a teenagers' choir has to be really interesting to the teenagers themselves, and not an activity forced upon them by adults. In respect to everything that has been said in the previous chapters about production style, technique and organisation, the leadership of a teenagers' choir will have to be conscious of the fact that they are dealing with teenagers. Participating or watching such a group has to compete with MTV, TMF and such. It has to be 'cool'. Remember this when choosing your repertoire and production methods. What are the secrets of being 'cool'? It is not so important to know these. It is much more important for our choirs to use them to maximum effect. We want to be more than just cool guys and kick performances of course. A teenagers' choir has to be mega great. But how?

EUREKA! There is a formula for maximum effect: $ME = IS + NA + CC$

Maximum effect = Inner strength + Natural association + Clear Communication.

IS

Inner strength is where it begins. This means two things:

- Your motivation as leadership is within you: love for young people as a reflection of God's love for people. If there is one thing that teenagers ask of you, it is reality. They, better than any others, are able to see through artificial attitudes. Your inner strength is not what you yourself are. It does not therefore depend on how cool you are. It depends on how 'real' you are, so that they can see the reality of God.
- Your goal as a teenagers' choir is within the same inner strength: this can be built up. In my opinion, a teenagers' choir can be one of the most powerful teenagers' activities in the church. Moreover, it has a great advantage over MTV and TMF in the sense that their inner being is also being looked at. Interest in their person is very important for teenagers.

NA

Natural association also has two sides to it;

- First of all, again, that of genuineness. The leadership does not have to be cool but the choir itself does. Continue to devote yourself to teenagers out of your own inner conviction. The nice thing about working with young people is that you automatically start to adopt things from them and to learn to speak their language, but do it naturally!
- As well as remaining ourselves it is very important to interest ourselves in how teenagers experience the world. How many magazines such as 'Yes' or 'Flair' or teenagers' magazines have you already read? It is important to be able to form a picture of that world. Not to condemn it, but to be able to understand from what kind of experiential world they are coming from when they come to choir practice on Thursday evening. Try to run the evening on that wavelength. Follow the trends on MTV and TMF. You will have to discard some of these clips' content (which does not fit into our morality), but you can nevertheless follow the same trend. Some time ago

I think that over half of choir practices is filled up with talking. This is not a standard, and it certainly depends on personality, but referring back to everything said

heretofore, I believe it to be of the utmost importance to talk with the 'teenagers', and that is a very fascinating occupation.

Recommended literature

Student Ministry for the 21st century, Bo Bushers, Willow Creek Association, 1997.
(also translated into German: Jugendarbeit im Jahr 2000).

Chapter 28 - Mixed choir

Much of this book is also directly applicable to a mixed choir (age range approx. 30-60). There are a few differences which need to be mentioned, however, and some additional remarks which need to be made. Here they are:

Until a few years ago someone who reached the age of 30 or thereabouts had to leave the Gospel or youth choir. Such people sought enthusiastically to join a mixed Christian choir. Alas, they often fell into deep discouragement! The atmosphere, manners, the choice of songs are often totally different.

Many 'older young people' found themselves in a no-mans-land. The underlying reason for this was that repertoire committees had absolutely no inkling of the world of Gospel or youth music. A few years ago the Continentals started Continental Encores (aged 30-55). The 'older young people' proved very convincingly to be able to perform Gospels and other youth repertoire perfectly. Including suitably adapted choreography.

We should like to stimulate traditional mixed choirs to choose part of their repertoire from the music of the Continentals, among others. It *can* be sung and it *can* provide a significant new impulse. There are also arrangements available for performances with orchestra.

There are already mixed choirs following the Continental Encores' example and singing virtually only Gospel music and youth music.

In other words: this is an important new development!

Chapter 29 - Senior choirs

Much of this book is also directly applicable to senior choirs. There are a few differences and additions, however, which need to be mentioned. Here they are:

Majority

The number of over-sixties is growing. After around the year 2005 half of the population will consist of over-sixties. But what are these people going to do?

- Some of them choose to continue working, even up to the age of 70.
- They apparently show much interest in culture, travel and music.

Why, then, are several senior choirs declining in numbers?

Suggestions, backgrounds and remarks

Senior choirs are also recommended to develop a modern, youthful (Gospel) repertoire and, for example, also a repertoire consisting of songs from the Opwekking collection. This new repertoire apparently rejuvenates and inspires.

Senior choirs provide for important social contact! There can therefore never be enough of them! They need therefore to be organised very consciously. (For suggestions: your national choir-organisation or ask Christian Artists and other senior citizens' organisations.)

In view of the senior citizens' sphere of interest it is also useful to organise daytime programmes and/or trips.

Senior choir rehearsals should preferably be held in the afternoon!

You are as young as you feel. So it is recommended that consideration be given to performing modern productions. You really can do without choir folders and decor and choir dress can be much more modern in style.

Performances: what is required from the choir will continually need to be looked at.

The starting point must be the choir members' capabilities. There can be a large turnover in these choirs, particularly due to the increasing ages of their members. This means that the composition of the choir, and therefore its possibilities, can vary.

Voice warm-up and training are very important to this target group. The people may know and feel what they are capable of. Moreover, ability to sing can be maintained longer through training and coaching. Use a maximum of 10 minutes' rehearsal time.

The company factor is enormously important! Experiencing pleasure jointly through music must be the prior goal. This is another and specifically oriented form of togetherness. Working together towards a common product. Attention can be paid to common interests. Rehearsals should be completely aimed at this. And they will have to allow for sufficient rest pauses.

Choose a rehearsal room on purpose, together with the people (!). Does it need to be a room where singing can take place without disturbance? Should it be the same room in which they can have a cup of coffee or a drink?

Choose consciously, together with the people (!) whether or not to give performances. Senior choirs have a different sound which people can greatly appreciate. Know what you want to do when you receive an invitation for a performance: is your goal simply to provide a cosy atmosphere and togetherness, do we want to work towards something, are we to take the organisation of a concert upon ourselves?

Choose a repertoire within the choir's voice range. Having to sing too high or too low is unpleasant.

Make use of senior citizens' knowledge and experience! Not only when they are singing but also in the area of management. Are there people who play instruments? Let them do so! It is also a good idea to see whether there is a qualified senior citizen who is able to act as a guide during trips, excursions etc.

There are many known examples of choirs working together. It is often very nice to give a performance together with a different kind of choir, e.g. with a children's choir! This is also a very pleasant experience for the other choir!

F

Miscellaneous

Chapter 30 - CD's

There are very many advertisements in magazines promising you all kinds of things to help you produce a CD! But be careful! There is a lot of chaff among the corn. The 'all in one deals' are infamous, e.g. 1,000 CD's, including recording, sleeve etc. for 5,000 Euro. Do not fall for this. Request advice in any case from Continental Art Centre in Rotterdam. This is free for members.

You must certainly insist upon obtaining the following clear estimate:

- How many evenings or days will be taken up with recording and what will this cost?
- How long will mixing and editing take and how much will this cost?
- Does your conductor or leader have the casting vote? Be careful of quickly rushing it through.
- Agree on separate prices for pressing, mastering, a full colour booklet, designs etc.
- Who decides about the draft?
- Agree on a separate price for Stemra.
- Request prices from different firms; you will be surprised.

When you have concluded definite agreements you can immediately put together a sales campaign via the choir members so that you can have sold some 500 CD's before it is released. All kinds of playful activities can be thought up.

Do not waste time dreaming of distribution deals with anyone whomsoever. They do not really work. You sell virtually everything through your own people in your own area and at your own performances. And it is better to limit your first pressing rather than to have 500 copies left!

Chapter 31 - Join the Continentals

Why should you join with the Continentals? It doesn't matter whether you consider their style to be too American or whether you prefer the Oslo Gospel Choir. We're not talking about taste! We're talking about something much more important, i.e. the unique formation and training given by Continentals. By joining them you learn things you cannot learn elsewhere. Research has been done for years on its positive effects. And this proves it to be a very enriching and lasting experience for everyone.

In which areas is training available:

- Artistic
- Movement, body language and choreography
- Stage production
- Spiritual and content
- Cultural, among other things by visiting other countries and staying with host families
- Musical
- Group discipline
- Group dynamism
- Social

The Continentals do *not* take your best people away. After you have learned a very great deal through their training and the tour you will return to your own choir or group to put what you have learned into practice. This has proved in practice to be an enormous impulse for your own choir or group.

How long are your tours?

Our tours last from 2 to a maximum of 4 weeks, including 8 days' professional training.

Ages

You can join one of the following age groups:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| - 08-12 years old | Continental Kids (a week's camp and 8 concerts in a season) |
| - 13-17 years old | Young Continentals |
| - 16-30 years old | Continentals or Discipel |
| - 30-55 years old | Encore Continentals |

Who may join?

Singers (male and female), musicians (for the band, but all classical instruments for orchestra), light and sound technicians, road crews, bus drivers, conductors. In many categories there is additional training available for light, sound, road management, discipleship, drivers, conductors/leaders among other things.

If you want to develop as a choir/group, send them to the Conti's and you will thankfully pluck the fruit of this endeavour.

Address: P.O. Box 81065, 3009 GB Rotterdam

tel. +31 104212592

e-mail: info@continentalministries.org

www.continentalministries.org

THERE ARE CONTINENTAL OFFICES (doing Continental groups) ALL OVER THE WORLD! JOIN THEM

Chapter 32 - Fundraising and sponsors

When you want to start up large projects such as concerts with appealing names or recording a CD, you invariably come up against financial constraints.

Here are a few tips:

Seek donors and 'Friends of Our Choir'. Do not only ask them for money, but also invite them to, and offer them reserved places at your concerts, and send them a choir newsletter from time to time.

Set up a pre-sale system so that you will already have the finances in hand.

Pre-financing: seek people who are prepared to advance money. Make your goal and expectations clear and explain how and when you intend to repay the money.

Sponsoring with acknowledgement: you advertise for people/firms in exchange for financing. Remember to reserve places for them at your concerts and possibly to give them V.I.P. treatment.

Look into the availability of subsidies. Do not conclude too quickly that these provisions are not applicable to your choir. Some national cultural funds give subsidies for the purchase of instruments, choir vestments etc.; your local Department for Cultural Affairs can be consulted with reference to a basic subsidy.

Work with entry tickets and/or collections.

Are you supporting a good cause with your product? In that case, give extensive publicity to this through the (house-to-house) media and request contributions or help from (municipal) authorities.

Organise activities such as a sponsored run or a rummage sale.

Request contributions or help from organisations such as the Lions and Rotary Clubs, especially if you are supporting a good cause with your activity. There is furthermore a fundraising book, containing all the addresses of firms and organisations from which you could request contributions or help.

G

Useful

Chapter 33 - Join up

Please give up the idea that you can do it all alone. If you think and do so, you will come to a halt after about 4 years because of lack of knowledge and ability.

What should you do?

Join the Christian Artists Music and the Media.

We are a member of the worldwide Artists International of the WVA (World Labour Association).

We are housed together in the Continental Art Centre in Rotterdam. This is where the logistical heart is, as well as the archives and the library, and this is where training is given, etc.

Help

Thanks to all these networks, an affiliated choir, singer, conductor, group, dancer or artist can obtain help, advice, support and/or mediation.

Yearbook

Members may be listed in the CA-Directory, which plays a tremendously stimulating and P.R. role. Very many soloists, duos, groups and choirs get bookings in this way.

Study days

All kinds of study days are held regularly! You can learn a lot which will enable you to develop further.

Course, studies & training, seminar

You can attend the international study week of Christian Artists.

Consultants

See chapter 35.

There are many reasons to join and become a member. For further information: Continental Sound/Christian Artists, P. O. Box 81065, 3009 GB Rotterdam, tel. (0031) (0)10-4212592, e-mail: info@continentalart.org.

Chapter 34 - Recommended literature

MUSIC IN MINISTRY (Leen La Riviere)

A Biblical view of music, published by Continental Sound.

REVIVALS & MUSIC (Leen La Riviere)

published by Continental Sound.

CREATIVE & CHRISTIAN (ROYAL CREATIVITY) (Leen La Riviere)

A Biblical view of creativity, published by Continental Sound.

This NEW edition has been published in at least 14 languages (!) under the title:
BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS.

PAS-DE-DEUX (Leen La Riviere)

A Biblical view of creativity, published by Continental Sound.

THE CREATIVE CHURCH (Leen La Riviere)

A growth model for the church, published by Continental Sound.

PRAISE AND WORSHIPPERS (Leen La Riviere)

A biblical view on praise and worship, including an historical overview

THE MESSAGE (Leen La Riviere)

The content of the Gospel, published by Continental Sound.

THE MESSAGE, part II (Leen La Riviere)

The practical consequences of the previous book, published by Continental Sound

LESSONS, LEADERS AND LIFE (Leen & Ria La Riviere)

A leadership manual for training, insight and discussion, published by Continental Sound.

THE CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC DEBATE: WORLDLY COMPROMISE OR AGENT OF RENEWAL? (Steve Miller)

Published by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A.

THE WAY, BIBLE STUDIES ON DISCIPLESHIP (Leen La Rivière)

Published by Continental Sound.

PRAYING, 251 prayers (Leen La Riviere)

A very practical help for prayer! All the prayers in the Bible.

Published by Continental Sound

PRAISE & WORSHIPPERS (Leen La Riviere),

In debt study about the real nature and forms of praise & worship

Published by Continental Sound

WORSHIP (Graham Kendrick)

Published by Kingsway.

IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH (several authors)

Published by Hodder & Stoughton.

ONE MINUTE MANAGER (Kenneth Blanchard, Ph.D. / Spencer Johnson, M.D.)

Published by Fontana/Collins.

MEGASTORIES (VOOR CITYKIDS) (only in Dutch) (Leen La Rivière)

The Bible stories told anew, published by IBS.

ROADCREW MANUAL (several authors)

Lesson notes for road managers etc., published by Continental Sound. Only available when taking the CS course for conductors or assistant conductors.

EVANGELISTIC CONCERTS (Leen La Rivière)

How to organise an event. Published by Continental Sound.

SESAM ATLAS OF THE ART OF SONG (Ank Reinders)

Published by Bosch en Keuning, Baarn.

Chapter 35 - Consultants

After reading this you may be thinking: 'What now? How will I ever get my act together?'

The Continental Sound/Christian Artists has a group of experienced and qualified *Consultants* available who can be hired to assist you on the spot. The price: travelling costs and an hourly tariff. The tariff is cheaper if the choir is a member of CA.

What can the consultants do?

- Advise on a large diversity of topics; from judicial problems, via dealing with conflict to repertoire choice and rehearsal techniques.
- Give an evaluation of the choir: an analysis of where you are and how you can progress artistically, spiritually, performance-wise, organisationally and in the area of public relations.

Request information from Continental Sound/Christian Artists, P. O. Box 81065, 3009 GB Rotterdam, the Netherlands, e-mail: info@continentalart.org.

Chapter 36 - Important addresses

Continental Sound/Christian Artists, P. O. Box 81065,
3009 GB Rotterdam. The Netherlands Tel. (0031) (0)10-4212592
E-mail: info@continentalart.org.
www.continentalart.org www.christianartists.org

CONTACT with Christian Artists Organizations around the world:
www.christianartists-network.org

You want to study more?
www.arts-academy-europe.org

From the archives:

The church chorister's ten commandments
(Found in an old Catholic hymnal, AD 1910.)

1. *Be a man of faith and prayer.*
 2. Pronounce the church language clearly and try to understand it.
 3. Love Gregorian music and learn it well.
 4. Take great care with the short responses.
 5. Only sing approved music.
 6. Do not sing above your strength or unprepared.
 7. Pay attention to use of voice.
 8. Sing to edify, not to glitter. Do not look for solos.
 9. Never miss a rehearsal.
 10. Promote church singing.
-
- A. Pray if you are not singing.
 - B. Do not walk around.
 - C. Use the missal.
 - D. Do not come too late.
 - E. Register as a member of the retreat association for church choristers.

BEHIND THE SCENES

This manual is written to help and stimulate choirs, bands, praise & worship teams, local initiatives, churches, groups.

Music is a vital means for spiritual renewal, personal growth and social cohesion.

So you better get started NOW!

Leen La Riviere
chairman