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AMIS INTERNATIONAL HONOR BAND AND CHOIR FESTIVAL

DIRECTORS' HANDBOOK

The AMIS International Honor Band and Choir Festival (HBC) is a selected group of performers that generally numbers between 80 – 90 band members, 120 – 130 mixed choir singers, and (where the festival site permits) 60 women's choir singers, representing 40 or more international schools. Participants are chosen by audition.

Alternates: After the auditions and selection of the ensembles have been made, alternates are also chosen in the event that a selected student is not able to attend. An alternate must accept that role, pay the music fee, and prepare his/her music as if he/she were selected as a member of the ensemble. Notification of the need for an alternate to fill a position in the Band or Choir can come as early as December and as late as a day or two before The Festival. It is crucial that each alternate is as well prepared as those selected as original members of the ensembles. If the time comes when an alternate no longer wishes to maintain that role, the teacher should notify AMIS headquarters.

Auditions: An audition CD is provided to schools expressing interest in the Festival and can be obtained by contacting AMIS headquarters. Information about audition requirements is found on the AMIS web site. The completed forms and scores, and required recordings, along with the Director's recommendations, are then submitted to the audition committee by approximately October 20th. (This date varies slightly from year to year and is October 21, 2006, for the festival in March of 2007.) The committee then selects the members of the orchestra. Directors will be notified in November of students who have been selected for the Festival. The students must then sign and return an acceptance form to their Director. Detailed information about all of this is found on the AMIS web site.

Concert: Recordings: Each school pays a fee for a CD of the concert which will act as the school's archive copy. They can then copy the CD for participants if they wish to do so. The concert recording is made by a competent sound engineer and is then mixed before the master copies are prepared. It is of the best sound quality possible for a live performance in the venue being used, without disrupting the performance.

Site: The concert location and time will be posted on the web site.

Tickets: Directors and official school chaperones will receive a ticket to the concert as a part of the registration fee they have paid. Additional information on ticket prices for spouses, partners, parents, will be

made available prior to the festival. Concert seats are frequently limited, depending on the size of the hall.

Deadlines: These are designed for the success and smooth operation of each Festival. Directors are urged to use the deadline as the **last possible** date to submit materials. Almost all forms are now online. It is important for directors to submit these forms rather than sending bits and pieces of information in emails. You will automatically receive a copy of each online form you submit.

Directors' Dinner: Details of the Directors' dinner will be sent to you. Cost of this dinner is included in the registration fee paid by teachers and official chaperones. If you have a spouse or partner who is attending the festival and would like to join you at this dinner, AMIS will usually be happy to include them in the reservation and will collect the necessary fee from you at the festival.

Workshops and Meeting: There will be mini-workshops offered during the festival. You should notify AMIS if you have a topic which you would like to offer as a mini-workshop. There will be a business meeting and Annual General Meeting during the festival. Directors are required to attend this business meeting.

Responsibilities: Directors are expected to be present at all rehearsals to help, listen and supervise. Some teachers will be asked to take part in the testing and chair assignments on Thursday of the festival. Others may be asked to help with a sectional rehearsal if it is required.

Dress code:

Concert Girls – white blouse with sleeves, ankle or floor length black skirt or dressy full length black trousers; black shoes. No bare shoulders.
BARE MIDRIFTS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE
CONCERT ATTIRE
Boys – dark suit or jacket, white shirt, dark tie, dress slacks, Dark dress shoes and dark dress socks.
NO SNEAKERS

Rehearsals: neat, clean comfortable clothes.

Executive Council – AMIS: This will meet during the Festival weekend.

Festival Fees:

These may be paid either in sterling or in Euros. You will need to request that your invoice is written in the currency you prefer. Payments, including payments for hotel housing, may be made by transfer or in the form of a cheque. The payment due date is December 15th.
Please remember that registration fees are not refundable.

Festival: Conductor: Festival Conductors are chosen from a list of professionals in the field who are currently working, where possible, in colleges and universities. Past choral conductors have included Rodney Eichenberger, Anton Armstrong, André J. Thomas and Dr. Edith Copley. Past band conductors have included Anthony Maiello, Craig Kirchhoff and Jerry Luckhardt.

Host schools: If you are interested in hosting this festival please contact

the Executive Consultant, Georgia Bassett. You may also want to read the hosting handbook which is available on the web site.

Sightseeing: It may be possible to organize a few hours of sightseeing for the festival participants. In some cases this will involve a small extra cost. You will be advised about this in the lead up to the festival. You will need to supervise your students during any group sightseeing.

Arrival/Departure: Participants arrive during Wednesday afternoon/evening in order to register at the hotel where they will stay for 4 nights, and to get a good night's sleep before the festival begins. When making travel arrangements try to avoid very late arrivals and very early departures on Sunday morning. Actual festival activities will begin at 8:30-9:00hrs on Thursday (or whenever the school day for the host school will begin).

All participants are expected to be present at the first festival activity and are requested to make travel plans accordingly..

Rehearsals will be held throughout the day on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The concert is scheduled for Saturday evening.

Folders: All choral students should arrive with their music in a **black folder**. Band students must also arrive with their music in a folder. This should be labeled with their name on the **inside**. Each piece of music should also be labeled. Students should bring a pencil (with an eraser on the end) to every rehearsal in order to mark their music.

Forms: **Forms are now on line.** The deadlines for submitting these forms are listed on the web site. Please adhere strictly to these deadlines, submitting information ahead of the deadline where possible. **Please use these online forms rather than sending bits and pieces of information as part of emails.**

It is important to give all the information requested when you initially fill out the form (such as nationality, contact phone, Allergies, etc.

Housing: **All Students, Directors and chaperones** will be housed in a local hotel. AMIS will make all arrangements for Festival hotels for four nights. Please plan to arrive at the Festival hotel on Wednesday afternoon/evening. All Directors and chaperones will be housed in the same hotel as the students and will be responsible for their students during the festival. We do not book rooms for parents not acting as official chaperones, but can provide a list of hotels for them to use in booking their own accommodation. Information about the hotel will be available on the web site. Hotel fees are prepaid at the same time as other festival fees. There will be a cutoff date after which refunds may not be possible. If you need to arrive early or stay late because of travel arrangements AMIS can organize housing in the festival hotel for you. The hotel will be given the Director and students' names listed by school. It is usually possible to organize housing with families for those students attending the festival on an AMIS scholarship.

Room Assignments: AMIS will create the student room assignments based on availability and configuration of the rooms provided in the hotel. Room requests will be honored where possible. A preliminary list

of assignments will usually be available ahead of time but the final lists will be available only on arrival.

Student curfews and conduct: As per the Student Code of Conduct Form, to be signed by each participating student and their parents, the curfews for the festival are set. It is each Director's responsibility to check that their students are in their own rooms and are abiding by the Festival rules.

Instruments: Students and Directors should verify that instruments are in good working order before the Festival begins. Be sure to check for damage before leaving the airport, so damage can be properly reported. It is sometimes possible to borrow string basses or tubas from the host school or to ask the host to rent a string bass or tuba for your student. If you hope to avoid bringing your own string bass or tuba, please ask early about borrowing or renting an instrument. You will need to pay any rental costs if the host rents a string bass for you. Percussionist should bring all their own sticks, which should be clearly labeled.

Meals: The cost of lunch Thursday and Friday, and both lunch and dinner on Saturday are included in the registration fee. Breakfast is included in the hotel bill. All other meals are the responsibility of the participants.

Music: **Mailing:** DHL will be used to send music and rehearsal tapes **only when requested**. These charges will be billed and are payable in either sterling or Euro cash or cheque on registering at the Festival. **Preparation:** Students will be tested upon arrival at the Festival. It is important to the success of the experience that each student arrive VERY WELL PREPARED. This is the responsibility of each participating Director. There will be a complete outline of the testing procedure available before the festival.

Purchase: All accepted students and alternates are expected to purchase. Choral Directors are also expected to purchase a set of choral music. Music for all groups and rehearsal CDs for choral students will be mailed after shortly after December 1st. CD's should be duplicated for each part as needed. These are meant to supplement, not replace, actual rehearsals with the teacher.

Passports: **It is the Director's responsibility to check on the status of their students' passports and, where necessary, visas.** You should do this as soon as the festival participants are chosen. It is now often a very slow and complicated process to obtain visas for festival participants. You will need to provide the host with full details about the student (or teacher) requiring the visa as well as the address and fax number for the Consulate where you are obtaining the visa. This is YOUR responsibility. It is a very sad occasion when a student has to miss the festival because of not applying for the visa in sufficient time

Payments: See **Invoice**. Any unpaid fees are payable in sterling cash or cheque on registering at the Festival.

Sectionals: Should the conductor request these, teachers will be assigned to assist as required.

Travel: Make your plans early. Registration begins late afternoon on Wednesday and all participants should arrive at the hotel on that day. Transfer from the airport/main train station to the hotel is the responsibility of each Director and information will be provided on the web site on the available methods of transportation. Delays should be notified to the Festival organizer as soon as possible giving a new estimated time of arrival.

Transportation from the hotel to rehearsals and the performance venues will be provided.

August 2006