

Glinka Academy – St Petersburg (Russia)

Conclusions:

Round table “International experience of choral schools as a unique tool for the development of choral music in Russia and in the world”

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Maintenance of choral traditions is considered as a healthy, well developed civilised society. There are different approaches to create this type of society including cultivating high aesthetic demand among public and motivating people for join art & music. In return this will symbolise high cultural and spiritual level of population.

Choral culture in this respect is less costly but most efficient mechanism in development of cultural model among youth.

Professional musical circles of Russia and some foreign countries (Austria, the UK, Germany, Denmark, Spain, the USA, Finland, France) are concerned by current threats of modern society to best traditions of professional choral music education which date back for 9 centuries !

It is exactly because of professional education of choirmasters from age of seven, introduced by M.I. Glinka and N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov in instrumental classes and preserved during Soviet & post-Soviet times, we have world famous musicians.

Early and intensive music education – guarantee for success of Russian musicians at world stage. If we are to abolish old tradition of eleven years professional education for musicians, we will not have high-quality Russian choirs and orchestras. Abolishment of early choir education for boys will completely destroy system of professional music education.

Therefore we consider important to attract attention of public, UNESCO leadership of section for intangible cultural heritage, Russian committee for preservation of intangible cultural heritage at the Russian Commission for UNESCO affairs, as well as ministers for culture of those countries preserving tradition of unique choirs of boys and men and their professional music schools with long history.

We suggest initiating procedure of inclusion of “choirs of boys and men...and their choir schools” as a UNESCO intangible heritage in October 2018 and address governments of countries, round table participants to confer status of national heritage to these choirs and schools.

Conclusions:

1.Examples as candidate for inclusion into UNESCO intangible heritage list should be: St. Petersburg Glinka Choir College, Moscow Sveshnikov Choir College, New College (Oxford), King’s College (Cambridge), Choir of Westminster Abbey London, the St. Thomas Choir of Leipzig, The Choir of St. Thomas Fifth Avenue in New York, Escolania de Montserrat in Spain, Cathédrale Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Lyon, the Vienna Boys’ Choir in Augarten Palace, Copenhagen Royal Chapel Choir at the Copenhagen Cathedral. These schools not only have extremely high reputation of best choirs but also long history dated back to middle ages as well as professional music school founded not earlier than 300 years ago.

2. Create a working group of experts representing each nominated choir and the intangible heritage they represent as above to prepare an official application for UNESCO intangible heritage.

3. Request Ebbe Munk, Knight of the First Rank of the Order of Dannebrog, Artistic director of the Copenhagen Royal Chapel Choir to Chair expert group.

4. Recommend the Chairman and directors of candidate-choirs to prepare joint application document by 1 June 2018 for applying during next UNESCO assembly in October 2018.

5. To stimulate artistic experience exchange, promote cooperation of Russian and foreign choirs, develop and enhance choir art, create conditions for better understanding and cooperation between people in Europe and across the globe, attract public attention to choir singing – we suggest organising International Festival of Boys’ Choirs in November 2018 to show how choir singing can unite countries and people.