



## **Minutes**

### **Brussels Choral Society Annual General Meeting**

**Date:** Thursday 19 April 2018

**Time:** 9 p.m. – 10.00 p.m.

**Chair:** Levke King, BCS President

#### **1. Opening of the meeting**

BCS President Levke King (LK) opened the meeting at 9.10 p.m. Levke thanked all members for coming and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

#### **2. Adoption of the Agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

#### **3. Approval of last year's minutes**

The minutes of last year's Annual General Meeting were approved.

#### **4. Report of the Musical Director**

In his report, Eric Delson (ED) gave an overview of all the musical programmes that the choir had performed in 2017. He gave very positive feedback on the performances and underlined the choir's versatility that was reflected in the diversity of the programme, in particular in respect to the programming of the full season.

Singing the *Missa Solemnis* was decided upon the request of many choir members and it had been very exciting to perform it in April. The same programme was repeated in Bruges in June with Arti Vocali Antwerp. While the quality of the partners and the acoustics of the Concertgebouw were really good, the musical direction in Bruges had been unfortunately disappointing. Eric underlined the success of the December concert with Nathalia Binder and the *Mozart Requiem*. The programme provided for a beautiful evening with a full house where both choir and orchestra achieved the highest level of performance. In the context of the Fauré concert in March Eric underlined the progress the tenor section had made thanks to the dedicated voice coaching. The Board might consider offering specific coaching sessions also for the other sections, possibly on an occasional basis. Finally, ED explained the idea of regionally themed summer concerts, which he would like to continue for the BCS summer concerts.

ED underlined that BCS was always looking for new partners and orchestras, which was not always easy as preparations had to start a long time in advance. Collaboration with the Philharmonischer Chor Bonn was confirmed with two joint performances of the *Verdi Requiem* in Bonn and Brussels. ED informed the choir of a recent request from Studios Cantandi, a choir based in Berlin, to sing the *Berlioz Requiem*, tentatively in May and fall 2019.

Finally ED pointed out how particularly fruitful the Spa weekend had been in discovering new singing techniques and ideas. He underlined the high level of the workshop leader, Kimberly

Dunn Adams, Assistant Professor for Choral Music at the College of Music at Western Michigan University.

## **5. President's Report**

Levke King (LK) explained to the members and especially the newcomers the role of the board and the committee that ensured the good governance of the BCS and allowed for the BCS to work like a “well-oiled machine”. The most consuming activity was the preparation of concerts, which also involved a big financial responsibility. Increasingly, communication took place by email. Both the Committee and the Board met four times each in the past season. LK underlined that the BCS had successfully completed the transfer to being digital. The minutes of the meetings and all other relevant documents were archived electronically using Dropbox, which had improved transparency, ensured 'business continuity' and would ease any kind of change in the composition of the Committee or the Board. The website was the main source of information for members and the representative image of the choir. General information to the choir was mainly passed by email to the members in addition to the general announcement at rehearsal. LK referred to the “pilot project” that had started with the tenors, to use part of our revenues for musical training and which she would like to see to continue developing in the future. She also mentioned the co-organisation of concerts (for example with the BPhO for Fauré) as a learning experience with an overall positive result. Contacts had continued well with the Bonn choir and would finally come to fruition with the joint concerts in Bonn and Brussels. The Bonn choir would join in the BSC for its annual workshop in Spa in order to prepare for the first concert on 9 November. It would be a very welcome occasion to get to know each other.

Regarding membership, the choir had grown again (15 new members since April 2017), represented 20 nationalities and members in the age between 25 and 77. LK underlined how important it was that the members were actively involved and encouraged members to lend a hand here in there whenever possible, also on an ad hoc basis (preparation of summer party, support for Spa workshop etc.)

Finally, LK thanked the musical director for his excellent musical leadership and for his relentless energy and motivation, the BCS Board and general team for their cooperation and support and all BCS members for their commitment. A special word of thanks went to Felicitas Hevicke, outgoing Vice-President Internal Affairs, and to Volker Brockmann (not present), outgoing BCS Secretary, for all the work done for the choir. Levke finally announced that this would be her last year as President and that she hoped to ensure a smooth transition in the coming year.

## **6. Treasurer's Report, including approval of the 2017 Annual Accounts and 2018 Budget**

Paul Bibauw (PB) explained the key elements of the financial result of 2017, which closed with a smaller loss than expected. He explained the difficulty in estimating figures concerning the potential sale of concert tickets, which were, however, always budgeted very conservatively. The Beethoven concert (Missa Solemnis) had been a loss whereas the Mozart December concert, with a completely sold out hall in BOZAR, was very good for BCS finances and had resulted in a 10.000 EUR profit. The last workshop in Spa also had a positive result, as the workshop leader had not asked for a fee, just for travelling expenses. For 2018, the draft budget showed a profit considering the popularity of the Verdi Requiem and the fact that the BCS would receive a fee of 5000 EUR for the Bonn concert. For 2018 the purchase of a digital piano would be included as an exceptional expenditure. In this context Eric also referred to the sound recording of Mozart, which had been delayed for several reasons but should be available soon. PB explained that all aspects of the concerts are budgeted for and pointed out that upon demand more detailed summaries were available for each concert should members be interested.

LK thanked PB for the presentation of the annual accounts and Alison Weinel for assisting Paul in establishing the accounts.

The AGM approved the 2017 accounts and the 2018 draft budget.

### **7. Approval of Board's discharge of responsibilities**

Based on the reports, the AGM approved the discharge of the Board.

### **8. For decision: Election, re-election, and resignation of the association's board members**

Regarding elections and nominations, there was full support for all candidates.

The Board of the BCS therefore consists of Levke King (President), Sophie Meura (VP Concerts), Paul Thirion (VP Communications), Heleen Averink, Eva Puttkamer (Vice-Presidents Internal Affairs), Paul Bibauw (Treasurer), Elsa Garcia-Maltras (Secretary), Laure Heysch, Tania Schroeter, Jonas Albert, Richard Ivens (Voice Representatives). The Musical Director, Eric Delson, is not member of the Board but attends the Board meetings.

Felicitas Hevicke (ex Vice-President Internal Affairs) and Volker Brockmann (Secretary) resigned. The AGM warmly thanked them for their work and contribution.

### **9. For information and approval: Appointments**

The AGM was informed of the other appointments made by the Board. Main changes: Marie Blondeel replaces Heleen Averink as deputy voice rep for the sopranos and Wolfgang Oepen joins the librarian's team.

### **AOB**

LK confirmed that the musical assistant (Jeff Dirix) and the pianists were paid per session whereas Eric had an expense budget. A different model would most likely entail a doubling of the membership fee.

Finally, some clarifications were given on the recording of concerts (expensive and time-consuming, so not generally done) and the change of a concert date for 17 November (BCS didn't get its first choice in BOZAR).

Date, signature: Brussels, 27 May 2018



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Levke King Elsner  
President Brussels Choral Society