News

Our upcoming schedule is quite heavy: we will sing four different works in three different venues in Flanders and Brussels. This is a great opportunity for us to meet and captivate new audiences!

We will work again with the Guides in November. Three performances of *Porgy and Bess* with them in 1997 left us with great memories. Let’s hope it’s the same this time.

In this issue

**English**

So many novelties at the start of this choral season: new works, new soloists, a new conductor, a new concert hall. Farewell to Roger Bausier who conducted us in Brahms’ *Requiem* in 2008. And a tribute to Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, the master of *lieder*, who died in May. Happy reading!

**Français**

Que de nouveautés en ce début de saison: de nouvelles œuvres, de nouveaux solistes, un nouveau chef, une nouvelle salle de concert, un nouveau who’s who. Adieu à Roger Bausier qui nous a dirigés fin 2008 dans le *Requiem* de Brahms. *Chorus Lines* publie également un hommage à Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, le maître du lied, disparu en mai dernier. Bonne lecture!

*Your editor,*

**Georges Charneux**
From the Musical Director

The opportunity to get to know yet another Beethoven masterpiece is truly a privilege. And re-visiting our old friend Mr Orff also reminds us of the power and energy that we are capable of producing. As we add the Venetian master, Vivaldi, to our list, we are reminded of the extraordinary flexibility and range that has become a trademark of the BCS. Throughout the years, the BCS has continually shown its capability to sing a wide variety of music in a wide range of venues and styles, and this year’s programming shows that this is no exception. It’s a testament to your abilities as musicians that we are able to do this so well. In addition, we do this with such joy and energy that our Thursday evening rehearsals have become not only wonderful musical experiences, but also emotionally and intellectually stimulating events where we can all share the joys of music together. Thank you as always for your excellent work.

Onward and upward!

Eric

From the President

En route pour une fin d’année musicalement riche et variée ; mais outre le contraste entre les concerts Orff et Vivaldi, il y a une autre caractéristique de la BCS que nous allons expérimenter à nouveau, c’est la direction de deux chefs extérieurs. Tous deux talentueux, visionnaires, et entièrement dévoués à la musique, mais dotés de tempéraments pour le moins contrastés : après la discrétion toute en retenue d’Yves Segers, la flamboyance de Barth Van de Velde.

Si vous nous avez rejoints récemment, préparez-vous à deux expériences inoubliables!

Bien sûr, ce programme exigeant ne va pas sans un agenda de répétitions chargé, mais nous savons que nous pouvons compter sur vous pour faire honneur à notre réputation, et préparer ces deux concerts avec le talent et la flexibilité qui sont notre marque de fabrique!

Alexis
About Carl Orff’s music

Orff is most known for *Carmina Burana* (1937), a ‘scenic cantata’. It is the first of a trilogy that also includes *Catulli Carmina* and *Trionfo di Afrodite*. Together the trilogy is called *Triumphs*, or ‘triumphs’. The composer described it as the celebration of the human spirit’s triumphs through sexual and holistic balance. While ‘modern’ in some of his compositional techniques, Orff was able to capture the spirit of the medieval period in this trilogy, with infectious rhythms and easy tonalities. The medieval poems, written in an early form of German and Latin, are often racy, but without descending into smut. The first movement, *Fortuna Imperatrix Mundi*, commonly known as *O Fortuna*, is often used to denote satanic forces, for example in the Oliver Stone movie *The Doors*. The work’s association with Fascism also led Pier Paolo Pasolini to use the movement *Veris Leta Facies* to accompany the concluding scenes of torture and murder in his final film *Salo o le 120 giornate di Sodoma*.

As an historical aside, *Carmina Burana* is probably the most famous piece of music composed and premiered in Nazi Germany. In fact it was so popular that Orff received a commission in Frankfurt to compose incidental music for *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, which was supposed to replace the banned music by Mendelssohn. After the war, he claimed not to be satisfied with the music and reworked it into the final version that was first performed in 1964.

Orff was reluctant to term any of his compositions as simply operas in the traditional sense. He referred works like *Der Mond* (The Moon, 1939) and *Die Kluge* (The Wise Woman, 1943) as *Märchenoper* (fairytales operas). Both compositions feature the same ‘timeless’ sound in that they do not employ any of the musical techniques of the period in which they were composed, with the intent that they are difficult to define as belonging to a particular era. Their melodies, rhythms and, with them, texts appear in a union of words and music.

Of his *Antigonae* (1949), Orff said specifically that it was not an opera, rather a *Vertonung*, a ‘musical setting’ of the ancient tragedy. The text is an excellent German translation by Friedrich Holderlin of the Sophocles play of the same name. The orchestration relies heavily on the percussion section, but is otherwise fairly simple. It has been labelled by some as minimalistic, which is most adequate in terms of the melodic line. The story of Antigone has a haunting similarity to the history of Sophie Scholl, heroine of the *White Rose*, and Orff may have been immortalizing her in his opera.

Orff’s last work, *De Temporum Fine Comoedia* (A Play of the End of Time), had its premiere at the Salzburg music festival in 1973, performed by Herbert von Karajan and the Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. In this highly personal work, Orff presented a mystery play, in which he summarized his view on the end of time, sung in Greek, German and Latin.
About Carmina Burana

Carmina Burana, which means ‘Songs of Benediktbeuren’, was the title under which Johann Andreas Schmeller published a collection of manuscripts in 1847 in Low Latin and Low German, which had been put together in the 13th century at the monastery of Benediktbeuren in Southern Bavaria. There were some 200 poems and songs – some of whose original music has only recently been found – drawn from several countries, and they had been in the repertoire of the goliards, the vagrant monks of those far-off times. As a reading of the texts used by Orff shows, these wandering minstrels were not conventionally religious men, being much given to celebrating the pleasure of bed, board and bottle and taking a satirical view of church and state.

Orff came upon Schmeller’s edition in 1935 and thought it could provide the basis of a dramatic cantata for performance in the theatre with mimed scenes interpolated between the songs and dances. Assisted by Michel Hofman, he selected 24 of the texts and arranged them in groups, the opening chorus being repeated at the end.

In setting them to music, he called for solo singers, full choir, semi-chorus, boys’ choir and a large orchestra with celesta, two pianos and an augmented percussion section. The first of many productions of the work was staged in Frankfurt on 8 June 1937. La Scala, Milan, mounted the first production outside Germany in 1942. The most obvious feature of Orff’s music is its simplicity, a simplicity he deliberately adopted for instant communication with his audience and as his solution to the problems posed by the extreme complexity of late romantic music composed at the beginning of the century. Rhythm is the mainspring of Carmina Burana, as it is of that other neo-primitive 20th century work, The Rite of Spring. And the percussive enunciation of the rhythmic phrases makes an immediate, exhilarating impact, as it does in Stravinsky’s ballet.

It is a tuneful score, though the melodies are of the simplest, mostly consisting of short, rudimentary phrases, repeated in incantatory fashion over an ostinato (i.e. repeated pattern) accompaniment. Orff’s inspiration for these derived from such sources as plainchant, Bavarian folk-song, Italian opera and Lutheran chorales, though there is an element of parody in his treatment. He was not looking for historical authenticity but seeking to evoke the 13th century in a style of his own making.

The instrumental colouring is immensely skilful and attractive but the harmony is very basic and there is no counterpoint or thematic development.

The musicologist Ernest Newman was convinced that Orff discarded these compositional procedures from strength rather than weakness; some other critics have taken a less favourable view, but the public at large has delighted in Carmina Burana, making this still the most popular of all Orff’s works.
About Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Tchaikovsky was born into the family of a mining engineer on 7 May 1840 in Votkinsk in the Imperial Russian province of Viatka. Despite an early and keen interest in music, his vocation as composer only became apparent much later. In 1859, when he was 19, he graduated from the St Petersburg School of Jurisprudence and was appointed to the Ministry of Justice as a civil servant. After several attempts at composition, he enrolled in the newly opened St Petersburg Conservatoire, attending theory and composition classes. Tchaikovsky spent three years at the Conservatoire and was awarded its first medal, after which he left the civil service to begin a new life as a professional composer.

In 1866, he moved to Moscow, which was to become his permanent home in Russia, but he travelled abroad regularly to Italy, France and Switzerland. He started teaching at the Moscow Conservatoire and wrote his First Symphony (Winter Dreams) and his first opera.

In this early creative period, Tchaikovsky produced many masterpieces, notably his First Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (1875) and the ballet Swan Lake (1876). With their open emotionality, captivating dramatic control and peerless melodic beauty, they have remained the most popular of his works.

In 1877, Tchaikovsky suffered a deep personal crisis triggered by his marriage – which lasted all of three months. He left the Conservatoire and spent the next few years travelling around Europe. Moral and material support came from a rich patron, Nadezhda von Meck, who gave him substantial financial help. Von Meck maintained a personal correspondence with the composer for 13 years even though they never met face to face.

Once able to resume composing on a regular basis in 1877, Tchaikovsky produced the captivating Violin Concerto in 1878 and, in the same year, the opera Eugene Onegin, which still enthrals audiences with its psychological depth and noble style.

A succession of masterpieces followed: the ballet Sleeping Beauty, the opera Queen of Spades and the ballet Nutcracker. By now, Tchaikovsky had achieved worldwide fame. He toured throughout Europe and visited the USA where he conducted his own compositions, which continued to gain in popularity and success. The honorary doctorate awarded to him by the University of Cambridge in 1893 was tangible recognition of his success in Europe. No one, it seems, thought that his death would occur so soon.

But the Sixth Symphony (the Pathetique, 1893) carries intimations of the finale of Tchaikovsky’s life. In this symphony, the dramatic crescendo of the early movements is followed by the final adagio, which peters out into oblivion – as though the composer were performing his own requiem.

Tchaikovsky died in St Petersburg on 6 November 1893, nine days after the premiere of the Sixth Symphony. The circumstances of his death are still unclear (the suspicion of suicide still hovers). What is certain, however, is that he was to become and remain the most internationally famous Russian composer and one of the most renowned classical composers – a place he will retain forever.
About the 1812 Overture

Tchaikovsky composed the *1812 Overture* between 12 October and 19 November 1880 in response to Nicolas Rubinstein’s commission for the opening of the Moscow Exhibition the following year. In the event, the Exhibition was postponed, and the *1812* received its premiere a year late, on 20 August 1882, to the same kind of rapturous reception with which it has been received ever since.

Tchaikovsky undertook the task unwillingly, finally persuaded only by Rubinstein’s appeal to write it as a personal favour. But even in accepting the commission, he made it abundantly clear that he disliked having to compose music for such public occasions. It was without much agonizing that he duly provided something very festive and noisy, complete with cannon shots and bells. The work was drafted within the space of a week. Its orchestration took only a little longer.

It is a programme composition, masterfully incorporating several musical quotations. It opens with the religious chant *Save O Lord Thy People*; Russia prays for the gift of victory. Then, the music of war begins. The composer quotes the folk song *At the Gates* and the listeners are reminded of Tolstoyan scenes (in *War and Peace*): before the battle, Russian soldiers try to conquer their alarm and fear. Then, the battle itself. Tchaikovsky was probably thinking of Borodino, the only major battle in that campaign. The *Marseillaise* symbolizes the French army, and its clash with the Russian themes interprets the course and outcome of the battle. The French national anthem is a strong musical image and from the point of view of composition, it could not be substituted: this was the music that accompanied the Napoleonic troops, the enemy, into Moscow. The dramatic tension subsides towards the end of the *Overture* with the theme of the Russian anthem and its intrinsic beauty balancing the *Marseillaise*, though the power of the sound increases right up to the apotheosis, with the ringing of church bells, the boom of the canons and the victorious military fanfares of the orchestra.

Today, the *Ouverture solennelle* ‘1812‘ to give its original title is, without question, Tchaikovsky’s most popular piece and very likely the most popular piece in the classical repertoire. The reason it has achieved such status is surely precisely because Tchaikovsky tossed it off in such a hurry. It is exactly what Rubinstein had hoped it would be: a work of thrilling celebration that holds the attention of even the most hardened critical ears, from the first notes of the opening solemn hymn through the busy but carefully controlled build-up of excitement to the final outrageously clamorous climax.

Tchaikovsky’s original composition doesn’t include a choir. The version we will sing was arranged by the American composer Igor Buketoff who made the following changes and additions:

- The opening segment, *God Preserve Thy People* is sung a cappella by the choir (and not played by the strings)

- A women’s choir is added to the flute and cor anglais duet rendition of *At the Gates*.

- The orchestra and chorus unite in the climax with a triumphant version of *God Preserve Thy People* and *God Save the Tsar*. 
About La Brabançonne

The Belgian national anthem was written in September 1830 during the Belgian Revolution by a young revolutionary called Jenneval (the stage name of a French actor, Louis-Alexandre Dechet), who read the lyrics during a meeting at the Aigle d’Or café. At the time, he was an actor at the theatre where, in August 1830, the revolution leading to independence from the Netherlands began.

Surprisingly, Jenneval’s first text is simply a warning to King Willem II of the Netherlands. At the time, many people in Belgium believed that a peaceful agreement was still possible with the King but the situation dramatically changed after Willem had committed troops to Brussels. Jenneval then re-wrote his lyrics, condemning the action of the King and praising the martyrs of the Belgian revolution. This version of the text was set to music by François Van Campenhout, an opera singer, conductor and composer who first performed it in September 1830.

In 1860, Belgium formally adopted the song and music as its national anthem, although the then prime minister, Charles Rogier, edited out lyrics attacking the Dutch Prince of Orange because Belgium was now at peace with the Netherlands. Through the new lyrics, Rogier wanted to establish that the idea behind Belgium had already existed before the revolution of 1830. Today, historians consider this opinion as an anachronism because the different states of the Ancient Regime that form the actual Belgian state had no predestination to become Belgium at the time; their regimes, however ‘foreign’, being considered as legitimate by the people.

Various committees were responsible for reviewing the text and melody of the anthem to establish an official version. Their work was never completed. However, a ministerial circular of the Home Office on 8 August 1921 decreed that only the fourth stanza of the text had to be considered official. Today, the national anthem is mostly performed in its orchestral version; according to some historians, the reason behind this is that the verse of the invincible unity of Belgium is particularly inappropriate in a context where the unity of Belgium itself is threatened.

In recent years, an unofficial, shorter version of the anthem is sung on Belgium’s National Day on 21 July each year, which combines the words of the anthem in all three of Belgium’s official languages.

About Jean-Valentin Bender (1801-1873)

Jean-Valentin Bender was a Belgian conductor and composer. He began his career as a military musician in various armies, first in the Netherlands, then in the French army, and finally in the new Belgian army in 1830 where he could give free rein to his gifts as a military musician.

King Leopold I noticed his talent and asked him to form a body of military musicians who could give splendour during formal representations in the presence of the king. This was the birth of the band of the Belgian Guides.

His name is known to this day as the composer of the famous March of the First Regiment of the Guides.
Meet our soloists

Anja Van Engeland (soprano)

After graduating in 1999 with the highest distinction and receiving a Masters Degree in Music from the Lemmens Institute in Leuven, where she was coached by Dina Grossberger, Anja Van Engeland specialized in singing and opera at the Antwerp Conservatoire and was then accepted as a member of the Flanders Opera Studio.

Since 2002, she has sung in many operatic productions in either Flanders or Liege. She has sung twice with us: first in a Bruckner/Haydn programme and then last December in Verdi’s *Requiem*.

Vincent Lesage (tenor)

With a degree in baroque violin and musicology, Vincent Lesage started his musical career in baroque ensembles. It was there that he discovered a passion for this musical universe and, most importantly, a voice! He began his vocal training at the Royal Conservatoire of Brussels, then started to discover the large repertoire of oratorios and operas, first as a singer in specialized ensembles and then as a soloist. He has sung tenor in most of the large baroque vocal works but is also interested in the Mozartian repertoire.

In addition, he has sung in *The Magic Flute* (Mozart) and *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Janacek) at the Opera de Wallonie.

Vitali Rozynko (bass)

A native of the San Francisco Bay Area, Vitali studied at The Oberlin Conservatory, The Eastman School of Music and The Royal Academy of Music, London. He has performed many roles under famous conductors such as Sir Colin Davis and Seiji Ozawa. His operatic repertoire includes the great bass roles in the operas of Mozart, Beethoven, Puccini and Verdi, and he appeared in a concert to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Seiji Ozawa’s tenure with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He has sung in many opera houses, mainly in the USA, UK and Italy.

The Arenberg Choir

Based in Leuven, the Arenberg Choir is a mixed choir for singers of all ages. At the beginning of 1950, music lover and connoisseur Dieudonné Feys founded the Arenberg Choir under the official title of ‘Choir of the Serene House of Princes and Dukes of Arenberg’.

Since 1986, the Arenberg Choir has been directed by Lou Van Cleynenbreugel. Under his influence, the choir has grown into a group of around 65 trained and enthusiastic singers.

The Arenberg Choir performs music for everyone: classical and contemporary works alternate with religious and profane music. Each year the choir performs several concert programmes. The highlights are their own spring and autumn concerts and their Christmas concert in Leuven, where the choir repeatedly counts on a large and enthusiastic audience.
The Royal Band of the Belgian Guides

The Royal Band of the Belgian Guides Regiment consists of a Symphonic Band made up of 84 strictly selected artists and a trumpeter corps of 19 first-class musicians.

Due to its exceptional qualities, the band has incessantly fascinated many composers, ranging from Berlioz to Stravinsky, as well as large audiences in Belgium and abroad, since its foundation in 1832. This excellent symphonic band has always had as its principal vocation the defence of Belgian music and, especially, of original Belgian wind band music. It pursues this objective by means of numerous concerts in Belgium and abroad, as well as radio concerts and CD recordings.

Even today, famous foreign composers, such as Roger Boutry and Derek Bourgeois, and Belgian composers, such as Frederic Devreese and François Glorieux, call on the Symphonic Band of the Belgian Guides to create their new compositions and record them on CD.

The band’s origin dates back to 1832 when King Leopold I invited the conductor of the Band of the first Regiment of the Guides, Jean Valentin Bender, to form a band attached to his personal guard. The successive illustrious conductors managed to constantly increase the quality of this band so that soon it was considered as one of the world’s foremost wind bands. Successful concert tours in Canada, Spain, the USA, Thailand and Turkey, as well as numerous concerts in France, Germany, the UK, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg and The Netherlands have enlarged the band’s long list of achievements.

About Yves Segers, our conductor

Yves Segers, born in Temse in 1978, graduated with the highest honours for flute at the music academy of Sint Niklaas. He consecutively obtained four degrees at the Royal Conservatoire of Brussels. In 2001, he got a Master of Music degree option on the flute with the greatest distinction, as well as a pedagogical degree. In 2004, he obtained a Master of Music degree option in wind band conducting and in 2006 a Master of Music degree option in orchestral conducting.

As a flautist, Yves Segers won several contests, notably the 1996 Axion Classics contest and the prestigious Tenuto Contest.

Between 1995 and 2000, Yves Segers was a member and soloist of the Philharmonic Youth Orchestra of Flanders and toured in Russia, Canada and South Africa. In May 2001, he joined the Royal Symphonic Band of the Guides. Simultaneously he also performed with numerous orchestras and ensembles. As a soloist, Yves Segers often performs in Belgium and abroad with several chamber music ensembles. He was invited to be a guest conductor by the Brussels Philharmonic Orchestra, the National Orchestra of Belgium, the Royal Symphonic Band of the Belgian Guides, and the Brussels Conservatoire Symphonic Band.

After numerous auditions and training periods, Yves Segers was appointed Officer Bandmaster and conductor of the famous Royal Symphonic Band of the Belgian Guides in 2008.
About Antonio Vivaldi

Antonio Lucio Vivaldi (4 March 1678, Venice - 28 July 1741, Vienna) was an Italian composer and one of the main composers of the Baroque period.

Coming from a large family, Vivaldi was born on the day of an earthquake. Of puny constitution, he nearly died in the cradle and was given an emergency baptism on the day he was born by the midwife herself.

His father, a barber but also a talented violinist at the Basilica San Marco, helped him to start a musical career and made him enter the orchestra of the Cappella di San Marco where he was a valued violinist. He suffered from asthma, which prompted his father to destine him to the priesthood. Tonsured in 1693, he became a priest in 1703. He was nicknamed ‘the red priest’ because of the colour of his hair.

From 1704, he was suspended from his duties and obligations for medical reasons, which enabled him to devote himself entirely to music. He was appointed maestro di violin at the Ospedale della Pietà, one of the Venetian girls’ orphanages; there, he formed a girls’ band, which was unique at the time and attracted many rich foreigners. He also worked as an impresario for the theatre Sant’Angelo in Venice, where he dealt with contracts and bills.

Very soon he knew glory and fame, and became one of the first true stars of the music world. He was often accompanied by many young girls, which made people gossip, and sold off the manuscripts of his concertos for the price of one ducat. He spent his old age in poverty and was buried by the hospital’s service to the poor.

After his death, his music fell into oblivion and was only rediscovered in 1913 following the work of the musicologist Marc Pincherle. His works were republished from the 1950s.

Vivaldi’s influence on Western music is considerable: he truly created the solo concerto as taken up later by the classical and romantic composers. He was the first composer to use the ritornello form regularly in fast movements, and his use of it became a model; the same is true of his three-movement form (fast-slow-fast). His methods of securing greater thematic unity were widely copied, especially the integration of solo and ritornello material; his vigorous rhythmic patterns, his violinistic figuration and his use of sequence were also much imitated.

He was a gifted composer and had a great sense of orchestration. He was extremely prolific and it is estimated that he wrote over 450 concertos.

Johann Sebastian Bach greatly admired him and borrowed many of his themes to transcribe or adapt them. He transcribed several concertos from Vivaldi’s Opus 3, the Estro Armonico, for organ or keyboard.
About Vivaldi’s *Gloria*

The *Gloria* probably dates from around 1715 and has a typically extrovert opening. The *ritornello* introduces a unison theme in D major centring on the tonic chord; the orchestral colour is provided by the addition of a trumpet and an oboe to the basic string orchestra. The second movement, *Et in terra pax hominibus*, is an expressive B-minor *andante* with a gently pulsating bass over which vocal layers gradually build up with considerable harmonic intensity. Following the lively duet for two sopranos, *Laudamus Te*, the brief choral *Gratias agimus tibi* introduces a contrasting imitative movement, *Propter magnam gloriem*. The reflective mood returns for *Domine Deus, Rex coelestis*, where a lilting soprano solo alternating with a solo oboe or violin is accompanied by the continuo alone. This accompanying texture is again used for the alto solo in *Domine Deus, Agnus Dei*, which is interrupted by incisive phrases for the full chorus and strings.

In *Quoniam tu solus sanctus*, music from the first movement returns in an abbreviated form, and this re-use of opening material at the end of a work to give a sense of unity is common in Vivaldi’s sacred works.

The final double fugue *Cum Sancto Spiritu* has an interesting history. Vivaldi was an inveterate borrower, though normally from his own works, but this movement is based on the finale of another *Gloria* by G. M. Ruggieri. Vivaldi simply reduced the forces from two choirs and orchestras to one and eliminated the second viola part: a common practice in those times...

About Vivaldi’s *Magnificat*

Vivaldi wrote three different versions of the *Magnificat*. The final version, which we will sing, takes six movements from his first version; the others are replaced by solo arias. Of the remaining sections, *Et Misericordia* is notable for its depth of harmonic interest and expressive use of the rising intervals of a minor sixth and a major seventh, while *Deposuit potentem* contains vigorous unison writing. The five new arias, from their musical style, appear to date from the later 1720s and were written for five of the girls at the Pieta, a Venetian orphanage for girls.

The most interesting change in this final version of the *Magnificat* is that the text of the original single movement, *Et exultavit*, first set for successive soprano, alto and tenor solos with a brief choral interjection, is split into three independent solo arias with more extended musical settings. All five arias display stylistic features typical of Vivaldi’s operatic music, such as the falling chromaticism in the accompaniment of *Quia respexit* and the incisive syncopations and so-called ‘Lombard’ rhythms (semiquaver-dotted quaver) of *Esurientes*. The addition of this virtuosic writing to the more solid choral movements makes this *Magnificat* a splendid example not only of the way in which Vivaldi could adapt his own works, but also of the variety inherent in so much of his best music.
Our soloists for the Vivaldi concerts

**Martine Reyners (soprano)**

Martine Reyners began her musical education as a pianist and went on to pursue the art of singing at the Lemmens Institute in Leuven and then at the Royal Conservatoire in Ghent, where she obtained her Master of Music in vocal performance.

Equally at home in the *lyrico spinto* and dramatic coloratura repertoire, soprano Martine Reyners made her debut at the Alden-Biesen Summer Opera Festival in 2007 as Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*.

Miss Reyners has since gone on to perform the title role in Donizetti’s *Emilia di Liverpool* in a production created by the European Opera Center to celebrate the opening festivities in Liverpool, which was the European Capital of Culture in 2008. Miss Reyners sang the roles of Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and *Tosca* in their début performances at Alden-Biesen in 2009 and 2008 respectively. She has also sung the parts of Aida, Abigaille (*Nabucco*) and Leonore (*Fidelio*).

Miss Reyners has performed with the orchestras Il Fondamento, I Fiamminghi and the Flanders Radio Orchestra and has collaborated with conductors such as Dirk Brossé and Koen Kessels.

**Malgorzata Godlewska (alto)**

Malgorzata Godlewska studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London on a two-year Postgraduate Vocal Studies course, which she completed in 2009. She had previously studied at the Frederic Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw, where she gained her Master of Arts in Vocal Studies in 2007.

During the period 2003 to 2007, she was a principal with the Warsaw Chamber Opera and a freelance singer for Polish television and radio. In 2008, she was awarded a Polish Government Scholarship for further postgraduate study.

Her operatic performances include Ulrica in Verdi’s *Ballo in Maschera*, Suzuki in Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly*, Penelope in Monteverdi’s *Il ritorno di Ulisse* and Romeo in Bellini’s *I Capuletti e Montecchi*. Her oratorio roles include Bach’s *Magnificat*, Brahms’ *Alto Rhapsody*, Szymanowski’s *Stabat Mater* and Vivaldi’s *Magnificat*. With the Warsaw Chamber Opera, she sang Mozart’s *Così fan Tutte*, *Zauberflöte*, Don Giovanni, *Clemenza di Tito* and *Figaro*, as well as Janacek’s *Jenufa*.

**About Sinfonietta (Francis Poulenc)**

An introduction to the piece, which will be included in our Vivaldi concerts

Finished on 8 September 1948 at Nozay, the *Sinfonietta* was first performed in London on 24 October of the same year by the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Roger Desormière. In this piece Poulenc uses three of the themes from a string quartet, which he had destroyed because he was not satisfied with it. He was happy with the present work, which aims only to please, with lightness and brilliance. If one had to find a precedent among the symphonies of French composers, Bizet would most readily come to mind.
About deSingel (Antwerp)

deSingel International Art Centre in Antwerp is a Flemish cultural centre designed by architect Leo Stynen and inaugurated on 4 November 1980 in the presence of King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola.

It is an arts centre that was designed for a broad, art-loving audience. The cultural centre is an open house for contemporary and international art, and hosts four disciplines: architecture, dance, music and theatre. The emphasis is on contemporary art, both for code-breaking productions as well as contemporary interpretations of classical works. It is notably the home of Philippe Herreweghe and Collegium Vocale.

Its intention is to bring (aspiring) performing artists and audiences together in a climate of critical reflection and pioneering creativity, based on a challenging international programme in a variety of arts.

The large-scale infrastructure comprises a medium-sized concert hall (966 seats), the Blue Hall, where we will sing Vivaldi’s Gloria and a large theatre for drama and dance (803 seats), the Red Hall.

About the new Who’s Who

Making a Who’s Who was, at the outset, a suggestion from the committee. The annual ‘turnover’ in the choir is quite large so there’s a need to know who’s who in each section as soon as possible.

First step: to know precisely who is still there and who has left. Sometimes it’s quite easy, some members having announced that they are leaving us. But what about those who’ve said nothing yet obviously are not coming anymore? After agreement with the voice reps, the singers who, by late September, have not attended any rehearsal in the current season are considered to have left the choir and therefore are not to be included in the Who’s Who. However, some exceptions are made where members have been away sick.

Next step: find a decent picture of each member. Fortunately this was not too difficult since I had kept a copy of the previous edition. Pictures sent by each new member for their presentation in Chorus Lines were a great help. But the large collection of photos taken by Marc Lamote, our almost official photographer, was, ultimately, an essential element in making the document.

Finally, how to put this all together? Matthew Carver, who had initially just offered his assistance, was ultimately the real architect of the latest Who’s Who, due to his mastery of PowerPoint which enables an agreeable presentation of all the photographs. For the rest, the Who’s Who is, above all, a matter of patience and being meticulous: don’t forget anyone, ensure that the names are spelt correctly, put everyone in the correct place (so many recent changes!), select the latest (and best!) photo. This way we can say that the entire choir took part in the making of the Who’s Who.

Many thanks to you, Matt – and thank you all!
Farewell, Roger Bausier

Roger Bausier was born in the village of Vezon, near Tournai, on 23 February 1945. Like his father, he started playing the cornet in the local band before studying at the Conservatoire of Tournai where he switched to the trombone.

His quest for perfection led him to the Conservatoire of Brussels where he achieved high marks for his degrees. In 1968, he taught at the IMEP (Namur) then at the Conservatoire of Mons, and finally in Brussels.

He was admitted in 1969 to the prestigious Band of the Belgian Guides where he soon held the position of principal trombone. In September 2002, in close collaboration with Clare Roberts (Derek’s daughter), he created the Brussels Philharmonic Orchestra, which he directed for ten seasons. At this time he gave many young musicians the opportunity to make their orchestral debut.

He will be remembered as a music lover, a man who strewed his home with scores, and loved passing on his knowledge. He never forgot his birthplace where he sometimes performed for free. He was also ‘a brilliant man, nice, funny, witty, loyal friend, proud of his dearly beloved family’.

We sang the Brahms Requiem at Bozar under his baton in 2008.

The BCS says farewell to...

Louise Cunningham (soprano – UK), Birgitta Hamann (soprano – Germany), Sarah Lebrecht (soprano – UK), Alison Stroud (soprano – UK), Annabel Brewka (alto – Germany), Derek Roberts (tenor – UK), Graham Stroud (tenor – UK), Christian Olesen (bass – Denmark)

Liz Ball, a new translator for Chorus Lines

I am proud to introduce Liz to you, our new translator for Chorus Lines. She worked on the text about Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (p. 17) for this edition. Welcome, Liz!

I am American, from a town in North Carolina that is known for its cigarette industry. I planned to stay only for a year, but I have married a man from Germany who intends to spend his career in Brussels and we are expecting our first child in early November. I have taken some breaks from the BCS because I have also been the singer for a couple of wildly international, variously skilled rock bands!

Thanks to those who took part in making this edition: Eric, Alexis, Liz (translation), Fiona (proofreading), Hidenori Yabushita (picture p. 18), Caroline, Alice, Emma, Aurore, Germaine, Hanne, Liva, Ellie, Etienne, Geert, Peter and Klaus (photos & bios). Special thanks to Matt for his capture of the cover photo, from YouTube!
We welcome our new members

**Caroline Attard (Malta – Soprano)**

I moved to Brussels in March 2011. I play the piano, enjoy taking photos and travelling. I am a pharmacist by profession and am currently working with the European Commission, managing research projects in the area of public health. I sang various choral works and operas with choirs in Malta and in the UK, and enjoyed a number of musical experiences in Europe, one of which was taking part in the first Choir Olympics in Linz, Austria in 2000.

**Alice Descamps (Belgium – Soprano)**

Je m'appelle Alice et j'ai commencé très tôt la musique, par le violon. J'ai également étudié la flûte traversière et le chant. Titulaire d'un master en communication et d'un master en management, je travaille dans le marketing. Actuellement, je joue dans un orchestre de chambre à Bruxelles, mais je désirais reprendre le chant. D'où ma présence dans le chœur.

**Emma Leigh (UK – Soprano)**

I moved here two weeks ago, having finished my MSc in London. Now I am an intern working for a Green MEP. I have apparently been singing since the age of three! I play violin and piano, and the last work I sang was Handel's *Foundling Anthem*. My other interests include cycling, running, cooking and social justice. I also love a good debate!

**Aurore de Mahieu (Belgium – Soprano)**

As a pianist and singer I have always loved music. Since my childhood, I have been in school choirs with friends or lately in a small choir in Luanda with my parents. I sang Handel’s *Messiah* last year and Mozart’s *Requiem* last June. Glad to join the BCS this year! :)

**Germaine Moné (Cameroun – Soprano)**


**Liva Stokenberga (Latvia – Soprano)**

My name is Liva. I come from Latvia, and after studying, travelling and living in various places abroad, I have now found a home in Brussels. For almost a year I have been working at a consultancy specializing in the field of environmental law and policy, giving me the opportunity to learn about new subject areas almost every day. Back in Riga, I was part of a female choir, and our repertoire included original Latvian and folk music, as well as major choral works. Since then I have sung temporarily in several other choirs. In addition to singing, I spend my free time travelling, reading, doing yoga and re-connecting with friends and family.
Hanne Ristevirta (Finland – Soprano)
I come from Finland. I moved to Brussels in 2009, and have worked in the European Parliament for three years now. I used to sing in choir in Finland, and I am very excited to restart this hobby in Brussels! I also enjoy very much baking, traveling and reading.

Ellie Stylianou (Cyprus – Soprano)
I came to Brussels in July 2011 to work for the Permanent Representation of Cyprus to the EU. The last time I sang in a choir was when I was in high school so I am very excited to start afresh in a choir of such high standard. I look forward to the experience and to meeting more of you in the coming rehearsals.

Etienne de Ranter (Belgium – Ténor)

Geert Kayaert (Belgium – Bass)
Born in Anderlecht, I am living in Dendermonde with Ann and my children Gertjan (20) and Florian (18). My passion is … music. What else! I’ve played the violin for almost 30 years, sometimes in a regional symphonic orchestra and a folk orchestra. For the last six years I’ve combined singing in a chorale in Aalst with an ensemble in Dendermonde. Other passions are cycling and walking. Great Britain is my favourite cycling destination. I work for SABAM, the authors’ society of Belgium.

Peter Laruelle (Belgium – Bass)
Hi, I am 39 and spend my days as a business controller at Bridgestone. I live in Heverlee and music is an important part of my life. I sing in the choir Koordinaat in Leuven, and take voice classes. I’ve already been a member of the BCS for a couple of years. I’ve also sung in the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay (Florida, USA), Voice of Freedom (Paris, France) and a couple of other choirs. The most memorable production I’ve enjoyed so far was David Fanshawe’s African Sanctus, in St Petersburg, Florida, in 2000.

Klaus Winkler (Germany – Bass)
I’m German and have been singing in all kinds of choirs since I was 16 or so (bass 1). My wife and I came to Brussels in 1999 and since then I have been thinking about joining a choir again. And now is the moment to do so! I look forward to the rehearsals and the concerts, and talking to you during the breaks.

We welcome back Katalin Mate (Hungary – Soprano) and Florian Horner (Austria – Bass)
A tribute to Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau

For the last sixty years, his voice has never left me. DF-D had, in particular, something exceptional: he combined the music and text to perfection when it came to leading roles in opera; even more so to Lieder. He considered the music as a method to showcase the text... He insisted on singing and pronouncing the consonants, whereas so many singers, especially women, tend to sing only the vowels, which makes the texts incomprehensible.

In addition, unlike so many others, he didn’t hold to a repertoire but to a musical epoch. Certainly, admittedly, he dominated the renditions of Schubert, Schumann, Hugo Wolff and Brahms. But he also contributed towards promoting his contemporaries, going so far as to commission new works! His most heartrending performance was that of King Lear, a version that Aribert Reimann had written at his suggestion...

Mozart, Verdi, Wagner and Berg are only some of the composers whose operas have been marked by his performances; although the memory he leaves is, above all, one of a singer and performer of recitals! But this overlooks even more his sense of human tragedy. He was the first to sing in German in Israel, respecting the horrors of the past but with an implicit plea for rejecting a collective, hereditary sense of guilt. Until that point, even the Ode to Joy from the Ninth Symphony had been performed in English. He himself had also sung in Hebrew at times. Benjamin Britten chose the German baritone when creating his War Requiem, an overwhelming work, performed for the first time on 30 May 1962 for the reconsecration of Coventry Cathedral, which was destroyed in the terrible bombing of the city by the Luftwaffe on 15 November 1940.

Fischer-Dieskau first stopped singing opera, and then recitals, but all the while continued to conduct, to paint (several exhibitions have shown his talent) and, above all, to train new singers in master classes that were full of smiling understanding.

In 1985, for his 60th birthday, a German editor published a book with the text in German but with the title in French: Hommage à Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. They asked me to contribute. My ‘letter’ to DF-D ended thus: “You are surely not at the end of your life. But that’s not the only reason you should make an effort to move towards it (in the songs that call death to remove the burden of misfortunes from the past). In your life, you have always been able to experience the joy of providing pure joy for others, which allows you to escape from the internal and external desert; that is, at the same time to leave oneself and achieve a sense of internal depth. Only music gives us this double possibility, thanks to the great mediators who are the performers.”

DF-D, indeed, considered himself a simple servant of the works that he had chosen to interpret...he did not seek great applause intended for himself, but the emotional and joyful bond of the audience with the character presented by the singer. A vast number of recordings are available to us.

Alfred Grosser – La Croix – 30 May 2012
A bit of audacity was necessary to open our last concert of the 2011-12 season with Peteris Vasks’ *Dona Nobis Pacem* (for which the composer himself gave us some advice on pronunciation!), even if the main work on the programme was Haydn’s *Nelson Mass*, well known by the audience.

The work of the Latvian composer impresses the audience, judging by the applause after our performance. Elgar's *Serenade* sounds nice, but nothing more. Haydn's work is brilliant; it is probably his best mass. Despite her beautiful voice and real vocal agility, Sarah Van Mol cannot always be heard above the orchestra, and Kairouven Seeger sounds more baritone than bass. Ines Carsauw (alto) and Joris Bosman (tenor) fare much better. The audience, larger than expected, is visibly happy. A great evening, despite the deplorable acoustics of the church, which destroys the chance for any nuance.

There are shortened holidays for the choir as 50 of us come together on 30 August to quickly learn a varied programme that includes several national anthems. Our friend Andrew Kong strives to teach us how to correctly pronounce the words of the Chinese anthem. Many thanks, Andrew!

Thursday, 6 September: at the Square at 2.30 pm for the dress rehearsal. Choir and orchestra are held squashed behind a movie screen used to enlarge the faces of the speakers. We are doing our best to rehearse: the screen keeps going up and down, the musicians in the orchestra can’t hear themselves, the rostrum is misplaced, the lighting still needs working on, etc ... Pierre-Yves Gronier keeps his sense of humour, so essential in these circumstances.

5 pm: the ceremony starts, enhanced by the presence of Princess Astrid of Belgium. Solemnity, flags, introductions, (too?) long speeches interspersed with music. A knowledge of English is not Laurette Onkelinx’s strong point. Pierre-Yves Gronier’s beat is very accurate for the orchestra, giving us total confidence in him. The quartet of soloists is more than adequate. A final triumph – easy, given the repertoire. As we exit, Mr Gronier congratulates us warmly. But quickly, we must go – we have a rehearsal tonight!

**We’re on YouTube! But that’s old news; you knew that ... Didn’t you?**