

CONCERT PROGRAM

FAKS Sings Vol.1

Thursday, 08.05.2025

20:00 - Opening Concert at the Church of St. Mary by the Sea, Vrsar

Friday, 09.05.2025

18:30 - Show Concert at Spomen Dom, Pazin

Saturday, 10.05.2025

18:00 - Concert of Friendship at MMC Hall, Rovinj

18:00 - Concert of Friendship at the Church of St. Mary by the Sea, Vrsar

FAKS Sings Vol.2

Thursday, 15.05.2025

20:00 - Opening Concert at the Church of St. Mary by the Sea, Vrsar

Friday, 16.05.2025

18:00 - Concert of Friendship at the Italian Community Hall, Poreč

18:00 - Concert of Friendship at the Church of St. Mary by the Sea, Vrsar

Saturday, 17.05.2025

18:00 - Show Concert at Spomen Dom, Pazin

Dear friends of choral music,

Welcome to the spring edition of **FAKS festival – Festival of amateur cultural creation 2025**, dedicated to the beauty of choral music. Festival is taking place in Croatia, beautiful cities in Istria such as **Vrsar, Rovinj, Poreč and Pazin**. **FAKS festival** is a festival of art and cultural lovers, festival of friendship, connection between local and international performers, connection with local and international audience, festival of inspiration, innovation, new modern creation, festival that celebrates artwork of amateurs and culture itself. In ten years, **FAKS festival** became a meaningful and important event for all its participants, primarily because it gives people the opportunity to test their abilities, to believe in themselves. Therefore, all participants are presenting their tradition, their cultural heritage as well as their rituals and habits in spirit of promotion of the topics high on the agenda of Europe. The language of the choral music is easy to understand and clear to everyone, it helps to convey emotions and experiences, and it is an expression of freedom, positive energy and inspiration.

I would like to thank Maistra Hospitality Group, Touristic board of Rovinj and Touristic board of Vrsar for their support.

In the name of **FAKS festival** team, I wish to all participants a creative success, overcoming all difficulties and tireless energy in reaching new horizons, new heights for the benefit of the world's culture!

Ines Kovačić Drndić
President and artistic director
FAKS festival



PUERI SCHOLARI, HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ, CZECH REPUBLIC



Pueri Scholari is the preparatory choir of the renowned Czech Boys Choir Boni Pueri, one of Europe's leading boys' choirs with a tradition dating back to 1252. Based in the Czech Republic, Pueri Scholari prepares young singers aged 4 and up for international stages. As part of Boni Pueri, the choir has contributed to over 4,500 concerts worldwide and collaborated with top orchestras and artists. The choir is known for its excellence in classical, sacred, and contemporary repertoire and continues to represent Czech musical heritage at prestigious venues and festivals around the globe.

PÉCS HIGH SCHOOL OF ARTS CHOIR, PÉCS, HUNGARY



Choir has been active since the founding of the school. From 1984 to 2023, the choir was led by János Jánosné Rába Mária Bontovics, and in September 2023, Dr. Tibor Hoffner took over as the new choirmaster. The choir regularly performs at city, county, and school festivals, concerts, and choir festivals. Its repertoire mainly includes Romantic and 20th-century works. The choir has received the title of "Choir of the Year" several times and has performed in Germany, Poland, Austria, Transylvania, Croatia, and Serbia.

IDICA CHOIR, CLUSONE, ITALY



Choir Idica (Italian Choir of Alpine Songs) was founded 68 years ago in Clusone, an historic city rich in tradition and folklore. The choir's repertoire includes Alpine songs by composers such as Bepi De Marti, Marco Maiero, Kurt Dubiinsky, and Pigarelli, as well as songs in foreign languages learned for various international tours. Over the years, the choir has performed in countries like Israel, Mexico, USA, Brazil, Thailand, Argentina, and many others, becoming an ambassador of Alpine music and traditions. After Choir Master Dubiinsky, the choir was led by Gianluigi Bigoni, who passed away prematurely. The current choir master is Gianlorenzo Benzoni.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR FERE ANGELI, STRAKONICE, CZECH REPUBLIC



Fere Angeli (or "Almost Angels") have been singing in Strakonice since 2002. Currently, the choir consists of 50 members aged 10 to 15, most of whom also play an instrument at the music school. The choir performs regularly in Strakonice and its surrounding areas and participates in competitions both at home and abroad. The repertoire mainly includes variations of folk songs and 20th-century music. The children rehearse once a week, on Friday afternoons, and occasionally attend weekend-long practice sessions outside the town. The choir's main goal is to create a fun environment where the children enjoy singing and bring joy to themselves and their audience.

MATHIAS CHILDREN'S CHOIR, PÉCS, HUNGARY



Mátyás Király Street Elementary School is the oldest school in Pécs, celebrating its 300th anniversary in 2022. As a key center of Zoltán Kodály's musical pedagogy heritage, our choir focuses on performing works by 20th-century and contemporary Hungarian composers, while also introducing classical and Hungarian folk music. The choir has consistently earned the highest "Gold" rating in national choir assessments and was named "Choir of the Year" in 2018, 2023, and 2024. It has also participated in international competitions and festivals.

CANTABELLA CHOIR, PÉCS, HUNGARY



CantaBella Choir was founded in 2022. Although a relatively young group, its members have a strong background in choral singing. As former students of Mátyás Király Street Primary School in Pécs, they reunited to celebrate the school's 300th anniversary, contributing to the prestige of the grand gala. Afterward, some members returned to choral traditions, forming a chamber choir with 15 members. In its short existence, the choir has performed at KórusJam in Pécs, at various local events, and once in Beli Manastir, Croatia. Beyond the joy of singing together, the choir aims to demonstrate to its audience, and the world, that Zoltán Kodály's legacy of music education creates a soul-stirring experience that resonates deeply with music lovers and is always ready to be shared.

VRSAR – ROVINJ – PAZIN – POREČ



INTERNATIONAL CHORAL
FESTIVAL
CROATIA



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Vol. 2 - 15.05.-18.05.2025.

FAKS
FESTIVAL AMATERSKOG
KULTURNOG STVARALAŠTVA
FESTIVAL OF AMATEUR
CULTURAL CREATION



SPONZORI



Turistička zajednica
grada Rovinja-Rovigno
Ente per il turismo
della città di Rovinj-Rovigno



Participants

TRICHIANA POLYPHONIC CHOIR, TRICHIANA, ITALY



Trichiana Polyphonic Choir was established in 1983. Currently the choir is directed by Maestro Stefano Bittante and is composed of 23 choir members. It has a repertoire of both popular and sacred and liturgical music. In 2013 the choir celebrated its 30th anniversary with a great concert in Trichiana, on the occasion of the Literary Prize "Trichiana Paese del libro", held by the choir and orchestra "In Musica Gaudium" of Oderzo, directed by Maestro Battista Pradal. In 2016 and 2018 the choir participated in the FAKS Festival in Croatia.

CANTEMUS MIXED VOICE CHOIR, NYÍREGYHÁZA, HUNGARY



Cantemus Mixed Voice Choir, founded nearly 25 years ago by Dénes Szabó, is one of Hungary's top choirs. Comprising university students and professionals, many of whom are alumni of the Kodály Zoltán Primary School, the choir regularly performs with leading Hungarian orchestras and has won several international Grand Prix awards, including in Budapest, Gorizia, Tolosa, and Cantonigros (Spain). Their repertoire spans from Renaissance to contemporary choral music, with performances broadcast on radio and TV. Since 1998, the choir has been conducted by Soma Szabó, a Liszt Prize winner. He also leads the Cantemus Youth Choir and Boys' Choir, teaches at the University of Nyíregyháza, and directs the Szabolcs Symphonic Orchestra. Szabó is a sought-after international juror and masterclass conductor.

BRIDGE CHORUS, CARDIFF - BRISTOL, UNITED KINGDOM



Bridge Chorus is a UK-based amateur choir, uniting singers from Roath Community Choir in Cardiff, Wales, and City Voices in Bristol, England. Their name reflects the long bridge connecting the two countries, symbolizing their musical bond. Under the direction of Ben Pinnow, Musical Director of both choirs, Bridge Chorus has performed at the FAKS festival on three previous occasions—in 2018, 2019, and 2023. Their love for the festival has brought them back once again. With a shared passion for singing and traveling, the choir embraces the festival as a perfect opportunity to come together, perform their favorite songs, and connect with fellow music lovers from around the world.

RETRO MIXED CHOIR, LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA



RETRO Mixed Choir was founded in December 1976. Over its 48-year history, many singers have been part of the choir, and it currently has 35 active members. Since December 2010, the choir has been led by Denis Robnik, Mag. Prof. of Musical Arts. Each year, the choir organizes one or two premiere concerts and several performances for various occasions in Ljubljana and other locations across Slovenia. They have also performed internationally in France, the Netherlands, Italy, Austria, Croatia, and Hungary. The choir's repertoire is extensive, featuring arrangements of folk songs, artistic and sacred music from all musical periods, as well as works by both Slovenian and international contemporary composers.

MENDULE FEMALE CHOIR, VRSAR, CROATIA



Female choir "Mendule" from Vrsar was founded in 1996. "Mendule" especially promote the musical heritage from Istria and Primorje-Dalmatia regions, as well as the works of classical music and entertaining Croatian and worldwide music. They regularly perform at cultural and tourist manifestations, where they are often included as organizers of various cultural events in Vrsar. „Mendule“ have been performing throughout Croatia and most of the European countries, proudly promoting the tradition and customs of their region.

MAVRICA MIXED CHOIR, VRHNIKA, SLOVENIA



Mavrica Mixed Choir was founded 31 years ago as an additional musical element to complement the Orkester Simfonika Vrhnika, a long-time collaborator. Originally a smaller ensemble, it has grown into a successful mixed choir, establishing its own independent musical path. Today, the choir consists of 35 singers and has been led by choir master Darinka Fabiani since its inception. Their repertoire spans multiple genres, including pop, ethnic, opera, operetta, sacred, and folk music. Highly active and prolific, the choir regularly performs concerts in Slovenia—most notably the annual New Year's Concert and Springtime Gala—as well as internationally, with recent performances at festivals in Prague and Venice.

CANTEMUS BOYS CHOIR, NYÍREGYHÁZA, HUNGARY



Cantemus Boys' Choir, founded in 1983, consists of selected pupils from the Kodály Zoltán Primary School (ages 10–18), with former members returning as Tenors and Basses. Part of the Cantemus Choral Institute of Nyíregyháza, the choir performs internationally, with tours across Europe. A major highlight was recording Boito's *Mefistofele* with Plácido Domingo. They also won First Prize at the 2019 Tallinn Boys' Choir Competition. Since 2007, the choir has been led by Soma Szabó.

ŠČEDRYK VOCAL ENSEMBLE, ZAGREB, CROATIA



Musical ensemble "Ščedryk" was founded in 2022 and operates within the framework of the Ukrainian Community of the City of Zagreb. Ščedryk is a chamber vocal ensemble dedicated to performing Ukrainian contemporary, traditional, and folk music. The ensemble primarily performs a cappella, with occasional instrumental accompaniment. Its members are Ukrainians from Croatia, joined by Ukrainian exiles who were forced to leave their homes due to the war and found temporary shelter in Croatia. The musical director of the ensemble is Olena Konovalova Štefanić, and the technical director is Emil Bobrek.

SOLENOTE CHOIR, BELLUNO, ITALY



SoleNote Choir is a polyphonic ensemble based in Auronzo di Cadore (BL), a small town surrounded by the dramatic views of the Dolomites in the northeastern part of Italy. The choir consists of just under thirty singers, both male and female. Founded in 2014 as a gospel choir, it has since expanded its repertoire to include a vibrant mix of spirituals, gospel, African music, pop, and rock, mostly performed with piano and drums accompaniment. The choirmaster of SoleNote is Mr. Francesco De Zolt.

SERGIO ALLETTO POLYPHONIC CHOIR, AGRIGENTO - ITALY



Founded in 2014, the Sergio Alletto polyphonic choir brings together choristers united by a passion for music and singing. Its varied repertoire reflects an openness to all forms of vocal expression. Dedicated to promoting choral music as a unifying experience, the choir has maintained an active presence in both liturgical and community events. Since 2022, Maestro Lorenzo Puma, a pianist and director graduated from the Bellini Conservatory of Palermo, has led the choir. His arrangements cover sacred, liturgical, classical, contemporary, and traditional music. Under his direction, the choir has performed at numerous events and festivals, both in Italy and abroad, showcasing its commitment to preserving and innovating choral tradition.

ROŽENICE MIXED CHOIR, PAZIN, CROATIA



Roženice Mixed Choir from Pazin was founded in 1979. Until the end of 2002, the choir was led by maestro Nello Milotti, a renowned Istrian educator, composer, and conductor. Since 2003, its artistic director has been Ines Kovačić Drndić. Over the years, the choir has won several domestic and international awards and proudly celebrates 46 years of continuous and successful work. Their repertoire focuses on the works of Istrian composers and compositions based on the Istrian scale, as well as pieces by Croatian and international composers from all periods of music history, including spirituals, lyrical works, and contemporary music. Their most acclaimed project, "Vjeruj u ljubav", showcases popular music with an orchestra and special guests, performed in the Grand Concert Hall in Pazin.