Commemorative ceremony
for the 60th Anniversary
of the Council of Europe
Commemorative ceremony for the 60th Anniversary of the Council of Europe

Strasbourg, 1 October 2009
Palais de la musique et des congrès
Salle Erasme, 7 p.m.

Protocol
Programme

The European Anthem
*Orchestre philharmonique de Strasbourg*

**Maud de Boer-Buquicchio**
Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe

**Danilo Türk**
President of the Republic of Slovenia

**Lluís Maria de Puig**
President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

**Thomas Hammarberg**
Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe

**Roland Ries**
Mayor of Strasbourg

**Symphony No. 3 in D minor, movements 4, 5 and 6**
*Gustav Mahler*
*Orchestre philharmonique de Strasbourg et son Chœur de femmes*
*Ensemble vocal du Conservatoire, Maitrise de garçons de Colmar*

**Frank De Winne (video)**
European Space Agency

**Mikhail Gorbachev**
Former President of the Soviet Union

**Václav Havel (video)**
Former President of the Czech Republic

**José Manuel Durão Barroso**
President of the European Commission

**Cecilia Malmström**
Minister for European Affairs of Sweden, Presidency of the European Union

**Youth essay writing Prize Award**

**Thorbjørn Jagland**
Secretary General of the Council of Europe

**Alexander Rybak**
Winner of the 2009 Eurovision Song Contest
The Council of Europe: our history

The idea of a united Europe and the establishment of a body representing all the peoples and countries of Europe was put forward as early as the 19th century. It was in the aftermath of the First World War that the idea really began to take shape; the second major conflict of the 20th century gave the impetus for its realisation, a union of European peoples being seen as the key to ensuring lasting peace and stability in Europe and the well-being of Europeans. As far back as 1942, Winston Churchill spoke of a Council of Europe within which the European family would be able to act in unison.

To provide protection against authoritarianism and arbitrariness, justice, respect for human rights and democracy were to form the basis for all co-operation between European countries and their peoples. Without this bedrock of values, all endeavours were doomed to failure. It was on this shared belief that the Council of Europe was founded 60 years ago.

In the years following its foundation, the Council of Europe developed the tools that were to ensure the continued existence of this set of basic values by framing standards and creating the machinery to uphold and promote them. The European Convention on Human Rights and the Court established under it are undoubtedly central to that machinery. Other major instruments covering a variety of fields, ranging from the European Social Charter to the European Cultural Convention, gave additional support to the structure.

Over the years, thanks in particular to the political impetus provided from the outset by its Parliamentary Assembly, the Council of Europe has adapted to a changing world by responding to the new needs and challenges facing our societies.

In the year of its 40th anniversary, the Council of Europe was confronted with the major challenge presented by the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet empire. With its solid experience and smoothly functioning institutions possessing the flexibility needed to adapt to new needs, the Council of Europe fulfilled its mission by welcoming in its midst, on the basis of commitment to its fundamental values, nearly all the countries of the former Eastern bloc.
The Council of Europe now covers virtually the whole of Europe's natural geographical area. Belarus, the only European non-member country as of 2009, will ultimately be able to carry out the reforms that will open the Council of Europe's doors to it and offer its citizens living conditions in which their fundamental rights are safeguarded.

In these early years of the 21st century, as the Council of Europe celebrates its 60th anniversary, respect for the rule of law and human rights in a framework of genuine democracy is a necessity that no one denies. These values which everyone claims to espouse might seem established once and for all. But it would be a mistake to entertain such an illusion. It is a sad fact that we are seeing a resurgence of attitudes that have always been a source of conflict and suffering: nationalism, xenophobia and intolerance. In a context of global turmoil, values seem under threat and major setbacks are not impossible.

Vigilance is absolutely essential for a future in which there can be no room for violations of fundamental values. Those values and the binding standards formulated for their protection are the guarantee of continued stability for European societies in the face of the dangers posed by terrorism, the tensions resulting from economic recession and intercultural or interreligious tensions.

The future will no doubt bring new, sometimes unsuspected difficulties and challenges. The adaptability which the Council of Europe has always shown is its major strength as it looks ahead to the future. With its expertise, its legal instruments and its institutional machinery boasting six decades of experience, the Council of Europe remains the indispensable tool serving European countries in the defence and promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Europe.
Former Secretaries General

Terry Davis
United Kingdom
2004-2009

Marcelino Oreja Aguirre
Spain
1984-1989

Peter Smithers
United Kingdom
1964-1969

Walter Schwimmer
Austria
1999-2004

Franz Karasek
Austria
1979-1984

Lodovico Benvenuti
Italy
1957-1964

Daniel Tarschys
Sweden
1994-1999

Georg Kahn-Ackermann
Germany
1974-1979

Léon Marchal
France
1953-1956

Catherine Lalumière
France
1989-1994

Lujo Toncic-Sorinj
Austria
1969-1974

Jacques-Camille Paris
France
1949-1953
Former Deputy Secretaries General

Hans Christian Krüger
Germany
1997-2002

Polys Modinos
Cyprus
1962-1968

Peter Leuprecht
Austria
1993-1997

Dunstan Curtis
United Kingdom
1955-1962

Gaetano Adinolfi
Italy
1978-1993

Anthony Lincoln
United Kingdom
1952-1955

Sforza Galeazzo
Italy
1968-1978

Aubrey Halford
United Kingdom
1949-1952
Former Presidents of the Parliamentary Assembly

René van der Linden
Netherlands
2005-2008

Miguel Angel Martínez
Spain
1992-1996

Karl Ahrens
Germany
1983-1986

Peter Schieder
Austria
2002-2005

Geoffrey Finsberg
United Kingdom
1992

José Maria de Areilza
Spain
1981-1983

Lord David Russell-Johnston
United Kingdom
1999-2002

Anders Björck
Sweden
1989-1991

Hans J. de Koster
Netherlands
1978-1981

Leni Fischer
Germany
1996-1999

Louis Jung
France
1986-1989

Karl Czernetz
Austria
1975-1978
Giuseppe Vedovato
Italy
1972-1975

Per Federspiel
Denmark
1960-1963

François de Menthon
France
1952-1954

Olivier Reverdin
Switzerland
1969-1972

John Edwards
United Kingdom
1959

Paul-Henri Spaak
Belgium
1949-1951

Geoffrey S. de Freitas
United Kingdom
1966-1969

Fernand Dehousse
Belgium
1956-1959

Edouard Herriot
France
1949

Pierre Pflimlin
France
1963-1966

Guy Mollet
France
1954-1956
The European Anthem

After the Council of Europe adopted the European flag in 1955, attention switched to the choice of a European anthem, for which the Council received around 20 proposals.

The words and music of *Ode to Joy* from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony were already being heard at many European ceremonies at local, regional, national and European level. Amid the jubilation surrounding the bicentenary of Beethoven's birth, the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted the European anthem in July 1971. The Council’s Secretary General, Lujo Toncic-Sorinj, then asked his compatriot, Herbert von Karajan, to arrange an official version of the European anthem, which was officially adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 12 January 1972. The European Union also adopted it 14 years later.

The melody is taken from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony composed in 1823, for the final movement of which he set to music the *Ode to Joy* written by Friedrich von Schiller in 1785. This poem expresses Schiller’s idealistic vision of the human race becoming brothers – a vision shared by Beethoven.

The official version was recorded by von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in March 1972. Lasting 2 minutes and 15 seconds, it corresponds to bars 140 to 187 of the symphony’s fourth movement and is based on the melody alone without Schiller’s text. Apart from the melody, Karajan retained two of Beethoven’s three variations, the violin variation and its modification into a solemn march, and ended with a cadence used as a conclusion emphasised by a marking of *ritenuto molto*. The tempo is markedly slower and the instrumentation creates a uniform sonority that diminishes the rich texture and timbre of the original.

Through the universal language of music, the anthem expresses the ideals of freedom, peace and solidarity for which Europe stands. It is the anthem not only of the Council of Europe and the European Union, but also of Europe as a whole.
Ours is a beautiful story; the story of how we have moved from mistrust to trust, peace and democracy thanks to the vision of a handful of people who drafted our Statute 60 years ago, acting on behalf of millions of their fellow Europeans holding the same dream.

Today we pay tribute to those great women and men who showed us that with courage, hope and faith great things can be accomplished. We celebrate the Council of Europe’s great achievements in promoting and protecting democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Europe, and we look to the future, aware of our great responsibility to the 800 million people who make up Europe today, and to generations to come, who aspire to live in a peaceful society respectful of the rights of each and every one.

I firmly believe in this Organisation and its noble values and I am convinced that it is the body best suited to guarantee the promotion and protection of the values enshrined in its Statute, which is also the common heritage of all Europeans.

Thorbjørn Jagland
Secretary General of the Council of Europe
Sixty years ago, the founders of the Council of Europe demonstrated remarkable vision, courage and determination. They created an Organisation which placed values at the heart of the European project. They also gave the Organisation the means and powers to defend and extend these values.

The 60th anniversary of the Council of Europe is an occasion to pay tribute to these remarkable women and men, and the best way to do so is to match their courage and their belief in democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and to convert their vision into action.

Anna Lindh, who, at the time of her tragic death, was a member of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, once said that human rights were praised more than ever – and violated as much as ever. This was not a recognition of defeat, but rather a rallying cry for action. It is not what we say about human rights, it is what we do for them which really makes a difference. This has been the philosophy underlying the work of the Council of Europe over the past six decades, and it will remain so in the future with the collective support of our member states.

Maud de Boer-Buquicchio
Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe
These days we have every reason to celebrate a great achievement: the 60th anniversary of the constitution of Europe based on human rights and the rule of law.

Since 1949, the Council of Europe has been working to achieve a greater unity between its now 47 members. It has played a decisive role in fostering a Europe without dividing lines, united by the values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

It is the European reference in these fields, which are vital for the stability and security of our continent. It acts on a daily basis to transform these values into reality for 800 million people, ensuring that each person can fully exercise his or her rights in practice and without discrimination.

The Council of Europe is a forum for political debate, standard setting and monitoring, with many achievements to its credit, including the European Convention on Human Rights and some 200 more treaties. It will continue its action to respond to the challenges facing our societies while protecting and promoting the values of the Organisation.

Danilo Türk
President of the Republic of Slovenia
Sixty years ago our Organisation’s founding fathers had the power of their dreams.

Today our power is very real: it is the power and creative energy of 47 countries whose objective is to achieve a more unified Europe based on solidarity.

However, as history shows, in Europe as elsewhere, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights are never secured once and for all. Instead there is a constant process of constructing and then defending what has been established. Europe must, and will, be in the front line of this struggle. It is at the very heart of the Council of Europe’s activities and those of its Parliamentary Assembly, which are for ever redoubling their efforts to ensure that all the member states achieve the highest possible levels of democracy and disseminate the Organisation’s values throughout the entire world.

Europe is our common future. The Council of Europe’s task is to ensure that this future is one of peace and justice for future generations.

Lluís Maria de Puig
President of the Parliamentary Assembly
of the Council of Europe
The dream of a peaceful, prosperous and united Europe, which brought into existence the Council of Europe 60 years ago, is also a dream of a world where people are masters of their destiny. It is a dream of our citizens being in control of decisions directly affecting their daily lives, and of communities governed by the very people who live in them. It is a dream of a Europe not only of nation-states, but also of local communities.

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities has been pursuing this dream for over 50 years, since 1957, championing the cause of local democracy as the foundation of any democratic system. It works to make sure that democracy grows stronger in our cities and regions, that the principles of the European Charter of Local Self-Government are respected across our continent, and that the quality of life and governance in our communities is constantly improved.

A Europe of cities and regions centred on the citizen, cohesive, sustainable and modern is part of this dream, and the Congress is there to turn it into a reality.

Ian Micallef
President a.i. of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
The Council of Europe was born out of the ruins and horrors of the Second World War.

Its founders were convinced that a strong, united Europe was essential to the establishment of peace, democracy and human rights.

Many changes have occurred in those 60 years. Europe has not been free of war and crisis. But the Council of Europe has maintained its course and has contributed to the advance of human rights in Europe.

Human rights remain vulnerable and continued vigilance is necessary. We are at a major turning-point if we want to see human rights and democracy continue to progress. The European Court of Human Rights, founded in 1950, devotes all its energies to achieving that goal.

More than ever, we need the Council of Europe – and the Court.

Jean-Paul Costa
President of the European Court of Human Rights
Ten years ago, the Council of Europe took a new step to enhance its work to defend human rights by establishing an independent office of a Commissioner for Human Rights.

The main mission of this office is to identify any shortcomings concerning compliance with human rights standards in all member states and also to offer advice on how they can be remedied.

In the course of its 10 years of experience, the office has found that the standards of the European Convention on Human Rights, the Social Charter and the other Council of Europe human rights treaties are of fundamental importance, as are bodies like the Committee for the Prevention of Torture and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance. A constructive dialogue with governments and co-operation with civil society have contributed to making the Council of Europe an effective defender of human rights.

Its 60th anniversary is an occasion for it to mobilise its resources and give a renewed impetus to the struggle against all forms of discrimination and for human rights for all.

Much has been achieved, but much remains to be done.

**Thomas Hammarberg**
Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe
The festivities marking the 60th anniversary of the Council of Europe are of particular significance to the City of Strasbourg, because the two institutions have clearly expressed their common desire to create synergy between their activities, which are inspired by the same values, those of peace, democracy and human rights.

The history of Europe is intimately bound up with that of Strasbourg. Chosen as the seat of the Council of Europe after the war, Strasbourg has come to be seen by all as a symbol of Franco-German reconciliation, and then of European unity. It is only natural, therefore, that the City of Strasbourg should be represented at this concert alongside the Council of Europe. I am especially pleased that this concert is being given in our Palais de la musique et des congrès by the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra and other regional ensembles, whose standard of excellence will, I am sure, be worthy of the heads of state and eminent personalities who have honoured us with their presence.

Roland Ries
Mayor of Strasbourg
Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)  
Symphony No. 3 in D minor  

Movements  


5. *Lustig im Tempo und keck im Ausdruck.* (Cheerful in tempo and bold in expression)  


Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra  
Conductor: Marc Albrecht  
Contralto: Hanne Fischer  

Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra Women’s Choir  

Conservatoire Vocal Ensemble  
Musical director: Catherine Bolzinger  

Colmar Boys’ Choir  
Musical director: Arlette Steyer
Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)
Symphony No. 3 in D minor

When Mahler arrived at his small lakeside retreat in Steinbach am Attersee, east of Salzburg, in summer 1895, little did he know that he would have to wait another year to complete his longest piece. It is a work on a vast scale. In his search for a title, Mahler first opted for *The Gay Science*, in homage to Nietzsche, then *The Happy Life*, and finally *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. The movements were entitled as follows: “What the forest tells me”, “What love tells me”, “What the dusk tells me”, “What the flowers in the meadow tell me”, “What the cuckoo tells me” and “What the child tells me”. A second version brought changes to some titles and added a seventh: “Pan’s Awakening. The arrival of summer”. In the end, only six were left, following the removal of “What the child tells me”. Mahler divided the six movements into two separate parts. In Part One, the same impetus drives the first three movements, which are the expression of nature. The other three assert the human presence with the introduction of voice. The build-up to a Christian revelation in the huge crescendo of the finale is prodigious. He eventually came around to the view that his efforts to provide his audiences with explanatory introductions were not only clumsy, but also totally unnecessary.

In a letter of 18 July 1896 to his friend Anna Mildenberg he described the spirit of the work as follows: “My symphony will be something the world has never heard before! In it Nature herself acquires a voice and tells secrets so profound that they are perhaps glimpsed only in dreams! I assure you, there are passages where I myself sometimes get an eerie feeling; it seems as though it were not I who composed them”. Indeed, the orchestration is grandiose with woodwinds in fours (and five clarinets), eight horns, four trumpets, four trombones, one tuba, two harps and percussions, together with a contralto soloist, a children’s chorus and a women’s chorus.

The first movement, *Kräftig, Entscheiden*, is the most tragic of the six. Tragedy surrounds this heroic and violent march whose theme is carried by the eight horns. Quick march tempos generate a sense of exuberance and show a prodigious sense of orchestral refinement. “I need a regimental band to convey the effect of my martial comrade’s [summer’s] arrival [...]. It has almost ceased to be music. It is hardly
anything but sounds of nature”, Mahler wrote. The conflict culminates when the theme exposed to the winds returns after a bitter struggle. The second movement, *Blumenstück*, begins with a kind of sentimental minuet (*Tempo di menuetto. Sehr mässig*). Mahler reported his impressions to his friend Natalie Bauer-Lechner: “It is the most carefree music I have ever written, as carefree as only flowers can be. It sways and ripples high up in the air, as lightly and graciously as possible […], but suddenly becomes serious and weighty, like a heavy storm sweeping across the meadow…”

The third movement, *Scherzo* (*Comodo. Scherzando. Ohne Hast*) features rustic dances which provide the accompaniment to birdsong. Mahler drew his inspiration from the song *Ablösung im Sommer* (Relief of the Summer Guard), whose lyrics evoke the song of the nightingale. Once the cuckoo falls silent, the nightingale may sing. “This piece really sounds as if all nature were pulling faces and sticking out its tongue. But there is such horrible, panic-like humour in it that one is overcome with horror more than with laughter”, Mahler wrote. The posthorn’s melody points for the first time to a human presence. This instrument announcing the arrival of the coach introduces an unexpected sense of gravity into the musical flow.

The fourth movement (*Sehr langsam. Misterioso*) places Man at the heart of the musical message. The contralto part uses the text of the Midnight Song (*Mitternachtslied*) from Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*. The climate is contemplative, expressing a sense of eternity which foreshadows his *Song of the Earth* (1908). Mahler chose the timbre of the contralto voice to symbolise the protective presence of the nurturing mother and the nurturing Earth. They console in times of sorrow — “*Tief ist ihr Weh! Tief ist ihr Weh!*” (“Deep is its pain”) — and affirm life’s permanence, while the boys’ voices proclaim the innocence of childhood, promising “heavenly joy that has no end”.

The fifth movement, *Lustig im Tempo und keck im Ausdruck* (Cheerful in tempo and bold in expression), brings in the children’s chorus again. The text is taken from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (The Boy’s Magic Horn). The morning bells, whose sound is imitated by the chorus (“bimm, bamm”), enliven this short sequence which echoes the previous movement. The women’s voices join those of the children: “*Du sollst ja nicht weinen!*” (“You must not weep”). The music’s deliberately naive and popular dimension offers an almost child-like glimpse of heaven.
The finale, *Langsam. Ruheoll. Empfunden*, is an Adagio on a vast scale with an unusual tempo for romantic music. The first theme evokes the slow movement of Beethoven’s last string quartet (Opus 135). “What love tells me” becomes an assertion of Christian faith. The theme, which is developed in a musical sequence lasting over 20 minutes, abandons all earthly pretensions. The irony and grimaces of the first movement have disappeared, giving way to the very passionate (*sehr leidenschaftlich*) singing of the hymn. The ascension to eternity, to the mountains surrounding Mahler’s *Häuschen*, becomes a chorale. Mahler described the composition of this movement as a painful process: “Christ on the Mount of Olives had to, and wanted to, drink the cup of sorrow to the dregs. The person for whom that cup is destined cannot, and will not, push it away, but at certain times he will be seized by a mortal anguish when he thinks of what awaits him. I have the same feeling when I think of this movement and when I anticipate all the suffering that I will endure because of it.”

The conductor and composer Felix Weingartner (1863-1942) conducted a performance of three movements of the Symphony (2nd, 3rd and 6th) on 9 March 1897. The complete this symphony No. 3 was performed in Krefeld on 9 June 1902 with Mahler himself as conductor and the contralto Luise Geller-Wolter as soloist. It was Mahler’s first major success.
Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra

Since its foundation in 1855 the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra has had some renowned Musical Directors, including Hans Pfitzner (1907-1918), Guy Ropartz (1919-1929), Ernest Bour (1950-1963), Alain Lombard (1972-1983), Theodor Guschlbauer (1983-1997), Jan Latham-Koenig (1997-2003) and Marc Albrecht, who has held the position since 2006. Outstanding guest conductors, such as Paul Paray, Eliahu Inbal, Karel Ancerl and Charles Munch, have also given concerts with the Strasbourg-based orchestra, as have many composers — Berlioz, Saint-Saëns, Mahler and Penderecki, to mention but a few. The orchestra also owes its international reputation to the many tours it has undertaken (with appearances in Brazil, the former Soviet Union, the United States, Japan and most of the countries of Europe), its participation in key festivals (such as Aix-en-Provence and Musica) and its recordings of a vast range of works. In February 2006 the orchestra won the Victoire de la Musique prize in the category “Classical recording of the year” for a CD of the works of Jean-Louis Agobet (born in 1968). The Strasbourg Philharmonic has a repertoire that is both operatic, since it participates in the season of the Rhine National Opera, and symphonic. It gives over 30 concerts a year in its home city of Strasbourg and also plays an important decentralisation role. The French Ministry of Culture designated it as a National Orchestra in 1994.

The Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra Choir

The Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra Choir, which was founded in 2003, has 75 members, all experienced, music-loving non-professionals recruited by audition. With the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra, the choir performs the major works of the choral repertoire, oratorios, passions and cantatas. This recently formed choir already has a number of very successful performances to its credit, including a particularly beautiful version of Arthur Honegger’s Jeanne au bûcher, its male singers’ acclaimed participation in Lizst’s Faust-Symphonie, Haydn’s Creation and, during its last season, an extremely mature, subtle interpretation of Mendelssohn’s Elias. Its presence on the Strasbourg music scene adds the strength and warmth of human voices to the orchestra’s powerfully expressive instrumental timbre. In October 2008 the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra Choir was awarded an “Encouragement Prize” by the association Fond’action Alsace.
Marc Albrecht

Acclaimed for his interpretations of Wagner and Strauss, as well as for his commitment to contemporary music, Marc Albrecht has conducted many major European orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, the Concertgebouw Orkest Amsterdam, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, the Staatskapelle in Dresden, the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, the Vienna Symphony Orchestra and the Lyon National Orchestra. In 2006 he made his BBC Proms debut in London with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.

In the early years of his career, Albrecht spent several seasons conducting at the Hamburg and Dresden opera houses and was also appointed personal assistant to Claudio Abbado at the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra in Vienna. In 1995 he began a highly successful six-year tenure as Music Director of the Staatstheater, Darmstadt, and since 2006 has held the position of Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra. In March 2009, following the tremendous acclaim for his performances of Die Frau ohne Schatten, which opened the season at the Netherlands Opera in September 2008, Marc Albrecht was appointed Chief Conductor Designate of both the Netherlands Opera and the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, positions that he will take up in September 2011.

Hanne Fischer

Hanne Fischer graduated from the Royal Danish Academy of Music, where she studied under Ingrid Bjoner and Vagn Thordal, in 1993. The same year she made her debut at the Royal Opera, Copenhagen, as Cherubino in Mozart’s Le Nozze di Figaro. After participating in a master class with Katia Ricciarelli, she was invited to the Accademia Lirica Mantovana. From 1993 to 1997 she was a member of the Kiel Opera. In 1995 she also made her debut at the Glyndebourne Festival, where she sang in Mozart’s La Clemenza di Tito, followed by the role of Isolier in Rossini’s Le Comte Ory in 1997 and 1998. She has made guest appearances at a number of leading opera houses, and gave a very successful performance as the fox in Janáček’s The Cunning Little Vixen at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées in 2002. The same year she was nominated for a Grammy Award for the role of Offred’s double in the world premiere of Poul Ruders’ The Handmaid’s Tale. In 2005 she sang at the gala opening concert of the new opera house in Copenhagen. The same year she sang Mahler’s The Song of the Earth with the Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin at the Berlin Konzerthaus. She also sang the role of Fricka in the new productions of Das Rheingold (2007) and Die Walküre (2008) staged by David McVicar at the Rhine National Opera. In 2010, in Copenhagen, Hanne Fischer will sing the part of Kathy in the world premiere of Lars von Trier’s Dancer in the Dark, adapted for the opera by Poul Ruders.
The Colmar Boys’ Choir

Initially composed of 13 singers when it was founded in 1985 by Arlette Steyer and Eugène Maegey, director of the Colmar Conservatoire, the Colmar Boys’ Choir today has more than 65 members. It regularly partners major cultural institutions, not least the Rhine National Opera and the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra. The choir has gained an international reputation, and its wide repertoire ranges from Gregorian to 20th-century music; it also interprets great orchestral works such as Haydn’s *Creation*, Mozart’s *Requiem* or Britten’s *War Requiem*. In May 2008 the choir sang Duruflé’s *Requiem* in St Stephen’s Church, Mulhouse, accompanied by Francis Jacob — organist at the church of Saessolsheim — on St Stephen’s remarkable Cavaillé-Coll organ, by the mezzo-soprano Geneviève Kaemmerlen and by Lisa Erbes on the cello. A team of specialised teachers is responsible for the boys’ vocal and musical training. In addition to focusing on choral singing, the training programme also seeks to develop the capacity to listen to others, to stimulate personal expression and individual responsibility within the group and to teach the social skills required for community life. In sum, this is a human and artistic endeavour in which the boys (and their parents) invest throughout their schooling.

Arlette Steyer

Choir master and singer, a graduate of the Colmar and Strasbourg Conservatoires, Arlette Steyer studied music at the Radio France Choir School in Paris.

For 10 years, she was a soloist with the Arts Florissants ensemble under the direction of William Christie. She has appeared on all the major stages in Europe and the USA and has recorded some 12 records. She has performed many roles, including Doris in *Atys* by Lully at the Opéra de Paris. Having won awards from the Fondation Alsace and the Bretzel d’Or in 2004, Arlette Steyer is much sought after in the leading institutions for her thoughts on choral singing, and is regularly invited to national and international choral gatherings. She is an active campaigner for innovative and varied programmes, and her experience as a singer and teacher has enabled the Colmar Boys’ Choir (which she helped set up in 1985 and of which she is the artistic and educational director) to achieve international recognition.
The Strasbourg Conservatoire Vocal Ensemble

The Vocal Ensemble comprises students from the singing class of the Strasbourg Conservatoire. Their weekly polyphonic practice is part of an overall training programme set up by a team of singing teachers, the choir master, language teachers and accompanists. As a complement to solo voice training, choral singing enables students to tackle a wide repertoire and to take part in various cultural events in the region. Apart from the classical and romantic choral repertoire, the Vocal Ensemble – exclusively female until 2003 – received considerable acclaim for its interpretations of contemporary works: *A Hélène* by Xenakis at the Xenakis season in Strasbourg (1999), *Enfantillages* by Betsy Jolas (2001), and *Vox Humana* by Mauricio Kagel, performed at the 1999 Musica Festival. The Ensemble has also participated in the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra’s programmes and performed Holst’s *The Planets*, under the musical direction of Jan Latham-Koenig (1999) and Mendelssohn’s *Ein Sommernachtstraum* under the musical direction of Peter Schneider (2002). In June 2003, the Vocal Ensemble won two awards at the Tours international choral competition. In February it performed *L’amour de loin* by Kaija Saariaho at the Beirut Al Bustan Festival, repeating the performance in 2006 at the Musica Festival and in 2008 at the Comédie de Clermont Ferrand.

Catherine Bolzinger

Choir master, graduate of the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Lyon, she studied music in parallel to university studies in the Arts and Musicology, before specialising in choral music with Bernard Tétu. In 1997, she founded the Strasbourg Chamber Choir, of which she is still the musical director, a vocal ensemble with members ranging in number from 8 to 20 specialising in the music of today’s composers. Her first recording with this choir in 2009 was dedicated to contemporary a cappella choral compositions. She has been the choir master of the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra Choir since its foundation in 2003 and has prepared singers for numerous major works from the classical repertoire and for more contemporary works, such as the world premiere of *Ritualis Totems* by Philippe Schoeller. She has also conducted the choir in performances a cappella or with piano accompaniment of works by Distler, Brahms, Schumann, Berlioz, Rossini and Ligeti. In 2004, she was awarded the Music Prize of the Académie des Marches de l’Est for her overall achievements in the musical field. In 2008, for her work as director of the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra Choir since it was founded she was awarded an “Encouragement Prize” by the association Fond’action Alsace. Catherine Bolzinger is also a teacher at the Strasbourg Conservatoire.
On behalf of the crew of this station, from some 300 km above Earth, I would like to congratulate the Council of Europe on its 60th anniversary. You have accomplished a great deal. Europe would not be what it is today had not it been for you. You have reached for the stars and those stars continue to shine today. By promoting democracy, human rights and the rule of law you have improved the lives of all of us in Europe and I dare to say, in space. You should be proud and continue to work in favour of a united Europe.

My wish is that all Europeans will continue to work together, using our diverse talents and drawing on the many cultures that make Europe so unique in the world.

Happy anniversary and keep up the good work!

Frank De Winne
Astronaut of the European Space Agency
on board the International Space Station
"Twenty years later, we are closer to our Common European Home, even if there is still a long way to go."

Mikhail Gorbachev
Former President of the Soviet Union

"I see these twelve stars as a reminder that the world could be a better place if, from time to time, we had the courage to look up at the stars."

Václav Havel
Former President of the Czech Republic
This anniversary is an excellent opportunity to look with pride at the progress our continent has made towards peace, co-operation and integration. It is also an opportunity to express satisfaction at the close co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union, two organisations sharing common values, and to build still closer ties between them in the future.

José Manuel Durão Barroso  
President of the European Commission

The European Union and the Council of Europe share the same roots. They were both created on the ruins of the second World War. The Council of Europe has given the European Union the core values that are enshrined in its treaties: human rights, democracy and rule of law.

Cecilia Malmström  
Minister for European Affairs of Sweden,  
Presidency of the European Union
60th Anniversary - Youth Essay Writing Competition
"How do you imagine the European citizen of the future?"

National Winners

**Andorra**
Borja Palomo Canals

**Armenia**
Artsrun Khanjian

**Austria**
Barbara Willvonseder

**Belgium**
Roeland Van Cleemput

**Bulgaria**
Anton Todorov

**Croatia**
Lea Araminčić

**Estonia**
Raido Pajula

**Finland**
Tiia Riihieluoma

**Georgia**
Otar Kakhidze

**Ireland**
Marie O’Reilly

**Luxembourg**
Maxime Spadoni – Max Steinmetz – Weyrich Mathis

**Moldova**
Victoria Purici

**Norway**
Carina Strøm Smith

**Romania**
Cristina Georgiana Paca

**Serbia**
Natalija Premovic

**Slovak Republic**
Radovan Potočár

**Slovenia**
Grega Ulen

**Spain**
Ylenia Jiménez Rodriguez
Alexander Rybak was born in Minsk, Belorussia. When he was 5, he and his family moved to Norway. He then began to play the piano following the inspiration of his mother, a classical pianist, and his father, a well-known classical violinist. From the age of 10 he studied at the Barratt Due Institute of Music. In 2004, he was awarded the Anders Jahre Culture Prize. In 2005, he entered the Norwegian version of Idol, reaching the semifinal. In 2006, he won Kjempesjansen (The Giant Chance), a talent competition hosted by the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK), with his own song Foolin’. He has collaborated with artists such as A-ha’s lead singer Morten Harket and Arve Tellefsen. In 2007, he played the fiddler in Oslo Nye Theater’s production of Fiddler on the Roof and won the Hedda Award for this role.

In 2009 he won the 54th Eurovision Song Contest in Moscow with a record 387 points, the highest ever in the history of the Eurovision Song Contest, singing Fairytale, a song inspired by Norwegian folk music. The song was composed and written by him and was performed together with the modern folk dance company Frikar. Since then, he has released his first album Fairytales and continues to write and perform music and act in films.

Alexander Rybak
Winner of the 2009 Eurovision Song Contest