FESTIVAL GUIDE

VOCAL ENSEMBLES

FESTIVAL OF SONGS OLOMOUC

54th International Choir Festival

Thu 3 June – Sun 6 June 2027

www.svatkypisniolomouc.cz

Festival organiser

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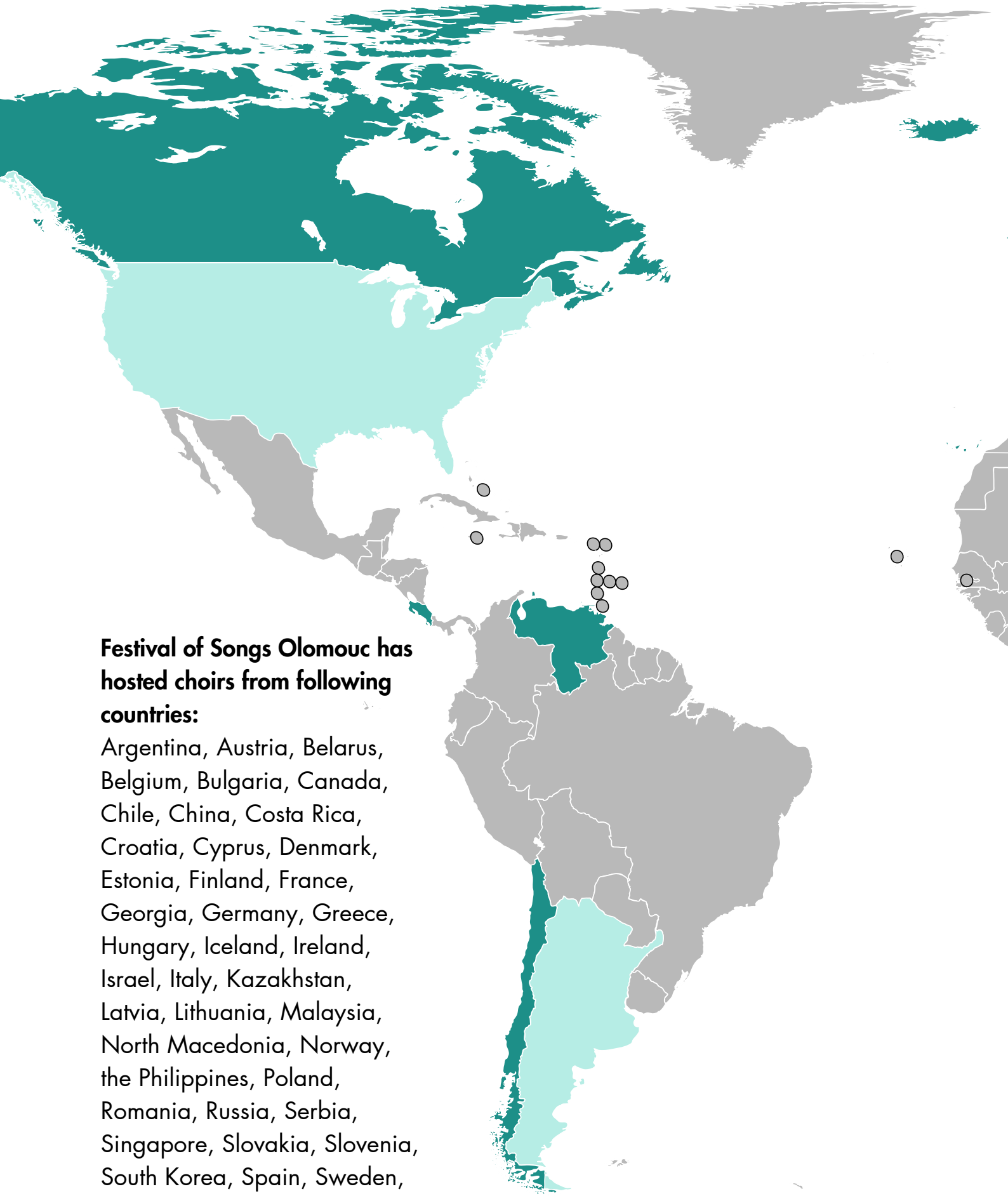
ABOUT FESTIVAL

The International Festival of Songs Olomouc was founded in 1972 under the name of the Children's Choirs Festival Olomouc (the current name was adopted in 1977) and soon became a traditional annual project in the region. It is therefore one of the oldest choral festivals in Europe.

The festival was founded by the choirmaster and music organiser Karel Klimeš together with his son Jiří Klimeš, who developed it further. From the beginning, the festival was organised by the Park of Culture and Leisure association. Subsequently, this activity was continued by the "Svátky Písní" association (until 1998) and then the Festa Musicale association, since 2015 under the leadership of Marek Klimeš. In 2022, the OLArt21 association took over as the festival organiser and, in the middle of the same year, Milan Motl became its artistic director.

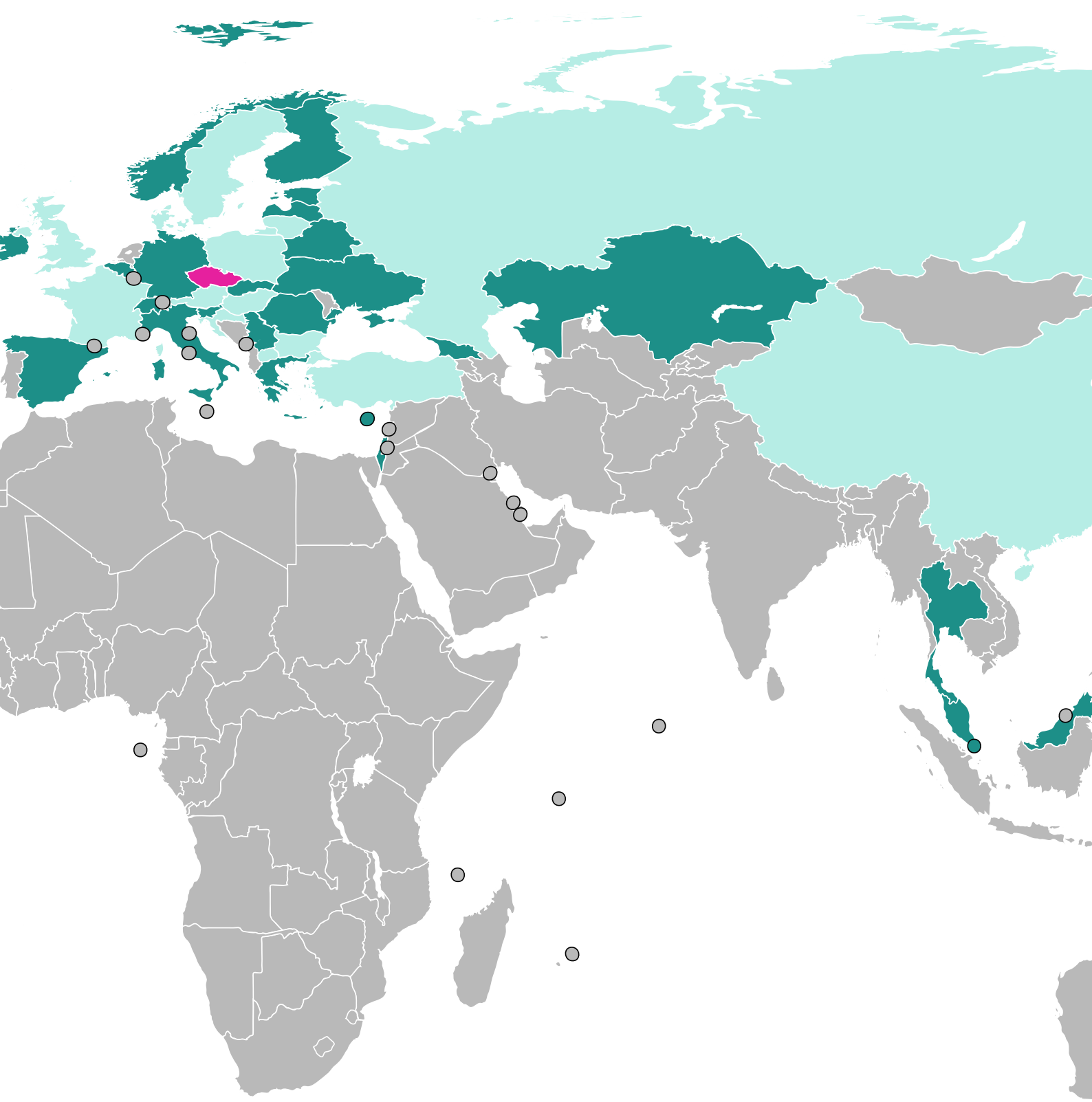
At first, the festival served exclusively as a platform for encounters of children's choirs through shows and concerts. In 1987, the International Choir Competition Iuventus Mundi Cantant ("Youth of the World Sings") was first opened. Later, in 2002, it was restructured and renamed the **International Choir Competition Mundi Cantant**. This opened the competition to all categories of choirs from all over the world.

In 2023, the festival celebrated its 50th anniversary. On this occasion, the **Almanac for the Half-Centenary of the Choral Festival in Olomouc** was published. For the first time, a non-competitive category for senior choirs was opened, making the festival a meeting place for all generations of singers, from the youngest to the oldest. At the same time, the **International Competition Vocalis Bellus** for vocal ensembles was established.



Festival of Songs Olomouc has hosted choirs from following countries:

Argentina, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, North Macedonia, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the USA, Venezuela and the Czech Republic.



The festival has been focusing on amateur music since its foundation.
Its main mission is to:

- **popularise** – amateur and professional music art
- **present** – choral singing in any vocal composition
- **promote** – education, concert activity and musical creativity
- **initiate** – cooperation between artistic ensembles and institutions
- **create** – unique artistic projects and environment for encounters
- **bring together** – people from different countries and cultural backgrounds through music

International Vocal Ensemble Competition VOCALIS BELLUS

COMPETITION CATEGORY

F

Open repertoire

- **Age limit:** There is no age limit in the open repertoire category.
- **Number of singers:** The number of singers is set from 2 to 8 people.
- **Time limit:** The time limist for vocal ensembles is 10 minutes. The time limit excludes time taken by entering/leaving the stage, the time between pieces or the time taken by applause. The total performance time should not exceed 15 minutes. If the time limit is exceeded, the competition performance may be terminated by the jury.



Za5 (CZE) – The best vocal ensemble of 2023, Absolute Winner Competition (1 June 2024, Reduta), photo: Jaroslav Pavel

GENERAL RULES

1. The International Vocal Ensemble Competition VOCALIS BELLUS is open only to amateur vocal ensembles.

2. It is assumed that vocal ensembles are not conducted by their artistic director or choirmaster during their competition performance, as it is the case with choirs.

3. **Technical support and instrumental accompaniment:** It is assumed singing will be without microphones, sound system and halfplayback recordings. An acoustic or electric piano will be available in the competition venue. Other accompanying instruments must be provided by the ensemble.

4. **Competition repertoire:** At least 1 piece must be performed a cappella.

5. **Sheet music and list of competition repertoire:** The list of competition repertoire containing full names of authors, full titles of compositions/cycles and duration of each piece must be provided no later than the deadline date for submitting all the required documents. Competition repertoire sheet music must be sent in electronic form via e-mail. Compositions must be performed in the order indicated on the sent list of competition repertoire. Any changes to the repertoire will need to be communicated to the organisers as soon as possible. Transpositions, unauthorised alterations or other interventions in the competition pieces should be indicated in the submitted sheet music and reported in advance to the organiser.

6. **Acoustic rehearsal in the competition venue:** The maximum time of the acoustic rehearsal is 10 minutes including the arrival and the exit from the stage. If the time limit is exceeded, the rehearsal will be interrupted by the organiser. The rehearsal time is assigned by the organiser, it is binding and must be respected. If the given date or time is not respected, no alternative rehearsal time will be arranged and the participant's right to an acoustic rehearsal in the sense of these rules expires.

7. **Competition venue:** After arriving at the competition venue, the ensemble will immediately announce itself to a member of the organising team. The choir will be assigned a dressing room and will be informed about the schedule of a rehearsal room. The maximum time for the use of the rehearsal room is 10 minutes. The minimum time for the use of the dressing room is 25 minutes, the maximum time is limited according to the current occupancy of the competition venue. All participants are required to respect the competition schedule and follow the organiser's instructions. Dressing rooms (especially in the Reduta Hall) are not to be used for singing, but only for changing and storing belongings during the competition performance.

EVALUATION RULES

1. **Competition jury:** The competition is judged by an international jury headed by a chairman of the jury. The decision of the jury is final and irrevocable.

2. **Evaluation system:** Each juror has a maximum of 30 points at their disposal that are awarded on the basis of the evaluation criteria: intonation and rhythm, expression and style of interpretation, singing technique, dramaturgy of the competition programme and artistic impression. Jurors don't have to comment on all of these criteria in their verbal evaluation. The final score is determined by the average of the points awarded by individual jurors. Based on the final score, choirs and ensembles are placed in the relevant award level (bronze, silver and gold). Award levels are not limited by the number of placed choirs and ensembles.

Honourable mention (1.00–6.99 points)
Bronze medal (7.00–14.99 points)
Silver medal (15.00–22.99 points)
Gold medal (23.00–30.00 points)

3. **Special awards of the jury:** The jury may award a special award for exceptional performances, e.g. for an outstanding performance of a certain composition, vocal culture, dramaturgy and other qualities of the competition performance noted by the jury.

4. **Documentation of the evaluation:** After the announcement of the results, each choirmaster, choir member or representative has the opportunity to participate in an analysis seminar with the competition jury to receive a feedback. The written verbal evaluation of each juror will be sent to the choir in electronic form after the festival.

5. The best vocal ensemble, i.e. the winner of the VOCALIS BELLUS Competition will have the opportunity to perform as part of the MUNDI CANTANT Absolute Winner Competition in the following year's edition as the festival's special guest.

CZECH CHALLENGE

The challenge to include **Czech songs and works by Czech composers** in the competition performances was established on the occasion of the Year of Czech Music 2024 and has remained a permanent feature of the festival ever since. It promotes the appreciation and performance of Czech choral music and highlights its significant place in our musical heritage. The festival's Artistic Board has selected works that showcase its beauty, diversity and value. The result is a representative **list of works** featuring both established masters and leading contemporary Czech composers. The list of these works is available for download on the website.

The best performance of a Czech composition across all categories will be announced at the Absolute Winner Competition. The winner will become the first recipient of the **Jan Vičar Award**, including a cash prize.

FOLKLORE CHALLENGE 2027

The theme and main artistic focus of both the competition and accompanying programme for the 54th edition of the Festival of Songs Olomouc is **folklore** and its various forms. We are announcing a challenge to include **folk songs, their arrangements or artistic stylisations of folk material** in the programme of ensemble's competition performances in the category F.

Vocal ensembles are **free to choose their pieces** at their own discretion and according to the availability of sheet music. We welcome a varied selection of pieces and inspiration drawn from the **folklore traditions of various Slavic nations**.

The best performance of a folklore piece across the aforementioned categories will be announced at the Absolute Winner Competition.

- Ensemble that decides to take part in the Czech or Folklore challenge must designate one nominated piece from its list of competition pieces. The jury will then assess this piece separately within the context of the relevant challenge.
- Ensemble may enter both challenges (even within the same competition category), but a single piece may not be entered in both challenges at the same time. In such cases, the ensemble must nominate two different pieces.

FESTIVAL PROGRAMME 2027

	THU 3/6	FRI 4/6	SAT 5/6	SUN 6/6
Check-ins, arrivals of choirs and ensembles				
International Choir Competition MUNDI CANTANT (children's and youth choirs)				
International Choir Competition MUNDI CANTANT (adult choirs and genre categories)				
International Vocal Ensemble Competition VOCALIS BELLUS				
International Choir Competition MUNDI CANTANT MUNDI CANTANT (category A8)				
Results announcement ceremony				
Absolute Winner Competition				
Festival concerts				
Meeting of choirmasters with the jury				
Workshop				
Masterclass				
Singing Fountains				
Social gathering (children's and youth choirs)				
Social gathering (adult choirs)				

The festival programme is subject to change.

WORKSHOP
FOR VOCAL ENSEMBLES

Give your vocal ensemble the opportunity to develop further musically. This workshop will offer vocal ensembles the chance to work together on singing technique, ensemble coordination and the interpretation of pieces. It will focus on practical skills that help to harmonise individual voices and develop a shared musical expression.

date:
FRI 4/6 2027 (morning)
price: free for vocal ensembles with paid registration fee for the relevant date; other individuals not belonging to participating ensembles 200 CZK/person

WORKSHOP 2027
FOR CHOIRS AND VOCAL ENSEMBLES

Discover the beauty of **folklore** at the 54th edition of the Olomouc Song Festival! Two themed workshops will offer inspiration and new musical experiences to children's, youth and adult choirs. The programme will be tailored to the number of registered participants and the type of choirs, so that everyone has the chance to enjoy this unique musical experience to the full.

dates:
FRI 4/6 2027 (evening) – children's and youth choirs
SUN 6/6 2027 (morning) – adult choirs
price: 100 CZK/person for choirs that have not paid the registration fee for the relevant date; free for choirs with paid registration fee for the relevant date; other individuals not belonging to participating choirs 200 CZK/person

More information about the festival's accompanying events will be gradually posted on the festival's website and social media channels.

SINGING FOUNTAINS

Experience Olomouc in a slightly different way! Embark on an adventurous journey through the city, discover its major landmarks and bring them to life with your singing. An extraordinary trip awaits you, combining exploration of Olomouc with the joy of music and choral singing. Join in this wonderful festival tradition – sing however you like, wherever you like and whenever you like.

date: THU 3/6 – SUN 6/6 2027



Women choir Lilith (SVN)
(6 June 2026, Pöttingeum Hall), photo: Martin Prášek

REGISTRATION FOR THE FESTIVAL

1. **The application** (i.e. completed online form on the website / form at the end of this guide) must be sent no later than: **7 March 2027**

2. After submitting your application, wait for the **confirmation** (automatic reply to the electronic form is only a proof that you have successfully submitted the application). A summary of your application will be sent to your contact e-mail. If we do not confirm your application within 5 days, please contact us.

3. Based on the information provided, a **proforma invoice** for the registration fee will be issued.

   We will also ask you to send us the remaining documents required for your participation in the competition. The list of **required documents** is on the next page. The deadline for sending them is: **31 March 2027**

4. Details of the festival's accompanying events will be published in time. In addition to the choir competitions, we organise **workshops, masterclasses and accompanying concerts** every year. If you are interested in taking part in any of the events on offer, please do not hesitate to let us know.

5. After the application period closes, your itinerary will be sent to you.

- By submitting the application form, festival participants confirm that they have been informed of the above conditions of competition and participation in the festival.
- Applications sent after the deadline will not be accepted (except for the extended application period, which may be additionally announced by the organiser). If the capacity of the competition is fulfilled (even within the regular application period), the organiser may refuse any further applications. Reservation of a place in the competition is not possible.

Required documents:

- **high quality photo** of the ensemble
- brief **profile of the ensemble / biography** (approx. 500 characters)
- **list of competition compositions** containing the full name of the composer, full title of the piece (cycle of pieces), indicated possible use of accompanying instruments, duration of each piece, indicated order of the pieces and possible nominations for the festival's challenges
- all competition compositions sent electronically by e-mail in PDF format
- MP3 or URL link – **recording** of at least one song performed by the ensemble, no more than 3 years old
- **confirmation of payment of the registration fee** (of the proforma invoice)

REGISTRATION FEE

The registration fee for the festival is set according to the table on the next page and includes:

- participation in the VOCALIS BELLUS Competition
- participation in the announcement of the competition results
- participation of the representatives of the ensemble in analytical seminars and other social meetings with members of the jury
- (in)active participation in accompanying concerts and performances
- gift package for the ensemble members
- use of the rehearsal room
- online presentation of the ensemble
- competition diploma and medals
- written evaluation of the competition performance from each juror and results sheet (in electronic form)
- photographs and video recording of the competition performance

Note: Registration fee **does not include** accommodation, transportation or catering for the ensemble during the festival.

REGISTRATION FEE

category F – Vocal ensembles	PRICE
1 DAY (2 DAYS) • FRI 4/6 (+ SAT 5/6)	1800 CZK/ensemble

Activities for each day are listed in the FESTIVAL PROGRAMME.

Note: The dates for the accompanying choral concerts are indicated in the festival programme only provisionally. Ensemble's interest in performing is surveyed via the application form. Expressing an interest does not constitute a claim to inclusion in the programme of accompanying concerts, nor does it oblige the organiser to arrange them. The organiser will decide whether to hold the concerts and their programme, taking into account the interest expressed and the festival's organisational capabilities.

Payment of the registration fee

- The registration fee must be paid by cashless payment against the proforma invoice. Bank charges are paid by the sender. Final invoice will be issued up to 14 days after the festival takes place.
- In case of cancellation of participation 6 weeks before the festival or later, the registration fee can't be refunded and will be credited to the festival in full (i.e. notification of cancellation must be sent no later than 21 April 2027). In the event of cancellation, the ensemble is expected to cooperate in finding a suitable replacement ensemble.

FINAL PROVISIONS

- The organiser reserves all the rights related to the taking of video and audio recordings of festival activities, including their further processing and use. By submitting the application form, the participants of the festival express their consent to the recording and publication of it (including parts of competition performances).
- The festival programme is subject to change.
- Any personal data provided will be used solely to ensure conformity with the competition rules and will not be disclosed to third parties. Once the festival is over and all administrative matters have been completed, this data will be deleted from the organisers database.



Cansona Neosoliensis (SVK)
(1 June 2024, Aula UP), photo: Jaroslav Pavel

APPLICATION FORM
FESTIVAL OF SONGS OLOMOUC 2027

Name of ensemble:
City:
Country:
Name of artistic director:
Number of participants*:

Name of contact person**:
Tel.:
E-mail:
Invoice address:

Chosen competition category: F

Ensemble will participate in the following festival days:

- ☐ Thursday 3 June 2027
- ☐ Friday 4 June 2027
- ☐ Saturday 5 June 2027
- ☐ Sunday 6 June 2027

Are you interested in performing at an accompanying concert as part of the festival*** YES / NO

By submitting this application, I declare that I have read and agree to the general terms and conditions and rules of the VOCALIS BELLUS Competition. I also confirm that I have been authorised to act on behalf of all members of the group by the members themselves or, where applicable, their legal guardians.
Date: Signature:

* Any person who is part of the competition performance is considered a participant (i.e. including the choirmaster, accompanist, etc.
** Contact person must be present at the festival.
*** Expressing an interest does not constitute a claim to the choir's inclusion in the programme of accompanying concerts, nor does it oblige the organiser to arrange such concerts.

CONTACT

OLArt21, z. s.

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Foerstrova 1047/49
779 00 Olomouc

IČO: 14136210

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