

Touching the sacred

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Sunday 13 September 2015 1:30PM

We go inside the spectacular Baha'i House of Worship in Sydney for Australia's first Baha'i Choral Festival.



IMAGE: THE AUSTRALIAN BAHAI TEMPLE, OR HOUSE OF WORSHIP IN SYDNEY, ONE OF SEVEN IN THE WORLD. (QI-JIE OH)

According to [the Baha'i faith](#), music is spiritual food for the heart and soul. Musicians are encouraged to set the sacred texts to contemporary music.

Founded in Iran in 1844 the Baha'i faith has around 6 million believers worldwide, with about 17 000 in Australia. Baha'is follow the teachings of their prophet Baha'u'llah (1817-1892) and believe there is only one God, and that all world religions including the Baha'i faith, are from the same Divine source.

The words of Baha'u'llah are used in many of the Baha'i songs, usually sung in three main languages of English, Arabic and Farsi. Our [80-voice festival choir](#) will also sing settings of the world's sacred texts in Hindi, Maori and the indigenous language of Woiwarrung, with compositions from the late Ravi Shankar and our guests, choir conductor Lorraine Manifold and her husband Alan Manifold.



IMAGE: THE 2015 BAHAI CHORAL FESTIVAL CHOIR, WITH CONDUCTOR LORRAINE MANIFOLD (GEOFF WOOD)

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

VIDEO: BAHAI HOUSE OF WORSHIP IN SYDNEY

Supporting Information

Track Title: Myriads of Mystic Tongues (English)

Artist: Baha'i Choral Festival choir/ Amelie Dziemba, cond.

Composer: Amelie Dziemba

Duration: 1.43

Record Co/ Number: A live recording engineered by Leila Shunnar for The Rhythm Divine, at the Baha'i House of Worship, Sydney, 6 September 2015.

Homepage: <http://www.bahaichoralfestival.org.au/>

Track Title: Blessed is the Spot (Woiwurrung, English & Maori)

Artist: Baha'i Choral Festival choir/ Lorraine Manifold, cond.

Composer: Elizabeth Haberman, arr. R. Garcia

Duration: 4.58

Record Co/ Number: A live recording engineered by Leila Shunnar for The Rhythm Divine, at the Baha'i House of Worship, Sydney, 6 September 2015.

Homepage: <http://www.bahaichoralfestival.org.au/>

Track Title: Thy Name is Healing (English)

Artist: Baha'i Choral Festival choir/ Lorraine Manifold, cond.

Composer: Adrienne Stengel

Duration: 1.47

Record Co/ Number: A live recording engineered by Leila Shunnar for The Rhythm Divine, at the Baha'i House of Worship, Sydney, 6 September 2015.

Homepage: <http://www.bahaichoralfestival.org.au/>

Track Title: Ek Hi Ped Ki Tum Ho Pal (Hindi & English)

Artist: Neha Anwari/ Baha'i Choral Festival choir/ Rachel Parker-Roohi, cond.

Composer: Ravi Shankar, arr. Tom Price

Duration: 2.41

Record Co/ Number: A live recording engineered by Leila Shunnar for The Rhythm Divine, at the Baha'i House of Worship, Sydney, 6 September 2015.

Homepage: <http://www.bahaichoralfestival.org.au/>

Track Title: Beautify Your Tongues (English)

Artist: Baha'i Choral Festival choir/ Lorraine Manifold, cond.

Composer: Lorraine Manifold

Duration: 1.56

Record Co/ Number: A live recording engineered by Leila Shunnar for The Rhythm Divine, at the Baha'i House of Worship, Sydney, 6 September 2015.

Homepage: <http://www.bahaichoralfestival.org.au/>

Track Title: Close Your Eyes (English)

Artist: Baha'i Choral Festival choir/ Lorraine Manifold, cond.

Composer: Alan Manifold

Duration: 2.29

Record Co/ Number: A live recording engineered by Leila Shunnar for The Rhythm Divine, at the Baha'i House of Worship, Sydney, 6 September 2015.

Homepage: <http://www.bahaichoralfestival.org.au/>

Track Title: Ya Baha'u'l-Abha (Arabic)




Artist: Baha'i Choral Festival choir/ Lorraine Manifold, cond.




Composer: Hooper Dunbar, Saffa Kinney, arr. Tom Price

Duration: 2.21

Record Co/ Number: A live recording engineered by Leila Shunnar for The Rhythm Divine, at the Baha'i House of Worship, Sydney, 6 September 2015.

Homepage: <http://www.bahaichoralfestival.org.au/>

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Guests

Lorraine Manifold

Born in Montreal and now living in Melbourne, Lorraine is a Choral Conductor and Voice Teacher with a Master's degree in Vocal Pedagogy (the science of teaching how to sing) from Northeastern Illinois University in the US. Lorraine is also the Director of the Perfect Chord Choir in Melbourne and is a singing teacher and choral conductor at Our Lady of Mercy College in Heidelberg, Victoria. She is a Committee member of the VIC/TAS Branch of the Australian National Choral Association, is a member of the Australian National Association of Teachers of Singing and the Australian Society for Music Education, and is the co-Founder and Artistic Director of Australia's first Baha'i Choral Festival.

Alan Manifold

An international expert and leader in library automation, Alan has been an elected member of Local Spiritual Assemblies throughout nearly his entire time as a Baha'i. A singer and composer, Alan is General Manager and co-Founder of the Australian Baha'i Choral Festival.

Further Information

Baha'i Choral Festival

Held on Sunday 6 September 2015, more than 80 singers from across Australia and overseas came together for Australia's first Baha'i Choral Festival.

Australian Baha'is

The Baha'i Faith is an independent world religion that was founded in 1844 and has been present in Australia since 1920.

Baha'i Choral Festival photo essay

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.

Credits

Presenter Geoff Wood

Producer Geoff Wood

Sound Engineer Leila Shunnar

Comments (3) [Add your comment](#)

Brenda Humphries :

09 Sep 2015 1:57:58pm

So this is how a drop of water in the ocean feels? Not majestic on its own, but when working with others - magic happens!

Thank you ABC for encouraging this gift of music to the world. Huge credit to the hard work of Lorraine and Allen. Can't wait for the next Choral Festival.

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Vahid Anwari :

11 Sep 2015 11:46:53pm

Such beautiful voices! It represented unity in its truest sense. It was sublime, divine and moving to hear this choir perform.

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Jane McLachlan :

14 Sep 2015 10:16:27am

Thank you very much, Geoff and the team, for this program on the Baha'i Choral Festival. It enabled those of us not able to be present in Sydney to share in this inspiring concert. The prayer translated into Woiwurrung and Maori was particularly moving.

Reply

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