



# XVIII. INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS MUSIC

XVIII. MEDZINÁRODNÝ FESTIVAL  
ADVENTNEJ A VIANOČNEJ HUDBY

4 - 7 December 2025, Bratislava, Slovakia



## PROGRAM

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BRATISLAVA  
MUSIC AGENCY





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## XVIII. MEDZINÁRODNÝ FESTIVAL ADVENTNEJ A VIANOČNEJ HUDBY

4 - 7 December 2025, Bratislava, Slovakia

**Hlavný organizátor / Organiser:**

BRATISLAVA MUSIC AGENCY

**Umelecký riaditeľ / Festival Art Director:**

Assoc. Prof. Milan Kolena, ArtD.

**Medzinárodná porota / International jury:**

Prof. Blanka Juhaňáková, ArtD. /SK/  
*predsedkyňa poroty / chairwoman of the jury*

Prof. Benedykt Błoński /PL/

PhDr. Milan Motl, Ph.D. /CZ/

Prof. Dariusz Dyczewski /PL/

Assoc. Prof. Milan Kolena, ArtD. /SK/

**Spoluorganizátori / Co-organizers:**

**Hlavné mesto SR Bratislava**

Bratislavské kultúrne a informačné stredisko

Bratislava - Staré Mesto

Spevácky zbor Apollo

**Mediálni partneri / Media:**

Kam do mesta

Citylife.sk

**Fotograf/ Photographer:**

Vladimír Kuric

## PROGRAM FESTIVALU / FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

### ŠTVRTOK / THURSDAY 4.12.2025

19:00 OTVÁRACÍ KONCERT FESTIVALU / OPENING CONCERT

Children's Choir Voci Veloci of the Primary Music School in Szczecin /PL/, Leo Vox /PL/, MPZ Cantus PoPuli /HR/, Mešani pevski zbor Zarja Šentvid pri Planini /SI/, Mixed Choir Echo from Zebrzydowice /PL/, Female Alumnae Choir of Tallinn University of Technology /EE/, Chór Akademicki Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie /PL/

*Jezuitský kostol, Františkánske námestie / Jesuit church, Franciscan Square*

### PIATOK / FRIDAY 5.12.2025

16:00 FESTIVALOVÝ KONCERT / FESTIVAL CONCERT

Leo Vox /PL/, Mešani pevski zbor Zarja Šentvid pri Planini /SI/, MPZ Cantus PoPuli /HR/

*Hudobná sieň Klarisky / Klarisky Music Hall, Farská 4*

17:15 FESTIVALOVÝ KONCERT / FESTIVAL CONCERT

Children's Choir Voci Veloci of the Primary Music School in Szczecin /PL/, Chór Akademicki Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie /PL/, Female Alumnae Choir of Tallinn University of Technology /EE/

*Hudobná sieň Klarisky / Klarisky Music Hall, Farská 4*

18:30 FESTIVALOVÝ KONCERT / FESTIVAL CONCERT

Lusatia consort /CZ/, Studentský sbor Collegium Iuvenum /CZ/, Mixed Choir Echo from Zebrzydowice /PL/, Kodály Zoltán Gimnázium Énekkar /HU/

*Hudobná sieň Klarisky / Klarisky Music Hall, Farská 4*

### SOBOTA / SATURDAY 6.12.2025

SÚŤAŽ SPEVÁCKYCH ZBOROV | CHOIR COMPETITION

*Zrkadlová sieň Primaciálneho paláca, Primaciálne námestie  
Mirror Hall of the Primate's Palace, Primatial square*

Detské zbory do 16 rokov | Children's choirs up to 16 years

9:30 Children's Choir Voci Veloci of the Primary Music School in Szczecin /PL/

Detské zbory do 12 rokov | Children's choirs up to 12 years

9:45 Leo Vox /PL/

Spirituál, Gospel, Pop, Jazz | Spiritual, gospel, pop, jazz

10:00 Children's Choir Voci Veloci of the Primary Music School in Szczecin /PL/

Sakrálna hudba a cappella | Musica Sacra a cappella

10:18 Chór Akademicki Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie /PL/

**Spevácke zbory dospelé | Mixed adult choirs**

10:36 MPZ Cantus PoPuli /HR/

10:54 Chór Akademicki Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie /PL/

**Ľudová pieseň a cappella | Folksong a cappella**

11:08 MPZ Cantus PoPuli /HR/

11:26 Mešani pevski zbor Zarja Šentvid pri Planini /SI/

**Sakrálna hudba s inštrum. sprievodom | Musica Sacra with instrum. accompaniment**

11:45 Lusatia consort /CZ/

**Zbory seniorov | Choirs of seniors**

12:05 Mixed Choir Echo from Zebrzydowice /PL/

**Ženské spevácke zbory | Female adult choirs**

12:30 Female Alumnae Choir of Tallinn University of Technology /EE/

**Mládežnícke zbory do 21 rokov (SATB) | Youth choirs up to 21 years (SATB)**

12:45 Studentský sbor Collegium Iuvenum /CZ/

**Detské zbory do 16 rokov | Children's choirs up to 16 years**

13:00 Be Happy /SK/

**VYSTÚPENIA NA VIANOČNÝCH TRHOCH / PERFORMANCES AT CHRISTMAS MARKETS**

**14:00** Lusatia consort /CZ/, Children's Choir Voci Veloci of the Primary Music School in Szczecin /PL/, Leo Vox /PL/, MPZ Cantus PoPuli /HR/

**15:00** Chór Akademicki Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie /PL/, Female Alumnae Choir of Tallinn University of Technology /EE/, Studentský sbor Collegium Iuvenum /CZ/, Be Happy /SK/

**16:00** Kodály Zoltán Gimnázium Énekkar /HU/, Mixed Choir Echo from Zebrzydowice /PL/, Mešani pevski zbor Zarja Šentvid pri Planini /SI/  
*Františkánske námestie / Franciscan Square*

**16:00 KONCERT NA VIANOČNOM PÓDIU / CONCERT AT THE CHRISTMAS MARKETS**

Lusatia consort /CZ/, Children's Choir Voci Veloci of the Primary Music School in Szczecin /PL/, Be Happy /SK/, Chór Akademicki Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie /PL/, Kodály Zoltán Gimnázium Énekkar /HU/

*Hviezdoslavovo námestie / Hviezdoslavovo square*

**17:00 VYHLÁSENIE VÝSLEDKOV SÚŤAŽE / COMPETITION RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENT**

*Františkánske námestie / Franciscan Square*

**NEDEĽA / SUNDAY 7.12.2025**

11:00 Performance during Mass in the Jesuit Church by Mixed Choir Echo from Zebrzydowice /PL/

*Odchod zahraničných speváckych zborov / Departure of the international choirs*

## MEDZINÁRODNÁ POROTA / INTERNATIONAL JURY

### **Prof. Blanka Juhaňáková, ArtD. /Slovakia/ *chairwoman of the jury***

Pianist and choirmaster, **Blanka Juhaňáková** graduated from Bratislava Conservatory and Janáček Academy of Musical Art in Brno. She lectures conducting at the Conservatory and the Academy of Musical Art in Bratislava. Since 1989 she has been leading the mixed choir Cantus and 1991-2001 she was choirmaster of the Slovak Phil-harmonic Choir, with whom she prepared several notable projects. She participated in the Boris Godunov project at the Salzburg Festival and in Japan, together with Claudio Abbado and prepared the Slovak Philharmonic Choir for the opera Rienzi by Wagner, with Zubin Mehta. In 1994 she initiated the establishment of the professional male vocal ensemble, Octet Singers, with whom she has recorded three CDs. In 2000 she became the Chairwoman of the Commission for Choir singing in Slovakia for the National Education Centre. She is a regular member and chairman of professional juries at choir festivals and competitions both home and abroad. Since 2002 she has been a member of the Commission for Concert Artists for the Music Fund and since 2003 a member of the Artistic and Scientific Council of the Musical and Dance Faculty of Academy of Musical Art in Bratislava. As a conductor and chamber musician she regularly performs in Slovakia and abroad (Belgium, France, Greece, Japan, South Korea, Luxembourg, Germany, Spain, Austria, Switzerland and the USA). In April 2005 she made her succesfull debut in the Rudolfinum in Prague with the Prague Philharmonic Choir and with the Symphony Orchestra of the Czech Radio in Verdi`s Requiem with the conductor Ondrej Lenárd.



## MEDZINÁRODNÁ POROTA / INTERNATIONAL JURY

### **Prof. Benedykt Błoński /Poland/**

Benedykt Błoński graduate of the Fryderyk Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw. Currently, he is working with the choir of the University of Warmia and Mazury. Since 2009, he has led the Choir CANTORES VARIENSES for Warmia and Mazury Philharmonic. For his artistic and teaching activities he has been honoured with numerous prestigious Awards such as the Gold Cross of Merit, individual awards of the 1st degree of the Rector of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, and many others. His achievements include recording of 13 CDs. Benedykt Błoński has also conducted hundreds of concerts in Poland and abroad (e.g Greece, Ireland, United Kingdom, Belgium, France, the Vatican, Italy, Spain, Germany, Russia, Mexico,



Argentina), performing Polish and foreign music, including premiere performances. He has held positions in artistic councils and juries of numerous choral competitions and festivals, both domestic and international. Benedykt Błoński has been an artistic director of international choral workshops “Eurochor 2001”, the artistic director of the Polish - German Choral Academy “In terra pax”, the artistic director of the F. Nowowiejski International Choir Festival. He is a member of the International Choir Olympic Council. He lectures at the Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz and the National Centre for Culture in Warsaw. Professor Błoński currently holds a position of the Dean in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Warmia and Mazury.

### **PhDr. Milan Motl, Ph.D./Czech Republic/**

PhDr. Milan Motl, Ph.D. (\*1977) is one of the most prominent choirmasters of youth choirs. He is a graduate of the University of Hradec Králové in the field of music education, history and solo singing. He studied choir conducting as part of choir management and extended his skills in orchestra conducting in Prague in Jiří Portych. He accomplished his doctoral studies at the University of Ostrava and in Charles University in Prague. He gained his first choirmaster experience in the Bonifantes Boys' Choir Pardubice (1999-2003). Since 2002 he has been the artistic director of KOS Mixed Choir and KOKOS Chamber Choir associated to the Pedagogical School in Litomyšl. Under his leadership, KOS won a number of gold medals at national as well as international competitions and festivals. During his career Milan Motl was awarded several special jury awards for his choirmaster's work (e.g., for performing a compulsory composition, dramaturgy, conducting performance). The Union of Czech Choirs (UČPS) praised him with the National Award Choirmaster Junior (2012) for extraordinary choirmaster achievements. KOS choir won the National Award The Choir of the Year (2018). The City of Litomyšl awarded Milan Motl the City Council Plaque for his merits to community in the



field of education and culture (2013). Milan Motl is also active in singing and music events organization. He has been an artistic director of the international choral Festival of Songs Olomouc (since 2023). He works as a voice consultant and music director. He is a chairman of the Association of Music Teachers, a member of the UČPS Music Commission and of NIPOS-ARTAMA Prague Professional Council for youth choir singing. He is repeatedly invited to the juries of solo and choir singing competitions and as a lecturer of choirmaster courses and choral workshops in our country and abroad.

**Prof. Dariusz Dyczewski /Poland/**

**Prof. Dariusz Dyczewski** was appointed methodology adviser by the Polish Minister of Culture and National Heritage (2014-2017) and served as President of the Polish Choir and Orchestra Society during the same period. In 2011, he received the title of Professor of Music Arts from the President of Poland. Since 2010, he has been a consultant at the Centre of Artistic Education in Warsaw and, since 2006, Artistic Director of the International Festival of Choir Songs in Międzyzdroje. He heads the private Primary and Secondary Music Schools founded by Leonard Piwoni in Szczecin and has chaired the Polish Association of Choirs and Orchestras in Szczecin since 2003. From 1991 to 2010, he taught at the Music Academy in Poznań (Szczecin branch), where he served as Dean of the Department of Music Education, and also lectured in Bydgoszcz as well as in Austria, Italy, and the Canary Islands. Founder and conductor of the Children's Choir Don-Diri-Don and the Boys' Choir Pueri Cantores of Polish Television in Szczecin, which he continues to lead, he has earned numerous awards and performed across Europe, North America, Asia, and Australia, including in the National Philharmonic Halls in Warsaw, Szczecin, Berlin, and Beijing. He has served as a juror in national choir contests, reviewed academic theses for the Central Commission, and collaborated with the Szczecin Opera House, Musical Theatre, and Pleciuga Theatre. He holds degrees in Music Education, Voice Emission, Choir Conducting, and Cultural Management from the music academies in Poznań, Bydgoszcz, and Wrocław.



**Assoc. prof. Milan Kolena, ArtD. /Slovakia/**

**Milan Kolena** is a conductor, artistic director of Bratislava Music Festivals, Associate Professor of choral conducting and Gregorian Chant at the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava and the president of the Slovak Choral Association. With his choir Apollo and Schola Gregoriana Bratislavensis Milan Kolena visited many prestigious choral competitions. In 2014 he gave lectures at three American universities: Illinois Wesleyan University School, University of Missouri School of Music, Colorado State University. He frequently works as a member of the jury at various international choral and orchestral competitions in Slovakia, Europe and Asia. He was awarded the best conductor special prize of the „Singing World“ choral competition in St. Petersburg, Russia in 2015. In the same year he held choral workshops in China and Hong Kong. He is a member of the International Council of the World Choir Games and Vice President World Youth and Children Choral Artists' Association. In 2018 he received the first place with his Apollo choir at "Moscow Sounds" Festival in Folk Music category and a Grand Prix for Sacred Music category.



## PRAVIDLÁ SÚŤAŽE / COMPETITION RULES

Časový limit jednotlivých vystúpení je 15 minút pre zbory a 20 minút pre orchestre. Program môže pozostávať z adventnej, vianočnej, svetskej alebo duchovnej hudby a cappella alebo s inštrumentálnym doprovodom (klavír bude k dispozícii).

### Diplomy

Súťažiaci zbory a orchestre budú podľa počtu získaných bodov zaradené do jednotlivých pásem:

Zlaté pásmo	90,00-100 bodov
Strieborné pásmo	75,00-89,99 bodov
Bronzové pásmo	60,00-74-99 bodov
Diplom za účasť	do 59,99 bodov
Grand Prix	- podľa rozhodnutia poroty a pri minimálnom počte získaných bodov 97.

Nesúťažné súbory získajú diplom za účasť na festivale.

### Ceny

Pre všetky zúčastnené zbory a orchestre budú pripravené diplomy s označením pásma, ktoré spevácky zbor získal.

Na návrh poroty môžu byť udelené ďalšie ceny súťaže, a to za najlepšie výkony (dramaturgia programu, hlasová kultúra, dirigentský výkon a pod.) Výsledky poroty sú konečné a nedá sa proti nim odvolať.

The time limit of competition performances is 15 minutes for choirs and 20 minutes for orchestras. The program can consist of Advent, Christmas, secular or sacred music either a cappella or with instrumental accompaniment (a piano will be available).

### Diplomas

Competing choir will be placed in following bands according to number of aquired points:

Golden band	90.00-100 points
Silver band	75.00-89.99 points
Bronze band	60.00-74.99 ponits
Participation certificate up to	59.99 points
Grand Prix	according to the jury's decision and with minimally 97 points.

Non-competing ensembles will be awarded Diploma for participation in the festival.

### Prizes

Each choir and orchestra will receive a diploma with the certification of the band awarded by the jury.

The jury may award other prizes of the festival for the best performances from the point of view of e.g. dramaturgy, voice culture, conducting performance etc. The jury's decisions are final, no appeals may be made.

## BE HAPPY /SLOVAKIA/

**Conductor: Mária Jašurdová**

**Be Happy** is a girls' choir from Základná umelecká škola v Púchove. Since 2010, it has been led by conductor Mária Jašurdová. The choir regularly performs at concerts organized by the school and the city. Its repertoire mainly features popular songs and spirituals, while also including classical and folk music, which the singers greatly enjoy performing.

In 2014, the choir and its chamber section achieved a silver band (equivalent to 2nd place) at the Musica Sacra festival. **Be Happy** also represented Slovakia at the Joy of Europe festival in Belgrade, Serbia. In 2016 and 2017, the choir was invited to perform at the festival "Bratislava spievaj". The chamber section earned another silver band at the International Youth Music Festival in Bratislava in 2017. A year later, **Be Happy** participated in the EMJ Neerpelt 2018 festival in Belgium, where it received the 2de prijs in its category as the smallest choir of the entire festival.

In 2019, the choir performed at the International Music Meeting Tokyo as the only Slovak representative of the festival. That same year, **Be Happy** achieved a gold band at the international festival Bratislava Cantat II in the category Spiritual, Gospel, Pop, Jazz.

**Mária Jašurdová** studied choral conducting at the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava (VŠMU) under the guidance of Ondrej Šaray. During her studies, she began working at the Základná umelecká škola v Púchove, where she continues to teach and conduct both student and teacher choirs to this day. In addition to her work as a conductor and educator, she is also an accomplished composer. She has released two CDs of her own compositions: *De profundis* for mixed choir and *Venovanie* for children's choir.

### Competition programme

**Detské zbory do 16 rokov | Children's choirs up to 16 years**

1. Greg Gilpin - A Star Dances, an Angel Sings
2. Americký spirituál, arr. Mária Jašurdová - Oh, Sinner Man
3. Anglická koleda, arr. Mária Jašurdová - Dobrý kráľ Václav
4. Mária Jašurdová - Naše dobré ja



## CHILDRENS CHOIR VOCI VELOCI OF PRIMARY MUSIC SCHOOL IN SZCZECIN /POLAND/

Conductor: Agata Czekalińska

The Voci Veloci Children's Choir of the Primary Music School in Szczecin has been led by Agata Czekalińska since 2007. The choir is composed of children between the ages of 8 and 16. Its repertoire includes classical music from the Middle Ages to contemporary works, as well as popular and ethnic music.

Since 2007, the Voci Veloci Choir has performed in more than 300 concerts, competitions, festivals, and workshops in Poland, Germany, Spain, Slovakia, Hungary, Austria, and Italy. The choir has received over 40 awards at national and international choral competitions. Voci Veloci also collaborates with major cultural institutions in Szczecin, including the Szczecin Philharmonic, the Opera at the Castle, and the Academy of Art in Szczecin. The choir is accompanied on piano by Katarzyna Sochacka.



Agata Czekalińska graduated from the I. J. Paderewski Music Academy in Poznań, branch in Szczecin. She began working at the Academy, where she currently leads the student choir. In 2007, she also started working with the Children's Choir of the Primary Music School in Szczecin.

With her choirs, she has participated in more than 300 concerts, festivals, and music events. In 2015, she earned her PhD degree, and since 2021, she has served as the Dean of the Department of Music Education at the Academy of Art in Szczecin.

### Competition programme

#### Detské zbory do 16 rokov | Children's choirs up to 16 years

1. Traditional Christmas song - Gaudete
2. Flet Foxes/Pentatoniks - White Winter Hymnal
3. Lisa Young - Thulele Mama Ya
4. Caterina Gimon - Fire
5. Mark Lowry, Buddy Greene - Marry did You know

#### Spirituál, Gospel, Pop, Jazz | Spiritual, gospel, pop, jazz

1. Walter Hawkins - Goin` up a Yonder
2. Jason Parker, arr Barret/Egle - Only You
3. Benjamin Russell Hanby, arr M. Brymer - Up on the Housetop
4. Mark Lowry, Buddy Greene - Marry did You know
5. Carl Jenkins - Adiemus

## CHÓR AKADEMICKI UNIWERSYTETU PRZYRODNICZEGO W LUBLINIE /POLAND/

**Conductor: Zofia Bernatowicz**

Since its founding in 1952, the **Academic Choir of the University of Life Sciences** has been actively involved in the field of musical arts. It collaborates closely with the Lublin Philharmonic, performing vocal and instrumental works by composers such as L. van Beethoven, A. Vivaldi, J. Haydn, G. G. Gorczycki, Z. Bargielski, M. Mussorgsky, C. Orff, J. S. Bach, K. Kurpiński, W.A. Mozart, and F. Schubert. It has toured extensively in almost all European countries and has won numerous awards at choral competitions and festivals. The choir actively participates in the city's cultural life, also participating in various events of its alma mater. For its contribution to the promotion of culture, it has been awarded the Medal of the Mayor of Lublin and the Medal of the Marshal of the Lublin Voivodeship.



**Zofia Bernatowicz** is a research and teaching assistant at the Institute of Music at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin and has directed the Academic Choir of the Pedagogical University of Lublin since 2019. She is involved in extensive artistic and outreach work. Her long-standing collaboration with several choirs has resulted in hundreds of concerts and participation in competitions and festivals. From 2003 to 2009, she was associated with the Musical Theatre in Lublin. Under her artistic supervision, the Theatre Choir prepared 20 premieres of operas, operettas, musicals, and concerts. She also served as music director and conductor of performances. For her work, she has been honored with numerous prestigious awards, including the Gold Cross of Merit and the Gloria Artis Medal for Merit to Culture.

### Competition programme

#### Spevácke zbory dospelé | Mixed adult choirs

1. Anonymous, arranged by Paweł Matz. - Kolęda hultajska (A Rascal Carol)
2. Folk pastoral, arranged "Dżerszeń"- Tri stawnnii cari (Three famous kings)
3. Zygmunt Noskowski - Witaj gwiazdko złota (Welcome, Golden Star)
4. Mikoła Leontowicz - Szczedrik
5. Jan Gall, arr, Antoni Zoła - Mizerna, cicha.. (A Miserable, Silent Manger)
6. John W. Peterson - Ta święta noc - Finał Kantaty „Pierwsza Kolęda” (This Holy Night - Finale of the Cantata “The First Carol”)

#### Sakrálna hudba a cappella | Musica Sacra a cappella

1. Wacław of Szamotuły - Modlitwa, gdy dzieci spać idą (Prayer for the Children Going to Bed)
2. Piotr Jańczak - Kyrie
3. Lajos Bardos - Libera me
4. Marek Jasiński - Ave Maria
5. Samuel Maławski, arr. Alexander Kantsberg - Haben Yakir li



## FEMALE ALUMNAE CHOIR OF TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY /ESTONIA/

Conductors: Indrek Vijard & Kristin Pintson

The Female Alumnae Choir of Tallinn University of Technology was founded in 1983 by former singers of the university's Academic Female Choir and conductor Silvia Mellik. Today, it has about 30 members, many of them university graduates. Since 2023, the choir has been led by chief conductor Indrek Vijard and conductor-choirmaster Kristin Pintson. Over its forty-year history, the ensemble has performed across Europe and earned numerous awards, including a Silver Diploma at Tampere Sävel (1995), the title Female Choir of the Year in Estonia (2006), and a Golden Diploma at the Istra Music Festival (2014). Later successes include Silver Diplomas in Provo (2016) and Kalamata (2017), and a Golden Diploma with Category Winner title in Høi An (2019). Recently, it performed at the Choralspace Festival in Berlin (2022) and received a Silver Diploma, Level X, in Calella/Barcelona (2023). The choir's repertoire spans Estonian and international classical, folk, and contemporary works, with several Estonian composers - such as Ester Mägi, Helen Tobias-Duesberg, and Alo Ritsing - dedicating pieces to the ensemble.



**Indrek Vijard** graduated from Tallinn Music High School in 1983 and the Tallinn State Conservatory in 1990 with a focus on choral conducting. Since 1995, he has directed Nõmme Music School and conducted notable choirs, including the EMLS Boys' Choir Kalev, Tallinn University Male Choir, and Väinamere EÜE Mixed Choir. Vijard has received several honors, such as the Presidential Order of the White Star IV class in 2021, and has served as the chairman of the Estonian Men's Song Society since 2019.

**Kristin Pintson** (2001) began her music studies at the Põlva Music School, specializing in piano. In 2025, she graduated cum laude with a master's degree in choral conducting from the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre in professor Hirvo Surva's class. She currently works with the chamber choir Õnneline, the mixed choir of Tallinn Tõnismäe State Upper Secondary School (where she also teaches music) and the Female Alumnae Choir of Tallinn University of Technology. With various choirs or orchestras, Kristin has participated in festivals in China, France, Portugal, South Korea and Turkey. In 2023, she was awarded the Gustav Ernesaks Study Scholarship.

### Competition programme

#### Ženské spevácke zbory | Female adult choirs

1. Cyrillus Kreek - Mu süda ära üles
2. Thomas Morley - April in is my mistress' face
3. Ola Gjeilo - Ubi Caritas
4. Pärt Uusberg - Kõik muutub lauluks
5. John Rutter - Christmas Lullaby



## KODÁLY ZOLTÁN GIMNÁZIUM ÉNEKKAR /HUNGARY/

**Conductor:** Sára Kempfski

**Non-competing choir**

The choir of **Zoltán Kodály Secondary Grammar School** has a rich history and plays a central role in the school's cultural life, upholding Hungarian choral traditions. Originally founded and directed by Csaba Balogh, the choir gained recognition both domestically and internationally. After a period of inactivity, the choir was revived in 1981 under the guidance of conductor Mónika Józsa, who led it until 1994. Nearly 30 years later, Sára Kempfski—a former student of the school—stepped in to lead the choir while still a secondary student herself. With her youthful energy and enthusiasm, she has since brought new life to the group, which she now conducts as a student at VŠMU. The choir's rehearsals, inspired by Kodály's legacy, offer students not only the joy of music but also a deep connection to Hungarian cultural heritage.



**Sára Kempfski** is a young conductor whose passion for music was nurtured from childhood, viewing it as a legacy from her father. After graduating from secondary school, she was accepted into the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava (VŠMU), where she now studies choral conducting. Sára has led her high school choir for three years and also works with children's and adult choirs. For her, it's important that each choir member finds comfort and peace in music. When conducting, she experiences moments where the world seems to quiet down, free from deadlines, responsibilities, and modern technology. Her goal with the Kodály choir is to support music education, which she feels has been undervalued in her country. She believes that music teaches us many things and compares choir singing to the work of bees in a hive—small yet indispensable, with a profound impact on the world.



## THE LEO VOX CHOIR OF LEONARD PIWONI PRIVATE MUSIC SCHOOL IN SZCZECIN /POLAND/

Conductor: Bartosz Rozdeba

Leo Vox is a choir consisting of students from grades 4-6 of The Leonard Piwoni Private Music School (1st Degree) in Szczecin. The choir enriches the school's musical life by performing at many ceremonies, such as the beginning of the school year, Independence Day, and the Christmas Show. The ensemble's repertoire includes vocal and vocal-instrumental works from genres such as film music, patriotic music, Christmas music, and others. In April 2025, the choir was awarded the Silver Band in the 5th National Competition of Children's Choirs, "Filii Melodiis." The choir works under the direction of Bartosz Rozdeba, with the support of Hanna Antosiewicz (piano) and Katarzyna Jurga (instructor).

Bartosz Rozdeba is a teacher, organist, conductor, and singer. He graduated from the Academy of Art in Szczecin, where he completed studies in music education, choral conducting, and church music, as well as vocal performance with a specialization in solo singing. He also pursued postgraduate studies in music pedagogy. He works as a music theory instructor at the Leonard Piwoni Private Music School (1st Degree) in Szczecin and as a lecturer at the Academy of Art in Szczecin. His main musical interests focus on sacred historical music, which he performs as a singer with the Szczecin Vocal Project ensemble.



### Competition programme

#### Detské zborov do 12 rokov | Children's choirs up to 12 years

1. Giacomo Mezzalana - Chiara è la notte
2. Vijay Singh - Medieval Gloria
3. Nino Rota - Speak softly Love (Theme from „The Godfather“)
4. Les Anges dans nos campagnes - adapted from the church hymnal
5. arr. Christopher Alexander and Byron „Bemo“ Myster II, Words and music Katherine K. Davis - The Little Drummer Boy



## LUSATIA CONSORT /CZECHIA/

Conductor: Štěpán Přenosil



The youth vocal-instrumental ensemble **Lusatia Consort** was founded at the Cvikov Music School (ZUŠ Cvikov) in 1996, initially as a flute ensemble. However, in the new millennium, its members expanded to include singers and players of other musical instruments, often even historical ones (such as violin, guitar, bagpipes, drum, accordion, bassinet, and cornamuse). The members have visited 15 European countries on their travels. In 2013, the group won 1st prize at an international youth festival in Neerpelt, Belgium, and in 2015, they became laureates of the Czech Radio „Concerto Bohemia“ competition, followed by the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Radio Award in Bydgoszcz, Poland, in 2016. They founded their own international multi-genre festival, BARABANFEST. The ensemble performs a variety of musical styles, from medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque repertoire to ethnic (folk) and film music.

Štěpán Přenosil, a teacher at ZUŠ Cvikov, has led the ensemble since its founding. He also actively performs with the medieval band Řemdiň, which has been active since 1989.

### Competition programme

Sakrálna hudba s inštrum. sprievodom | Musica Sacra with instrum. accompaniment

1. Adam Václav Michna z Otradovic - Andělské přátelství
2. anglická koleda - What Child is this
3. Marc Antoine Charpentier - Te Deum
4. Shane Mac Gowan, Jenn Finer - Fairytale in New York
5. irská koleda - Wren the wren



## MEŠANI PEVSKI ZBOR ZARJA ŠENTVID PRI PLANINI /SLOVENIA/

Conductor: Matevž Pušnik

Mixed Choir Zarja operates within the Cultural Association Zarja and is one of the key representatives of cultural life in the Municipality of Šentjur. The tradition of choral singing in the village dates back more than a century, while the choir in its present form has been active continuously since 1990. Today, the choir consists of around 30 singers, mostly from the younger generation, which gives it a special energy, freshness, and a modern approach to choral performance. Under the artistic direction of Matevž Pušnik, the choir focuses on diverse and challenging repertoire – ranging from Slovenian folk and art songs to contemporary works by Slovenian and international composers. The choir regularly participates in concerts, festivals, and national competitions, consistently achieving high artistic recognition. In 2022 and 2024, the choir received a Silver Plaque at the National Choral Competition Naša pesem. In addition to its domestic performances, Mixed Choir Zarja enjoys international concert tours, having performed successfully in the United States, Canada, and Spain, where they represented Slovenian choral art and delighted audiences abroad. Today, the choir stands as a vibrant and connected community whose youthful energy, commitment, and love of music enrich the cultural pulse of their home region and proudly continue the long tradition of choral singing in Šentvid pri Planini.



Matevž Pušnik (1994) comes from a small village in the Kozjansko region of Slovenia. He began his musical education at Music School in Šentjur, continued at the First Gymnasium in Celje, and later enrolled at the Academy of Music in Ljubljana. He is currently the conductor of several vocal ensembles. With his choirs, he has participated in numerous national and international competitions, earning various awards, including recognition as a promising young conductor. He performs regularly and organizes a variety of projects with his choirs. He continuously expands his knowledge by attending seminars led by renowned choral conductors such as Sebastjan Vrhovnik, Stojan Kuret, Gary Graden, Petra Grassi, Urša Lah, Ragnar Rasmussen, and others.

### Competition programme

#### Ludová pieseň a cappella | Folksong a cappella

1. Karol Pahor, arr. Gary Graden - Pa se sliš'
2. Tadeja Vulc (folk song from Kozjansko region) - Luka in smrt
3. Jan Triler (folk song from Kozjansko region) - Kam pa greste, lastovice
4. Samo Vovk (from Resia region, Barbara Grahor) - Ta na Solbici



## MIXED CHOIR ECHO FROM ZEBRZYDOWICE /POLAND/

Conductor: Jadwiga Sikora



The Mixed Choir ECHO was founded in Zebrzydowice in 1937 and has continued its artistic activity under the Municipal Cultural Centre since 1995. Its repertoire spans Polish and international works from the Renaissance to contemporary music, including sacred and secular pieces, carols, and folk arrangements. The choir plays an active role in the cultural and religious life of Zebrzydowice and has performed across Poland and abroad in

countries such as the Czech Republic, Austria, Romania, Ukraine, Switzerland, Lithuania, and Italy.

ECHO is a laureate of many national and international competitions and has released 11 thematic albums. Nine master's theses about its work have been written at the University of Silesia in Katowice. The choir is a member of the Polish Association of Choirs and Orchestras and has received numerous awards, including the Gloria Artis Medal (2020) and the Honorary Gold Badge with Diamond (2023). Since 1977, it has been led by Dr. Jadwiga Sikora, with Kazimierz Pietraszek serving as president since 2014.

Dr. **Jadwiga Sikora** is a conductor and educator, formerly with the Department of Conducting and Vocal Studies at the University of Silesia in Katowice. Closely connected to the amateur music movement, she began her career in 1977 as a music teacher and founder of the Children's Choir at Primary School No. 1 in Cieszyn. From 1995 to 2000, she conducted the Women's Choir of the Institute of Pedagogy in Cieszyn. Since 1977, she has been the conductor and artistic director of the Mixed Choir Echo in Zebrzydowice, leading it to numerous achievements.

She has long collaborated with the Pedagogical Center for Polish National Education in the Czech Republic (Zaolzie), organizing workshops for music teachers and serving as a juror for choir reviews and school competitions. Active in the Polish Association of Choirs and Orchestras, she has received many honors, including the Gold Cross of Merit (2002), the Gloria Artis Medal (2012), the Gold Honorary Badge with Diamond of the Polish Association of Choirs and Orchestras (2012), the Cieszyn County Award (2014), and the Golden Cieszynianka (2023).

### Competition programme

#### Zbory seniorov | Choirs of seniors

1. Anonim XVI w. Italia - Alta Trinita Beata
2. Stanisław Moniuszko - Pieśń wieczorna
3. Józef Świder - Pieśń
4. Franz Xaver Gruber, arr. Piotr Gruchel - Cicha noc
5. Joseph Ignaz Schnabel, arr. Arkadiusz Popławski - Transeamus



## MPZ CANTUS PoPULI /CROATIA/

Conductor: Tatjana Merkl

The Mixed Choir Cantus PoPuli was founded in 2014 by its artistic director and conductor, music pedagogue Tatjana Merkl. The choir is highly active, regularly participating in both national and international competitions, where it has earned twelve gold, three silver, and one bronze diploma. In cooperation with the Croatian Choral Directors Association, the choir organizes the international choral competition Istria Cantat and the event Polyphonic Embrace, a gathering of choirs held to celebrate Pula City Day. It also presents its own independent concert, Echoes of Music, which takes place on the feast day of the city's patron saint, St. Thomas. The choir's deep love for Istrian music and culture is evident through its performances and participation in the Festival of Istrian Choral Music - Naš kanat je lip (Our Song Is Beautiful), where it received the Croatian Composers' Society Award for the best performance of a choral work by a Croatian composer. Despite its relatively short history, the choir has entered the recording studio twice. In 2017, it recorded a song for a documentary about KUD Idijoti, the legendary punk band from Pula, and later performed at a charity concert held in the band's honor. In 2019, the choir returned to the studio to record the song Sole with the band Dogma and Saša Antić from TBF.



**Tatjana Merkl** (b. Pula, 1969) is a music pedagogue, conductor, and composer from Pula, active across Istria. A graduate of Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, she has taught piano, solfeggio, and solo singing at OKUD "Istra" since 1998, where she is also Vice President. She composes for instruments, choirs, and klapas, with works published in collections promoting the Istrian scale. Merkl has received awards from the Croatian Composers' Society (2021, 2023), the Croatian Choral Directors Association (Maestra Mentor, 2016), the Istriana Prize (2016), and the European Association of Folklore Festivals (2023). She founded and conducts the mixed choir Cantus PoPuli and the vocal ensemble Nešpula, and has led ensembles such as Rubino, Klapa Teranke, HO Stanko Mihovilić, and KUD "Matko Brajša Rašan." With numerous international prizes and collaborations, she has built a distinguished 28-year career in Croatian choral music.

### Competition programme

#### Spevacke zbory dospelé | Mixed adult choirs

1. Ola Gjeilo - Northern Lights
2. Michael John Trotta - Veni, veni Emmanuel-Ero Cras
3. Branko Stark - Plaudite Manibus

#### Ludová pieseň a cappella | Folksong a cappella

1. Joško Čaleta (Croatian folklore song) - Doleti sivi sokole
2. Petar Lyondev (Bulgarian folklore song) - Erghen Deda
3. Joško Čaleta (Croatian Christmas folk song) - Na dobro vam došlo porođenje
4. Franko Krajcar, arr. Tatjana - Jobrni je, jobrni



## STUDENSKÝ SBOR COLLEGIUM IUVENUM /CZECHIA/

Conductor: Leszek Kalina

**Student's Choir COLLEGIUM IUVENUM** was founded in September 1990 as the choir of the Polish Secondary School in Český Těšín. It currently functions as an artistically independent ensemble within the Polish Artistic Association ARS MUSICA. The choir has 60 members between the ages of 15 and 19. Its artistic director, founder, and conductor is Dr. Leszek Kalina, assisted by M.A. Grażyna Sucha. The choir's repertoire includes works by masters of polyphony, classicism, romanticism, contemporary and experimental music, as well as dance music and arrangements of folk songs. In other words, the choir strives to maintain a wide and versatile repertoire. The choir is a member of the Association of Choirs and Orchestras in Warsaw and the Union of Czech Choirs in Prague.



**Dr. Leszek Kalina** graduated from the Faculty of Education in Ostrava and attended Professor Józef Bok's seminars on choral music interpretation at the Warsaw Academy of Music. Since 1989, he has worked as a music teacher at the Polish Secondary School in Český Těšín. From 1991 to 2003, he served as the artistic director of the Polish Choir and Orchestra Association and also worked as a music education methodologist at the Pedagogical Centre for Polish National Education in Český Těšín. In 1999, he co-founded the Polish Artistic Society Ars Musica, where he continues to serve as artistic director and chairman. He regularly gives professional seminars, lectures, and workshops at various choral and folk festivals and competitions. His numerous distinctions include the Gold Cross of Merit awarded by the President of Poland (2015), the Medal of Merit for Polish Culture (Zasłużony dla Kultury Polskiej) awarded by the Polish Minister of Culture (1996), the Medal of the Polish Ministry of National Education and Sport (2005), the Golden Order of Honour with Laurel Leaf from the Polish Choir and Orchestra Association (2009), the Gold Badge of the Czech Choirs Association (2009), and the Bedřich Smetana Award - the highest conducting distinction in the Czech Republic (2024).

### Competition programme

**Mládežnické zbory do 21 rokov (SATB) | Youth choirs up to 21 years (SATB)**

1. Romuald Twardowski, text: Chamski Hieronim - Bóg w stajence
2. Feliks Nowowiejski, text: Paul Fleischer - Parce Domine
3. Józef Świder, text: Jan Kochanowski - Czego chcesz od nas, Panie
4. Karl Jenkins - Adiemus

## Welcome to Bratislava!



Bratislava is a beautiful city full of culture that is gradually being discovered by visitors from all over the world. It also has the reputation of the city of music, offering its visitors and citizens rich and colourful music events throughout the year. We are happy that you have come to the Slovak capital to live a wonderful music experience too. Welcome and have a good time!

### St. Martin's Cathedral

This Gothic cathedral constructed in the 14th century served as coronation place of Hungarian kings from 1563 to 1830 .

### Primate's Palace

The monumental Renaissance palace rebuilt in Classicist style used to be the seat of Cardinal Jozef Batthyányi. The palace's function is symbolized by a black cardinal's hat that can be seen on the top of the roof. In the past, the palace witnessed many crucial moments in the country's history, e.g. signing of the „Peace of Bratislava“ after Napoleon's victory at the Battle of Austerlitz. Today it houses a precious collection of paintings and tapestries with ancient Greek motives that were discovered by chance during the palace's reconstruction.



### Jesuit Church

The church was built in 1638 in neo-renaissance style and is one of the biggest Bratislava churches. Its simple exterior decoration contrasts to the beautifully ornated interior. The two side naves are adorned with beautiful baroque altars from the 18th century. The main altar with monumental pillars comes from the 19th century. One of the church's highlights is a unique rococo pulpit from 1753 made of unusual combination of wood, lead and gold. The church has a very good acoustics and is often a venue of classic and sacred music concerts.

### Main square

The history of the square dates back to the early Medieval period when there used to be a market and the place of citizens' meetings and trials. The Old Town Hall with Gothic interiors and baroque steeple today houses the city museum and often hosts concerts of classic, jazz or folk music in the courtyard. The square's main highlight is the fountain with the statue of the famous knight Roland who, as the legends say, used to dwell in Bratislava for a long time.



## **KALENDÁR PODUJATÍ | MUSIC FESTIVAL CALENDAR**

Zbory a orchestre 2026 - 2027 / Choirs and orchestras 2026 - 2027  
Bratislava, Slovakia

### **BRATISLAVA SPRING MUSIC FESTIVAL**

Bratislava, Slovakia; 19th - 22nd March 2026  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 11th - 14th March 2027

### **SLOVAKIA CANTAT**

**International Festival of Choirs and Orchestras**  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 23rd - 26th April 2026  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 22nd - 25th April 2027

### **BRATISLAVA CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA FESTIVAL**

**International Festival of Choirs and Orchestras**  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 11th - 14th June 2026  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 10th - 13th June 2027

### **INTERNATIONAL YOUTH MUSIC FESTIVAL I**

**Competition Festival for Children & Youth Choirs, Orchestras and Bands**  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 30th June- 3rd July 2026  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 29th June- 2nd July 2027

### **BRATISLAVA CANTAT I**

**International festival of choirs and orchestras**  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 20th - 23rd July 2026  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 26th - 29th July 2027

### **INTERNATIONAL YOUTH MUSIC FESTIVAL II**

**Competition Festival for Children & Youth Choirs, Orchestras and Bands**  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 20th - 23rd July 2026  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 26th - 29th July 2027

### **BRATISLAVA CANTAT II**

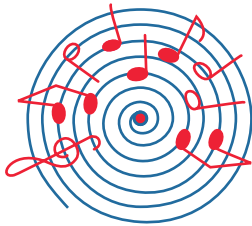
**International festival of choirs and orchestras**  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 8th - 11th October 2026  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 7th - 10th October 2027

### **INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS MUSIC**

Bratislava, Slovakia; 3rd - 6th December 2026  
Bratislava, Slovakia; 2nd - 5th December 2027



# We are celebrating 20 years!



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Since 2005 we hosted:  
more than 1200 choirs and orchestras  
more than 40 000 musicians  
more than 50 countries





# XVIII. INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS MUSIC

XVIII. MEDZINÁRODNÝ FESTIVAL  
ADVENTNEJ A VIANOČNEJ HUDBY

| 4 - 7 December 2025, Bratislava, Slovakia |

## 4.12.2025 ŠTVRTOK | THURSDAY

### 19:00 OTVÁRAČI KONCERT FESTIVALU / OPENING CONCERT

Children's Choir Voci Veloci of the Primary Music School in Szczecin /PL/, Leo Vox /PL/, MPZ Cantus PoPuli /HR/, Mešani pevski zbor Zarja Šentvid pri Planini /SI/, Mixed Choir Echo from Zebrzydowice /PL/, Female Alumnae Choir of Tallinn University of Technology /EE/, Chór Akademicki Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie /PL/

*Jezuitský kostol, Františkánske námestie / Jesuit church, Franciscan Square*

## 5.12.2025 PIATOK | FRIDAY

### 16:00 FESTIVALOVÝ KONCERT / FESTIVAL CONCERT

Leo Vox /PL/, Mešani pevski zbor Zarja Šentvid pri Planini /SI/, MPZ Cantus PoPuli /HR/

*Hudobná sieň Klarisky / Klarisky Music Hall, Farská 4*

### 17:15 FESTIVALOVÝ KONCERT / FESTIVAL CONCERT

Children's Choir Voci Veloci of the Primary Music School in Szczecin /PL/, Chór Akademicki Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie /PL/, Female Alumnae Choir of Tallinn University of Technology /EE/

*Hudobná sieň Klarisky / Klarisky Music Hall, Farská 4*

### 18:30 FESTIVALOVÝ KONCERT / FESTIVAL CONCERT

Lusatia consort /CZ/, Studentský sbor Collegium Iuvenum /CZ/, Mixed Choir Echo from Zebrzydowice /PL/, Kodály Zoltán Gimnázium Énekkar /HU/

*Hudobná sieň Klarisky / Klarisky Music Hall, Farská 4*

## 6.12.2025 SOBOTA | SATURDAY

### SÚŤAZ SPEVÁCKYCH ZBOROV | CHOIR COMPETITION

*Zrkadlová sieň Primaciálneho paláca, Primaciálne námestie  
Mirror Hall of the Primate's Palace, Primate's square*

### Detské zbory do 16 rokov | Children's choirs up to 16 years

9:30 Children's Choir Voci Veloci of the Primary Music School in Szczecin /PL/

### Detské zbory do 12 rokov | Children's choirs up to 12 years

9:45 Leo Vox /PL/

### Spirituál, Gospel, Pop, Jazz | Spiritual, gospel, pop, jazz

10:00 Children's Choir Voci Veloci of the Primary Music School in Szczecin /PL/

### Sakrálna hudba a cappella | Musica Sacra a cappella

10:18 Chór Akademicki Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie /PL/

### Spevacké zbory dospelé | Mixed adult choirs

10:36 MPZ Cantus PoPuli /HR/

10:54 Chór Akademicki Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie /PL/

### Ludová pieseň a cappella | Folksong a cappella

11:08 MPZ Cantus PoPuli /HR/

11:26 Mešani pevski zbor Zarja Šentvid pri Planini /SI/

### Sakrálna hudba s inštrum. sprievodom | Musica Sacra with instrum. accompaniment

11:45 Lusatia consort /CZ/

### Zbory seniorov | Choirs of seniors

12:05 Mixed Choir Echo from Zebrzydowice /PL/

### Ženské spevacké zbory | Female adult choirs

12:30 Female Alumnae Choir of Tallinn University of Technology /EE/

### Mládežnícke zbory do 21 rokov (SATB) | Youth choirs up to 21 years (SATB)

12:45 Studentský sbor Collegium Iuvenum /CZ/

### Detské zbory do 16 rokov | Children's choirs up to 16 years

13:00 Be Happy /SK/

### VYSTÚPENIA NA VIANOČNÝCH TRHOCH / PERFORMANCES AT CHRISTMAS MARKETS

**14.00** Lusatia consort /CZ/, Children's Choir Voci Veloci of the Primary Music School in Szczecin /PL/, Leo Vox /PL/, MPZ Cantus PoPuli /HR/

**15:00** Chór Akademicki Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie /PL/, Female Alumnae Choir of Tallinn University of Technology /EE/, Studentský sbor Collegium Iuvenum /CZ/, Be Happy /SK/

**16:00** Kodály Zoltán Gimnázium Énekkar /HU/, Mixed Choir Echo from Zebrzydowice /PL/, Mešani pevski zbor Zarja Šentvid pri Planini /SI/

*Františkánske námestie / Franciscan Square*

### 16:00 KONCERT NA VIANOČNOM PÓDIU / CONCERT AT THE CHRISTMAS MARKETS

Lusatia consort /CZ/, Children's Choir Voci Veloci of the Primary Music School in Szczecin /PL/, Be Happy /SK/, Chór Akademicki Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Lublinie /PL/, Kodály Zoltán Gimnázium Énekkar /HU/

*Hviezdoslavovo námestie / Hviezdoslavovo square*

### 17:00 VYHLÁSENIE VÝSLEDKOV SÚŤAZE / COMPETITION RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENT

*Františkánske námestie / Franciscan Square*

## 7.12.2025 NEDEĽA | SUNDAY

**11:00** Performance during Mass in the Jesuit Church by Mixed Choir Echo from Zebrzydowice /PL/

*Odchod zahraničných spevákych zborov / Departure of the international choirs*

*Na všetky podujatia vstup voľný / Free entrance to all concerts  
Zmena programu vyhradená / Programme is subject to change*

Spoluorganizátori festivalu:  
Hlavné mesto SR Bratislava  
Bratislavské kultúrne a Informačné stredisko  
Bratislava – Staré Mesto  
Spevákych zbor Apollo



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