



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Biennial Event- Still the Only Event of its Kind in the Nation -
Features New Choir Profiles and New International Representation**

Festival expects sell-out performances based on 2007 attendance and advance ticket sales

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA – The 2009 California International Choral Festival & Competition (CICFC), still the *only event* of its kind in the United States, is setting the stage for the world to come together again in music and peace on the beautiful central coast of California. The 3-day festival and competition, hosted by the Vocal Arts Ensemble of San Luis Obispo, takes place June 26-28, 2009 and features international and national choirs vying for awards, prizes and accolades. The performances will take place at the Performing Arts Center on the campus of the California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo.

2007 Re-cap | The inaugural CICFC in 2007 was a tremendous success with sold out performances and exuberant audiences. It was a jammed-packed weekend full of festivities as well. The community embraced the visiting choirs, taking them into their homes, playing tour guide to area attractions and having them perform at area churches. After all performances and enthusiastic standing ovations, it was Imusicapella from Imus, Philippines that took home the most prizes and captured the “People’s Choice” Award.

2009 Choirs | In 2007, the Festival competitions were limited to mixed (women and men) choirs. This year, however, as the buzz spread about the Festival, organizers had applications from both all-male and all-female choirs. In order to increase the quality and the diversity of the Festival and offer the audience the widest possible experience, one women's choir, St. Zlata Meglenska, from the Republic of Macedonia, and one male choir, The Prime Note Ensemble, a Philippine choir from Saudi Arabia were accepted to the competition. These choirs will compete in the Folk and Choir's Choice competitions and will be part of Sunday's Grand Finale, when all participating choirs sing together.

“We have some exceptional choirs this year,” says Gary Lamprecht, Artistic Director of CICFC. “The diversity of the competitive performances, with the addition of a women’s chamber choir and all men’s choir in the mix, will be greatly magnified. It’s all for the entertainment and enjoyment of the audiences that will attend.”

Choirs that have committed to the 2009 CICFC thus far include: **The Chamber Choir of the Medical University of Wroclaw, Poland; St. Zlata Meglenska, Republic of Macedonia; Fullerton College Concert Choir, Fullerton, California; Sikama Choir, Republic of Congo; The Prime Note Ensemble, Saudi Arabia, and returning Christ the King Church Choir, Uganda.** Extensive biographies for each choir can be obtained at www.CaliforniaChoral.org.

Judges | Returning as judges for the 2009 competition are **Professor Christian Grube** and **William Hatcher**. Joining them for the first time is **Dr. Ginger Covert Colla**. Grube was Professor for Choir Conducting at the Berlin University of Arts and Director of the famous Boys’ Choir, the State and Cathedral Choir of Berlin. Because of the diplomatic influence of his work, in 1995, Grube was awarded the National Medal for Distinguished Service, the highest civilian honor given by the German government. Professor Hatcher retired in 1999 from the University of Iowa after 43 years of conducting and teaching choral music. He was the recipient of both the Howard S. Swan Award and Weston Noble Award for lifetime achievement by the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA). Dr. Colla teaches part-time for Modesto Junior College. She holds the title of Professor Emeritus at California State University, Stanislaus where she was Professor of Music Education and Director of Choral and Vocal Studies from 1986-1999. Colla received the California Music Educators Association Award as the Outstanding Choral Music Educator in 1989 and was honored with the Howard S. Swan Award for Choral Excellence by the California ACDA in 2004. Extensive bios and photos for each judge can be obtained at www.CaliforniaChoral.org.

Performance Schedule I The performance schedule for the 2009 CICFC:

Friday, June 26, 8:00 p.m.

Welcome Concert

The San Luis Obispo Vocal Arts Ensemble hosts the event and will open the Festival & Competition by performing for the competing choirs. To welcome them to the community, the Ensemble will sing selections in each choir's native language.

Saturday, June 27, 10:00 a.m.

Required Pieces Competition

Each choir performs the same two pieces of music *All Breathing Life* by Bach and *Ave Maria* by Lauridsen while the judges listen for the elements that make each choir strong. (FREE Concert)

Saturday, June 27, 8:00 p.m.

Folk Song Competition

This performance is the most colorful evening of the competition. Each choir, dressed in native costume, will perform folk music from their country.

Sunday, June 28, 1:00 p.m.

Choir's Choice Competition

Each choir chooses a 12-minute program of their finest music to perform. This competition showcases the choirs' unique styles and exceptional musical skills, and it is the final competition of the Festival. At the end of this performance, the audience votes for their favorite choir in *The People's Choice* selection.

Sunday, June 28, 8:00 p.m.

Grand Finale Awards

The Festival & Competition concludes with the awards ceremony, honoring the winning choirs in each category. The first, second and third place choirs will sing one song of their choice. As a grand finale, all choirs join together for the performance of *All Breathing Life* by Bach, *Ave Maria* by Lauridsen and one thousand-plus people in the Performing Arts Center sing "This is My Song" from *Finlandia* by Sibelius.

Tickets I Ticket prices for each concert are \$20, except for the Required Pieces concert. It is FREE and open to the general public. Tickets for all 4 paid concerts can be purchased for a 10% discount until March 31 by calling 1.888.223.2787/805.756.2787 or walking up to the theater box office. All concerts are at the Christopher Cohan Performing Arts Center on the Cal Poly campus. Single tickets to each performance will go on sale April 2009.

Further Information I For further information on the 2009 California International Choral Festival & Competition, please call Executive Director Pat Harris at 805.440.6050 or email pat@californiachoral.org. Press information is available online at www.CaliforniaChoral.org.

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