

The 2015 Baha'i Choral Festival

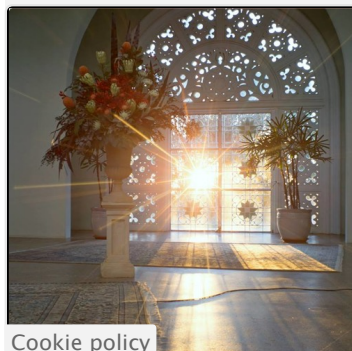
Tuesday 15 September 2015 4:31PM

Geoff Wood



IMAGE: BAHAI HOUSE OF WORSHIP IN SYDNEY (QI-JIE OH)

Sydney's Baha'i House of Worship is a spectacular nine-sided temple designed for the human voice. **Geoff Wood** steps inside during Australia's first Baha'i Choral Festival.



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Excerpt from Australia's first Baha'i Choral Festival.

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On Sunday 6 September, a choir of almost 80 voices from around the world sang in eight different languages with settings from the world's sacred scriptures. According to the Baha'i faith, music is spiritual food for the heart and soul. Musicians and composers are encouraged to set the sacred texts to contemporary music.



IMAGE: 2015 BAHAI CHORAL FESTIVAL (ZARRIN MUNUSAMY)

Choral music means just that, vocals only—no instruments are allowed in the Baha'i House of Worship. And it's not just Baha'i texts—Baha'is believe in the oneness of God and the oneness of the world's religions. Their services in the House of Worship include readings and unaccompanied singing of the world's sacred writings.



IMAGE: LORRAINE MANIFOLD BAHAI CHORAL FESTIVAL (ZARRIN MUNUSAMY)

The Baha'i House of Worship, built above Sydney's northern beaches in 1961, is one of only seven in the world. Like all Baha'i temples it has nine sides and nine entrances symbolically representing unity.



IMAGE: BAHAI HOUSE OF WORSHIP IN SYDNEY SHOWING TWO ENTRANCES (QJ OH-PHOTOGRAPHY, NONAGON)

Founded in Iran in 1844, the Baha'i faith has around six million believers worldwide, with about 17,000 in Australia. Baha'is follow the teachings of Baha'u'llah (1817-92). They believe there is only one god, and that all world religions (including the Baha'i faith) come from the same divine source.



IMAGE: BAHAI HOUSE OF WORSHIP IN SYDNEY UNDER THE DOME (QJ OH-PHOTOGRAPHY, NONAGON)

The words of the prophet-founder Baha'u'llah are used in many Baha'i songs, usually sung in three main languages of English, Arabic and Far



IMAGE: BAHAI HOUSE OF WORSHIP IN SYDNEY, SCULPTED SYMBOL (QJ OH-PHOTOGRAPHY, NONAGON)

The husband and wife team who co-founded the Baha'i Choral Festival made up of artistic director and choir conductor Lorraine Manifold, an festival general manager Alan Manifold. Lorraine and Alan both debute

works at the festival.



IMAGE: LORRAINE AND ALAN MANIFOLD (ZARRIN MUNUSAMY)

The Baha'i House of Worship is described as a place of prayer and meditation open to people of all beliefs. It's a fitting venue for the interfaith music of Australia's first Baha'i Choral Festival.



IMAGE: BAHAI HOUSE OF WORSHIP IN SYDNEY BY NIGHT (QJ OH-PHOTOGRAPHY/ NONAGON)



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