

# Festival Updates

## LETTER FROM OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

David Heidel

Choral festivals around the world have been given the unfortunate hand of cancellations, postponements as well as alternative forms of a festival such as virtual festivals over the past several years. Some festival organizations have completely ceased, and these disappointments will be felt for years, but we must move on, learning to adapt as we go and make the best with what is given to us. In a recent meeting with fellow festival organizations from around the world, I remember one colleague from Germany stating that “the development of future festivals is now affected by the pandemic, war and climate change, never to be the same again.” We all must now find solutions to new challenges.



## MONTANA INTERNATIONAL CHORAL FESTIVAL



For the Montana International Choral Festival, some of our challenges are quite significant. For example, finding host families to house our international choirs becomes more and more of an effort. We have been one of the very few quality festivals around the world to offer this “free housing and meals” aspect, and when I am recruiting choirs to come to Missoula, it indeed was often a game changer in choirs deciding to participate. Are we now seeing the end of that integral part of our festival? Traveling to Missoula is a huge financial burden for choirs, and anything we can do to help them be part of our community and share their music and lives with us for 5 or 6 days goes a long way in not only their decision to come to Missoula, but hopefully return for future festivals. That is why next year, we will be seeing not only new choirs, but choirs that have previously been to our festival, renewing friendships from the past and creating pathways for world communications via music and stories, smiles, and laughter.

The Montana International Choral Festival has become a highly respected festival and choirs from around the world know of us. This is because of great organization, quality choirs, and a community that reaches out to our choirs as hosts and audience members. We are so excited to be moving forward with our festival next July. Most of the choirs that were scheduled to come this summer have agreed to participate in 2023, which is wonderful news!

# 2023 Choir Reveal!



We are pleased to announce several of the choirs planning to be in Missoula next year (click the links to listen!):

From Colombia, we welcome Zebtysqua Voces;

Baao Children and Youth Choir from the Philippines;

and the Pan African Choir from Uganda

Along with these choirs and many others, the Montana International Choral Festival will once again take its place among the world's greatest festivals.



DONATE TO OUR  
2023 FESTIVAL BY  
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## LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Deb Stapley-Graham



A few days ago, as I was returning to my car after a visit with a friend, I became aware of someone playing percussion across the parking lot where I'd left my car parked under a group of old Cottonwoods. The string of syncopated beats was being played on repeat and became louder the closer I got to my car, yet I couldn't identify the type of instrument being played nor the location of the musician. It sounded like a bamboo slit drum was being played by Gene Krupa. I stopped near my car, turned round to get a 360 view of the parking lot, then happened to look up. I found Gene Krupa in the form of a fluffy gray Northern Mockingbird. He tilted his head back, opened his beak, and played the drum riff one more time, ending his drum concert at the exact moment I turned on my cell phone camera.

luffy Gene gave me an encore performance of cat and dog sounds, which were very good, but sadly, he did not circle back to drumming.

Music is everywhere in Missoula. On any given day one can find exceptional musical offerings. It's easy to find concerts by our symphony orchestra, university chorale, and community band. It's common to find stadium-packing superstars playing locally along with talented local artists. There is music in the shhh-ing of aspen trees singing to each other in the wind, tympani in a summer thunderstorm, and tinkling of water dancing over rocks in a cooling creek. One might even hear a jazz drumming bird in a certain parking lot.

Missoula is so excited to bring the Montana International Choral Festival back in 2023. It is an honor to host some of the most extraordinary choirs from all around the globe. Having to postpone our beloved choral festival has been frustrating, but we are even more eager and ready to celebrate with our community and our visiting choirs next summer. Here's to music in Missoula!



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and updates for our  
2023 Festival

JULY 19-22, 2023!