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**Europa Cantat elects new Board and President and presents programme for coming years
 The two major European choir organizations prepare a merger**

Europa Cantat – European Federation of Young Choirs is happy to announce that Sante Fornasier from Italy was elected as President of the federation as successor of Jeroen Schrijner whose mandate ended after a nine-year period on the Europa Cantat Board. The General Assembly which met in Sofia, Bulgaria, elected a Board of 13 persons from 12 European Countries.

The President will be supported in his work by three further Executive Board members:

Gábor Móczár from Hungary as 1st Vice-President

Fred Sjöberg from Sweden who was confirmed as 2nd Vice-President / Chair of the Music Commission

Jean Smeets from Belgium as treasurer

Further Board members are Séverine Delforge (Belgium), Montserrat Gual (Spain), Guido Helbling (Switzerland), Mihela Jagodic (Slovenia), Reijo Kekkonen (Finland), Jan Schumacher (Germany), Kaie Tanner (Estonia), Thierry Thiébaud (France), Daphne Wassink (The Netherlands)

The General Assembly also approved of the programme of activities for the coming years and decided on a merger of the two major European choral organisations Europa Cantat – European Federation of Young Choirs and AGECE (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Europäischer Chorverbände) into European Choral Association – Europa Cantat. The merger shall be prepared in 2010 and the organisation shall be merged at the beginning of 2011. With the fusion the two organisations wish to bring together the knowledge and experience of two important European organisations, offer the choral world the best possible service, form one major European Choir Federation in Europe and strengthen the position of choral music within Europe.



*After signature of merger contract
 J. Schrijner, M. Scheck, S. Fornasier*

The new Board will work on further developing the federation's strategy, aiming at turning it into an outstanding pedagogical and artistic project, strengthening and consolidating its position in the choral world and ensuring the long-term development and growth of the association. Under the motto "Uniting Youth in Song" the federation shall focus in the coming years on advocating for singing in music education based on the value of singing, collecting, disseminating and encouraging research, promoting activities with minorities and disadvantaged people and offering training courses and further educational activities all over Europe.

The Europa Cantat activities in the near future include in 2010 (the EU Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion) International Singing Weeks in Bonn (Germany), Vic (Catalonia, Spain), Usedom (Germany) and Lignano (Italy), a seminar for children's choir conductors in Örebro (Sweden), a Seminar for Young Composers in Aosta (Italy), the World Youth Choir (Canary Island and Iberian Peninsula), two Hearts-in-Harmony events bringing handicapped and other children and young singers together in Budapest (Hungary) and Barcelona (Catalonia, Spain), the Conference Voices of the Mediterranean in Girona (Catalonia, Spain), a performance of the Poverty Requiem in Bonn (Germany) and further smaller activities.

The brochure with the complete programme of events can be ordered from the Europa Cantat General Secretariat, updated information is available on www.EuropaCantat.org -> current projects.

For 2011 the federation announced the 6th edition of EUROPA CANTAT junior, the festival for equal voice children's and youth choirs which will take place in Pärnu, Estonia, and concerning 2012 preparations have already begun for the festival EUROPA CANTAT XVIII in Torino, Italy.

The General Assembly was hosted by the Bulgarian Choirs' Union which presented several choirs in concert and offered a workshop with Prof. Theodora Pavlovitch on Bulgarian Choral Repertoire. It was combined with workshops around the subject of Singing and Health with Prof. Tores Theorell (Sweden), Laurier Fagnan (Canada) and Harjo Pasveer (Netherlands) as well as the Europa Cantat Youth Committee which had invited the professional choir of blind singers "Petko Staynov" and their conductor Peter Matev. Material from these workshops will be made available on the Europa Cantat website www.europacantat.org.

For further information please contact

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Pictures of the new Board as well as the cover of the programme brochure for 2010 can be downloaded from www.EuropaCantat.org -> Media -> Download Centre for the press



The new Europa Cantat Board

G. Helbling, T. Thiebaut, J. Smeets, M. Gual, M. Jagodic, D. Wassink, S. Fornasier, S. Delforge, K. Tanner, R. Kekkonen, F. Sjöberg, J. Schumacher, G. Móczár