

VOX *maris*
INTERNATIONAL FEMALE CHOIRS
AND VOCAL ENSEMBLES
FESTIVAL

CHOIRS

„VAIDILUTĖS" (LITHUANIA)

University's of Applied Sciences female choir "Vaidilutės" was founded in 1956 in Vilnius, Lithuania. The choir was given the honorary degree of the folk choir and was named as "Vaidilutės" ('Priestesses') back in 1989. "Vaidilutės" is led by the conductor Mrs. Genovaitė Kumpienė since 1994 until now.

The members of the choir are mainly the students of the University. The most devoted girls continue participating in choir's activities even after the graduation.

Through the years the choir has participated in numerous concerts and festivals which took place in various European countries, such as Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Estonia, Czech Republic, Poland, Italy, Latvia and Spain.

The choral repertoire includes the music of the different centuries: the choir "Vaidilutės" pays special attention to the Lithuanian folk songs, sacred music as well as the modern music of the XXth century. The programme mainly consists of the works from following composers: F. Poulenc, G. Verdi, F. Corti, W.A. Mozart, F. Schumann, J. Brahms, J. Swider, J. Tamulionis, J. Baltramiejūnaitė, K. Kaveckas, G. Vanagaitė, Z. Bruzaitė, L. Abarius, N. Sinkevičiūtė, G. Caccini, C. Franck, J. S. Bach, A. Tchesnakov and others.

The choir keeps taking part in the National Song Festival of the World Lithuanians and various Youth festivals continuously since 1994. It actively performs at the secondary schools of Vilnius region, sings at the Cathedral Basilica as well as the other prestigious concert halls of Vilnius City.

"Vaidilutės" has participated in series of concerts dedicated to the Pope John Paul II in Zelona Gora, Poland back in 1997. The same year choir was invited to attend the international choir competition in Llangollen (Great Britain) and successfully won the third place. The following year this female choir participated in the 4th International Competition of the Choirs of the Sacred Music and in the 16th Choir Festival in Preveza, Greece. Two gold medals and the prize were given to the choir. Later on "Vaidilutės" took part in one of the most famous European choir festivals in Baltipaglia (Italy) and sang for the Pope at the monastery of Montecorvino and Vatican City. The choir also took part in the 18th International Competition of the Popular Music in Contanigros, Spain. "Vaidilutės" is participating in the Baltic Student Festival "Gaudeamus" continuously since 1999. This festival has already took place in Vilnius (Lithuania), Ryga (Latvia), Daugavpils (Latvia), Tartu (Estonia).

This female choir has been awarded as the first category choir in the national level in 2013. The same year choir won the third place in the Adults Choirs Competition held in Lithuania. Both in 2014 and 2016 "Vaidilutės" participated in the international religious music festival "Auksinė Šalčio juosta" and won the first place. This choir has also participated in Prague Summer Choral Meeting in 2017 and was

warmly welcomed by the audience. Choir keeps performing in both international and national levels, concerts are frequently held in various cities of Lithuania (Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai, Panevėžys, Druskininkai, Kaišiadorys, Visaginas, Palanga, Zarasai, Eišiškės, Utena). In 2019 the choir participated in 10th International Krakow Choir Festival CRACOVIA CANTANS and won the first place in the Category of Equal Voices.

This youth choir takes an active part in Lithuanian cultural life and successfully represents Lithuania in various musical events held abroad.

"SAULĖ" (LITHUANIA)

Jurbarkas cultural center women's choir "Saulė" gathered at the beginning of 2020 at the initiative of Danutė Lapienė, the choirmaster. Its participants are singing and active women from Jurbarkas region, all of whom are united by the desire to create a strong team and achieve the best results. In less than three years of creative activity, the women's choir of the Jurbarkas Cultural Center "Saulė" not only presented its songs at various events and celebrations, but also achieved particularly important achievements. The uniqueness of this choir is that it got together and held its first rehearsals at the very beginning of the pandemic, then had to take a long break, but this did not prevent the choir from working intensively and preparing a rich program when rehearsals resumed.

The choir's repertoire includes songs from the Lithuanian Song Festival program, Lithuanian folk songs, traditional songs, etc.

The first performance of the women's choir "Saulė" of the Jurbarkas Cultural Center took place in 2020 July 18 in the concert "With a song to life" held in the Jurbarkas exhibition and concert hall.

On the same day, the choir took part in the Street Music Day event in Jurbarkas. Although the pandemic had forced a temporary pause in the usual pace of rehearsals, the women's choir "Saulė", as soon as they were given the opportunity, renewed them and smoothly joined the events organized by the Jurbarkas Cultural Center. In 2021 June 26 the choir's songs were played at the traditional event "With a song to life".

In 2022 a concert dedicated to the World Music Day was organized on the initiative of the singers and leader of the women's choir "Saulė". The choir "Balti" from Jelgava (Latvia) took part in it.

In 2022 the women's choir of the Jurbarkas Cultural Center "Saulė" performed for the first time outside Lithuania - it traveled to neighboring Poland, Krakow, where the International Choir Festival "We are singing Cracow" took place. Choirs from Lithuania, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Portugal participated in the festival. Jurbarkas choristers performed at the Akademia Muzyczna w Krakowie (Cracow Academy of Music) and at the closing concert in the chapel of the Velički Salt Mines.

In 2022 December. and 2023 May. The "Saulė" choir visited Latvia - the cities of Dobele and Jelgava, with whose choirs the women from Jurbarkas maintain a close creative relationship.

One of the most significant events in the history of the Jurbarkas Cultural Center women's choir "Saulė" was in 2022 May 28. When the choir festival-competition "Our Songs" was held in Vievis. Choirs from all over Lithuania performed and competed in two categories - secular and sacred music. Jurbarkas Cultural Center women's choir "Saulė" participated in both competition programs and won the first place in both.

In 2023, the women's choir of the Jurbarkas Cultural Center "Saulė" participated in the competition of Lithuanian adult choirs, where they were awarded the highest 1st degree diploma.

VOCAL ENSEMBLES

„VENI GAUDERE „(LITHUANIA)

Academic singing studio of Vilnius University Kaunas Faculty

Academic singing studio was established as a choir in 2006 on the initiative of the conductor Adelė Mikalkėnienė. The status was changed in to a studio in 2021. It is a chamber group consisting of 4-14 members. Translated from Latin the name “Veni gaudere” means “we have come to rejoice”.

“Veni gaudere” performs at international festivals, organizes concerts in Lithuania and has been evaluated at international competitions: the choir has been awarded Golden Diplomas in the “Kaunas Cantat” international competition in 2011 and 2015, a I degree Diploma and III place in the “choirs of equal voices” category of the International Stasys Šimkus Choir Competition in 2016, and won Golden Diplomas in the sacred music and folklore music categories, as well as the GRAND PRIX, in the “Canco Mediterrania” (Spain) competition in 2017. In 2018 the “Veni gaudere” choir group was awarded the Golden Diploma and the Special Prize *for the unique culture of sound* in the “Cantu Gaudeamus” (Poland) competition. In 2018 the choir organized a concert tour in Japan.

The repertoire of “Veni Gaudere” consists of musical works from medieval Gregorian chants or Renaissance sacred compositions to contemporary music composed by Lithuanian and foreign composers performed *a cappella*.

„MELODIJA“ (LITHUANIA)

Culture Centre Of The Šiauliai District Municipality

Conductor Daina KAVALIAUSKIENĖ, tel. +370 650 36012, e-mail daina34@gmail.com

Concertmaster Danutė STRECKIENĖ

2014, participant of the Lithuanian Song Celebration „Čia mano namai“ (Here Is My Home), dedicated to the Commemoration of the 90th Anniversary of the National Song Celebration.

2002, „Aukso paukštė“ (the Golden Bird) nomination “Best Chamber Ensemble and Conductor” of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre and the World Lithuanians Song Festival Foundation.

The ensemble MELODIJA was established in 1993.

The ensemble was founded by the initiative and concern of the Head of the Culture Department Valė Jurešienė. Since the foundation, the ensemble was led by Birute Prokopaviciene. 2013 she was replaced by Daina Kavaliauskienė. For many years the excellent musician Danutė Streckienė is accompanist of the collective. Ensemble Melodija has taken an active part in numerous national events, participated in Šiauliai City and Šiauliai County song festivals. The collective is a winner and laureate of numerous vocal ensemble competitions and festivals.

Women singers represent various occupations. Ensemble repertoire is rich and diverse, it includes classic, Lithuanian folk songs as well as works of Lithuanian and foreign composers. This is a very able-bodied, active, creative and audience well-liked team.

The most significant achievements:

- 2002, „Aukso paukštė“ (the Golden Bird) nomination “Best Chamber Ensemble and Conductor” of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre and the World Lithuanians Song Festival Foundation.

- 2001 and 2005, Second Degree laureate, the Republican Soloists and Vocal Ensembles Competition „Sidabriniai balsai“ (Silver Voices), and 2010 – First Degree laureate. The ensemble was invited to perform at the final concert of the winners in St. Catherine's Church in Vilnius.
 - 2006 and 2008, III place winner, the Republican competition „Šilų aidai“ (Wood echoes) (Šilalė), 2012 – I st place winner.
 - 2003, Second Degree laureate, the International Folk Festival Song Competition in Port-sur-Saone (France).
 - 2004, on occasion of decade of ensembles creative activity CD „Svajonių lietūs“ (Dreams of Rain) was recorded.
 - 2008 June 12, the collective celebrates the 15th anniversary of its creative activity in the Šiauliai City Philharmonic Hall.
 - 2009, 1st place winner and nomination "For the Best Performed Folk Song", the 2nd International Vocal Ensemble Competition "Primavera" (Šiauliai).
 - 2011, the vocal ensemble represented Šiauliai district and Lithuania at the international festival "VIA KEKAVA" in Kekava municipality (Latvia). Classical music and folk music concert programs were presented.
 - 2012, the collective was invited to represent Šiauliai district and the Samogitian ethnographic region at the events of Vilnius Kaziukas Fair. Classical music program was performed at St Catherine's Church.
 - 2013, II place winner in equal voices category (conductor Daina Kavaliauskienė), the Republican Chamber and Vocal Ensembles Festival – Competition „Šventosios gaida“ (Tune of Šventoji river) (Ukmergė district, Taujėnai).
 - 2014, First Degree Diploma and Grand Prix, the Republican Vocal Ensemble Festival – Competition „Kur aukštas klevas“ (Where is the high maple) (Pakruojis region).
 - 2014, First Degree Diploma and prize for the best performance of Lithuanian folk song, the Lithuanian Vocal Ensemble Festival – Competition.
 - 2015, I place winner in the equal voices category, the Republican Chamber and Vocal Ensembles Festival – Competition „Šventosios gaida“ dedicated to P.Sližys centenary of birth celebration (Taujėnai Manor).
 - 2015, Gold Diploma in the first tour and special prize "For a masterful performance of a contemporary Lithuanian composer's work" in the International Choir Festival – Competition Šiauliai Cantat 2015. Gold Medal in the second tour.
 - 2016, First Place Diploma in the category of city and district centers vocal ensembles, the XXXIX Lithuanian Vocal Ensembles Festival – Competition „Šilų aidai“.
- Ensemble MELODIJA performs in numerous national events as well as in Šiauliai City, Šiauliai County and Šiauliai Region.

"MOZAIKA"(LITHUANIA)

Sintautai Women's Vocal Ensemble Of Šakiai Cultural Center

The ensemble "Mozaika" was formed in 2006. It is led by Deividas Kerevičius. The ensemble consists of 12-15 girls and women. The collective "Mozaika" actively performs at republican and regional festivals and events ("Zanavykų balsai," "Giesmė," "Džiūgaukim...Aleliuja," "Te Deum Laudamus," and others). They also participate in republican vocal ensemble competitions, where they have been awarded as laureates or prize winners multiple times.

In 2016, the ensemble "Mozaika" was nominated for the "Aukso paukštė-2015" award by the Lithuanian National Culture Center as the "Best Vocal Ensemble and Conductor."

In 2019, the collective participated in the 7th International Choral Music Festival-Competition "Auksinė Šalčios juosta" and won first place in the equal voices category. They were also awarded a special prize for the best performance of a Lithuanian folk song.

In 2021, at the Lithuanian Vocal Ensemble Festival-Competition "Šilų aidai 2021," the collective became the absolute winner.

In 2021, at the Lithuanian Vocal Ensemble and Soloist Competition "Sidabriniai balsai," they won first place in the women/men vocal ensemble group. They were awarded the title of laureate of the 1st degree. In January 2022, in the remote 4th holiday-talents competition "Kalėdų žvaigždė Slobožanskoje" (Ukraine), the collective won first place in the choir category.

Program:

1. "Fish Branch" ("Žuvų šakele") - Old Lithuanian folk song of Užgavėnės. Užgavėnės is an ancient winter festival symbolizing the expulsion of winter to invoke the arrival of spring.
2. "The Sun Rises" ("Užteka Saulužė") - This is an old Lithuanian folk wedding song that was sung when bidding farewell to the bride as she left her parents' home and set off to the groom's country.
3. "Ponete mente" - Original text is from a Florentine hymnal. It is a sorrowful plea of Mary, asking for attention to her suffering due to her son who was crucified for the sinners.
4. "Aglepta" - Mellnäs takes the five words of a spell from a nineteenth-century Swedish troll proverb and plays with each word melodically and with spoken and tonal effects. Once the choir learns the "trunk" of the tree (seven rather simple melodic figures), the rest of the work is in achieving the special effects, which are marvelously fun and interesting. They include sprechstimme, tone clusters (which are easily produced), phonetic fragmentation, and aleatoric effects.

„RASKILA“ (LITHUANIA)

A chamber choir named Raskila was founded in 1995. It has 13 members - women of different ages, occupations and experiences, united by love for music. The choir was brought together by Lina Kairyte – music teacher, composer, author of musical arrangements for vocal ensembles and choirs.

The musical/concert activity of Raskila is intensive, singers perform in various concert halls and churches around Lithuania. The choir also performed in Latvia, Germany, the Netherlands and Georgia. During the period of creative activity, Raskila has been awarded in various vocal music competitions in Lithuania; the choir has also received the "Golden Bird Award" one of the highest awards in non-professional artistic groups in Lithuania. During the period of its creative activity, Raskila earned numerous of important awards in various vocal music competitions in Lithuania. It also received awards abroad, such as a gold diploma and special diploma for exceptional vocal technique in an international choir competition in Sopot, Poland (2017) and a gold diploma and a special diploma for the authentic interpretation of folklore in Prague, Czech Republic (2018). In 2021 Raskila was awarded with the 2nd degree laureate diploma in the international competition "Vox maris" in Klaipėda (Lithuania) and in 2022 it received an award of the 1st degree diploma, 2nd place at the international Choir Competition of Stasys Šimkus in Klaipėda (Lithuania).

The repertoire of Raskila consists of original songs written by contemporary composers, various folk song arrangements and sacral music.

GAISMA” (LATVIA)

Stendes Tautas Nama Sieviešu Vokālais Ansamblis

The womens vocal ensemble of Stende Tautas nams Gaisma was founded in 2008. The leader of the collective, Armands Ulmanis, has been working with the ensemble since 2010. for the entire existence collective been active in performs concerts, participates in shows and competitions.

The composition of the collective has changed over the years, but the quality of the ensembles performance has not changed.

The ensembles repertoire includes Latvian and other folk songs, original songs by Latvian authors, etc.

The members of the ensemble are representatives of various professions, who devote their free time to song and singing together in the ensemble.

GIRLS' DREAMS" (DIVOCHI MRIJI) (UKRAINE)

The student choir "Girls' Dreams" is a creative group that unites girls who love song, who study at the departments of singing and music theory of the Lviv College of Music named after Stanislav Lyudkevich. The difficult times of the epidemic and the war, of course, prevented the normal development of the collective, but the choir does not stop, but continues to work, because the renewed victorious Ukraine will need new creative forces that will develop and multiply artistic achievements on the cultural national front.

Choir "Girls' Dreams" - Laureate of many All-Ukrainian and International choral competitions and festivals: "Introductory songs" (Vorzel, Irpin), 1st All-Ukrainian competition named after Volodymyr Pekar (Rivne), All-Ukrainian competition named after Mykola Leontovych (Kyiv), contest "Zhaivir calls friends", International Festival in Bulgaria. Recently, the choir returned from the X International Festival of Sacred and Passion Music in Szczecin (Republic of Poland) with the title of Laureate of the First Prize, the title of "Best Choir from Abroad" and other awards.

The director of the choir is Nadiya Povoroznyk, the concertmaster is Olena Senyk.