

## **HISTORY OF THE DARWIN CHORALE**

**In September 1984, the ARTS Council organised a special Music Workshop using the Combined Churches Choir and a visiting conductor from Adelaide, Dr. Dean Patterson who in 1985 was appointed to the Darwin Community College as a lecturer in Engineering. Anxious to continue his work with choirs, he auditioned a choir to celebrate the 300 Anniversary of J.S. Bach's birth by performing the St. John Passion for Easter. After the performance, the choristers decided to stay together with Dean, forming the Darwin Chorale.**

**During the last 25 years the Darwin Chorale has made the musical experience happen for its members and with the opening of the Darwin Entertainment Centre the Chorale took to the stage with a never to be forgotten production of HMS Pinafore. Stage shows which followed were The Gondoliers, Ruddygore, Orpheus in the Underworld, Oklahoma and The Pirates of Penzance. In 1999 the Darwin Chorale combined with two other community groups to stage Jesus Christ Superstar. After the success of this show the three groups combined with the Darwin Entertainment Centre and formed Superstar Productions which went on to mount even more successful productions of Les Misérables, Fiddler on the Roof, Guys and Dolls and the Sound of Music.**

**In 1988, the Bicentennial year, the Darwin Chorale formed the chorus for the Australian Opera's Opera in the Park at the Amphitheatre in Darwin for Puccini's Madama Butterfly, which also featured the Western Australian Symphony Orchestra.**

**There are the regular performances at Easter which have included performances of the Bach St. John and St. Matthew Passions, Mozart's Requiem, Vivaldi's Gloria, the Lloyd Webber Requiem and Brahm's Requiem. Stainer's Crucifixion has also been performed as well as the Jerusalem Passion and Ecce Cor Meum by Paul McCartney in 2009 under the baton of Nicholas Routley.**

**Cabaret music has been performed and shows starting with Takin' it from the Top, in 1991, All That's Jazz 1993, Choruslines 1994, Jazzin' About 1996, Love's in the Air 1997, Anything Goes 1998 and in 2004 The Chorale Downtown were lively experiences.**

**In April 2000 the Darwin Chorale participated in the Australian National Choral Associations' Choralfest in Melbourne and performed the Stabat Mater by Pergolesi at St. Paul's Cathedral.**

**In 2000 the Chorale combined with several other choirs to perform enHarmony. In 2002 the internationally acclaimed guitarist, Craig Ogden, performed with the Darwin Chorale in a concert featuring Gitano Romancero as part of the Darwin International Guitar Festival. Since this performance the Chorale has actively sought to introduce more music for voices and guitars and in 2004 commissioned Nora Lewis to compose the Savannah Suite for the festival in that year. Again in 2006 it commissioned Cathy Applegate to compose Staccato Lightnin' for the Guitar Festival.**

**In 2008 the Chorale entertained with an Elizabethan Feast concert at the historical Browns Mart building. Court jesters entertained between the musical items.**

**For some years during the 1990's the Chorale successfully staged at Christmas, a Ceremony of Carols and Lessons. More recently the Chorale assists at carol services amongst Darwin Churches.**

**One of the most rewarding events in the life of the Darwin Chorale was the choral exchange with two choirs from Dili in East Timor. The choirs were the Coro Santa Cecilia de Balide and Santo Antonio de Motael and combined with the Darwin Chorale, it performed at the Darwin Festival in 2008 as Cantar Timor. There was also a performance in Dili prior to the Darwin Festival. The Darwin Chorale commissioned a work for this event, called Ola Timor! it is in three parts which can be sung individually and was composed by Nora Lewis.**

**Choral exchanges have not been limited to the East Timor Choirs, in 2008 there was a joint concert in St.Mary's Cathedral with the Australian Youth Choir, and in 2009 a further collaboration with the Sydney Pilgrim Choir.**

**In 2009 the Chorale performed Carmina Burana with the Darwin Symphony Orchestra and finished off the year travelling to Alice Springs and combining with the Alice Springs Choral Society to perform a 2 piano and percussion version at the Araluen Centre.**

**The Darwin Chorale regularly participates in public ceremonies in Darwin on occasions such as Bombing of Darwin Ceremony, the Dawn Service on Anzac Day and the Police Remembrance Service.**

**The Darwin Chorale funds itself from concert takings, membership fees, sponsorship from the private sector and grants from the Northern Territory Government. It is particularly grateful for the support of Conoco Phillips and Air North for the choral exchange Cantar Timor in 2008.**

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