THOUSAND VOICES for peace

Peace is about much more than ending war

Flandres Festival Brussels commemorates the Great War
1,000 Voices for Peace in a nutshell

On 9 November 2014, Flanders Festival Brussels will be joined by over 1000 singers and the Brussels Philharmonic to commemorate the Great War. Singers and choirs from countries involved in the conflict at the time will be making an inspiring statement for peace.

Art, and especially music and song, is what binds our world together! The great Polish composer, Krzysztof Penderecki, also subscribes to the urgency of our statement for peace. He has created an oratorio for peace that will be performed for the first time on 9 November. Since his world-famous 1961 Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima, the fortunes of the world have become an inseparable part of his work.

1000 Voices for Peace also gives choirs from Belgium and the world an opportunity to fraternise with each other. Between November 3 and 9, we and many Belgian choirs will be welcoming fifteen choirs from all around the globe. With 15 fraternising concerts in Flanders, Brussels and Wallonia on November 5, 6 & 7, each choir will give colour and its best to the 1000 Voices for Peace narrative.

Herman van Rompuy, president of the European Council, is patron of the project. Herman Van Rompuy has been the head of Europe for two whole mandates. A mission which is just right for him. The 31rst of December 2014 his mandate ends, but not his personal quest. The President is convinced that culture plays an important role for being a bridge between countries and nations. For this belief, the European Union received the Nobel Prize for Peace.

Therefore we want to thank him and honor him for his relentless crusade. A composition assignment is given to one of world’s most important contemporary composers, Krzysztof Penderecki, to invigorate Herman Van Rompuy’s cultural story. Peace and global citizenship at the centre!
5-7 November 2014
Fifteen local fraternising concerts – choirs from Flanders, Brussels & Wallonia fraternise with choirs from all around the globe and sing the best from their repertoires

9 November 2014
35 choirs become ONE!
Koekelberg Basilica

CREDITS

Music: Krzysztof Penderecki – world première commissioned by Flanders Festival Brussels with support from the Polish Institute in Brussels

Music director: Andres Mustonen

Stage director & artistic coordination: Anthony Heidweiller

Orchestra: Brussels Philharmonic

Choirs:
Gents Universitair Koor, Vrouwenkoor Makeblijde (Zele), Knapenkoor In DulciJubilo (Sint-Niklaas), Kamerkoor Furiant (Wondelgem), Vocaal damesensemble Arabesk (Gent), Con Cuore (Waregem), Iepers Kamerkoor (Ieper), Cantores (Brugge), Leuvense Universitair Koor, Jeugdkoor Waelrant (Borgerhout), Octopus Kamerkoor (Antwerpen), Villanella jeugdkoor (Laakdal), Helicon (Lier), Don Boscokoor (Hoboken), Kathedraalkoor Hasselt, Manteliusensemble (Kuringen), Amabile (Neerpelt), Les Pastoureaux (Waterloo), Bozar choir for Singing Brussels (tbc), Koninklijk Atheneum Koekelberg, CAFE LATTE (Choir VUB)
Treenighedskirkens Drengekor (Denmark), Junges Vokalensemble Hannover (Germany), Voces Musicales (Estonia), BA Voice and Dance Choir, University of Limerick (Ireland), Zvjezdice (Croatia), Female choir BALTA (Latvia), Azuoliukas (Lithuania), Suan Plu choir (Thailand), Lautitia (Hungary), Ny AKO (Madagascar), The Chamber Choir of Wroclaw Medical University (Poland), Canzona Neosolium (Slovakia), Australian Voices (Australia), The Choir of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge (Great Britain), to be confirmed: India, the Netherlands, the USA

**Production:** Flanders Festival Brussels
# 1000 Voices for Peace in detail

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1. Project ‘1000 Voices for Peace’

1.1. Concept

In 2014, it will have been exactly 100 years ago that Europe and the larger part of the world plunged into a war that would have far-reaching and irreversible consequences for the entire planet. Old structures and power blocks were destroyed, new states rose, the old world from before 1914 had permanently come to an end.

In commemoration of the Great War, Flanders Festival Brussels is planning a monumental oratorio for peace on 9 November 2014, written for the Brussels Philharmonic and more than 1,000 singers. The singers come from Belgium and various other countries that were involved in the conflict at the time. None other than Krzysztof Penderecki was immediately found willing to compose this new work.

The peace concert on the 9th of November will also reflect on the cultural heritage that WWI left us. We will bring music written by composers during the war that bring to life the atrocities of the war as well as the stories of people from all over the world that have been involved in the conflict and that have marked families and societies for generations up to now. All of this will be given a place in the project, leading to a message of hope brought out by the full choir singing the newly written work of Penderecki.

In the many commemorations of World War I, it is mostly the military facts that are commemorated: battles, bombardments, deaths and the suffering in the trenches. These were terrible events. Millions of soldiers died. 1000 Voices for Peace will use this commemoration to reflect on peace.

“Peace is about more than ending war” (Ban Ki-moon). That is why we want to bring together people from countries that were fighting each other a hundred years ago to form a great choir, a choir that sings of peace.
Most people likely have given it little thought, but the First World War was not only a fight amongst Europeans. More than 50 population groups from more than 50 countries from all over the world were directly involved in the conflict.

Our choir will be the embodiment of these many cultures united, a test of true world citizenship and solidarity between people.

From that perspective we approached Ban Ki Moon to deliver a State of the Union on Peace during the momentous concert as the ‘representative’ of every human being on earth, as president of the world. The UN Secretary-General will talk about how art, singing together and music can contribute to make a difference.

As a symbol for a strong united future we will be establishing a direct connection to the European Space Laboratory during the event and have a conversation with the astronauts stationed there.

Peace, world citizenship and the future. These themes will govern the day. And music, a lot of music. Because on 9 November 2014, more than 1,000 Voices of Peace will be singing.

A day to remember!

1.2. Tradition

Flanders Festival Brussels – Europe (°1969), with a history of more than 40 years, is rightfully considered a unique and important player for classical music festivals in Brussels and Belgium. In addition to periodic events like the KlaraFestival or the European Galas, Flanders Festival Brussels has always taken on large, diverse and challenging projects. For the monumental a Thousand Voices for Peace, the whole team is joining forces and it will be supported by more than 100 volunteers.

1.3. Flanders

Amongst the inhabitants of the 20 municipalities involved, we want to create a local hype using banners over approach roads, house-to-house flyer distribution, clearly visible ads for the local concert in municipal newspapers, a counter on the town square displaying the number of people registered for the concert in Brussels, ... That will offer an incentive for people who want to ‘be part of it’.
The choir world is traditionally a very tightly-knit biotope, precisely because singing unites people. Furthermore, every choir has its own loyal following that will also be attending this event.

We try to create as broad a target audience as possible by, on the one hand, supporting local campaigns in the participating municipalities and, on the other hand, setting up a national campaign. This will include a series of radio and television adds, media partnerships with the printed press (newspapers, magazines) and online channels, street visibility, flyers, posters and billboards, press coverage, communication to specific target audiences like the music world, collaboration with the Belgian tourist sector.

1.4. The world is coming to Brussels

More than 50 countries where involved in WWI: Afghanistan, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Burkina Faso, Canada, China (no soldiers), Denmark, Dominica, Germany, Egypt, the Fiji islands, France, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, Ireland, India, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Luxemburg, Madagascar, Mali, Malta, Morocco, The Netherlands (although neutral), Nepal, New Zealand, Niger, Austria, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Samoa, Senegal, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Slovakia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Tonga, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Czech Republic, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Vietnam, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

- We are setting up collaborations with the tourist sector to establish the event as a steppingstone for individual tourism.

- For the 400 foreign choir members, we are organising a cultural and tourist programme in the week of the Brussels concert. We offer them an introduction to Brussels, Flanders and Wallonia in collaboration with various travel agencies.
The project communication will cover 15 countries carried by 15 embassies, the Flemish Representations, the Belgian Embassies abroad, the international festivals, etc.

1.5. **Artistic quality**

The grand and masterful oratorio for peace, freshly composed by Krzysztof Penderecki for a thousand singers, will be a new reference work with regard to WWI. We can involve our own performers (orchestras, organisers, technicians, etc.) in performances abroad. The production will be a unique diplomatic trump card for Flanders abroad, first to offer foreigners a very constructive image of our community, then as a foreign platform for Flemish delegations (diplomatic, touristic, economic, cultural).

1.6. **The artists**

**Krzysztof Penderecki**

Krzysztof Penderecki (1933) is a reputable Polish composer, conductor and music educator who enjoys a wide reputation. He is known as one of the most leading Polish avant-garde composers, but he also has composed in different styles during the years. Penderecki puts it this way:”My current work is mainly a synthesis from the past, present and is future-oriented.”

The most famous works that Penderecki composed are *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima, St. Luke Passion, Polish Requiem, Anaklasis* and further well known operas, symphonies, chamber and instrumental works... The list is endless! But
besides these works, Penderecki is also recognized for his film music. At first his music was heard in Polish films like *The Saragossa Manuscript* and *Katyn*, but soon Penderecki wrote music for international films like *The Shining*, *The Exorcist* and *Shutter Island*. During his career Penderecki received many national and international awards and honorary titles for his wonderful work.

**Mustonen**

The most famous Estonian conductor must be **Andres Mustonen** (1953). In 1972 he graduated as violinist from the Tallinn Music High School and five years later he graduated from the Tallinn State Conservatory. After his graduation he founded Hortus Musicus where he directs and conducts the ensemble. Hortus Musicus performs on many international festivals and stages concerning old music. As the years past by Mustonen's role as violinist gained less importance because he is mainly active as conductor which provided him work with famous orchestras, theatres and operas. Improvisation and spontaneity are features of his conducting style, like Mustonen quotes:”For me, an orchestra is not something static, but a living organism where the different parts mutually influence and elevate each other positively.” Mustonen conducts classic, romantic repertoires as well as the more modern ones.

**Anthony Heidweiller**

**Anthony Heidweiller** (1961) is a Dutch-Surinamese music artist. He is a respectable opera singer and a talented artistic director and coordinator. Heidweiller started as a student at the Conservatorium of Utrecht, Netherlands, where he completed his vocal studies in 1991.

Besides being a famous baritone, Heidweiller is also known for his musical community projects. In 1997 he founded Buffo Operamakers which is a youth opera company. This project is a collaboration between professional musicians and amateur singers that results in a mixed ensemble of different cultures and backgrounds.

In 2001 Heidweiller started the first youth opera festival ever: Yo! Opera Festival. With this project he intends to make opera less elitist and to bring opera back to
its roots, namely ‘the street’. Yo! Opera Festival tends to make the young audience of children and youth sing, write or even compose. In 2011 Heidweiller launched a new company of Operamakers in order to develop and produce education and participation projects.

1.7. **A unique experience for everyone**

A Thousand Voices for Peace is an enormous building box in which the choirs, but also the local authorities, the festivals, the tourism offices, the VVVs, the culture coordinators and organisations such as Unizo, Voka, etc. act as hosts and provide a warm welcome for everyone who wants join in the emotion of this commemoration. And we can make that group grow bigger every day. 1000 Voices for Peace will definitely act as a **crowd magnet for the recreational tourist**, comparable to what the Magritte Museum accomplished when it opened, but also similar to what a Ronde van Vlaanderen (although we set our sights somewhat more modestly) evokes in all layers of society: **the experience**.

1.8. **Practical: location, programme, etc.**
Flanders Festival Brussels's World War I commemoration project will take place in the week of 3-9 November 2014. In that period, there will be about 15 concerts with the participating choirs spread throughout Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels. To this end, every local choir will socialise with a foreign choir based on shared attributes (repertoire, age, pre-existing links between municipalities and countries, etc.) and these choirs will together give fifteen concerts spread throughout the country.

At the end of the week, on Sunday 9 November 2014, we will be gathering all the choirs – 1,000 singers in all – for one big concert with, as the centrepiece, the world première of the Oratorio for Peace. To get all 1,000 singers on a stage together and to accommodate an audience of 3,000, we have selected as the location the Koekelberg Basilica. The fifth largest church in the world not only offers us sufficient space, this unique location also provides the perfect backdrop for the grand project for peace. The Basilica is a monument that everybody knows and that carries an important symbolic weight, yet it is only because of the overwhelming concert experience of 1000 Voices for Peace that 3,000 people will enter the church for the first time and will come away with an emotional keepsake of their visit.

Because of the national scope of this project, we distinguish ourselves from the numerous local commemoration events. Also, the fact so many choirs and so many national and international partners are involved ensures an increase in the scale of the project.

First, the local concerts cater to the choirs and their supporters, municipal authorities and provinces, thereby allowing us to build the project from the bottom up.

Second, the world première in Brussels presents a concert in a prestigious framework with the presence of dignitaries, representatives of the Flemish and federal governments, the presence of Herman Van Rompuy and hopefully Ban Ki-Moon! Musically, the concert in Brussels will be a must-see event and will include numerous surprise acts, speeches by public figures, the connection to the ISS, the emotion of 1,000 voices accompanied by the Brussels Philharmonic and the spirited conductor Andres Mustonen. The intention is both to attract the audience of the local concerts and to appeal to a more Brussels-centred public.
1.9. **Facts & Figures**

**Singers**
15 foreign choirs at an average of 24 singers each = **360**
20 Belgian choirs at an average of 30 singers each = **600**

**Visitors**
15 concerts at a rate of 300 visitors = **4,500** visitors who buy a ticket for the municipal concerts
1 final concert = **3,000** Belgian visitors who buy a ticket for the Basilica of Koekelberg
## 2. OVERVIEW OF THE CHOIRS & CONCERTS

### BELGIAN CHOIRS

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<td>7. Brussels Region</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Brussels</td>
<td>CAFFE LATTE (choir VUB)</td>
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## INTERNATIONAL CHOIRS

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<td>The Netherlands</td>
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