

9th MAYO INTERNATIONAL CHORAL FESTIVAL

Córfhéile Idirnáisiúnta Mhaigh Eo

20TH to 24TH May, 2020

SYLLABUS 2020



CASTLEBAR
MUNICIPAL
DISTRICT

SUPPORTED BY MAYO COUNTY COUNCIL AND CASTLEBAR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Invitation and Introduction Cuireadh agus Réamhrá



It is my privilege to invite choirs to participate in the 9th Mayo International Choral Festival. Known as Ireland's friendliest choral festival, it has grown into what has become one of the most popular choir festivals in Ireland. We welcome both competing and non-competing choirs and our festival has many formal and informal performance opportunities and 15 different competition categories, including two new categories, work-place choirs and third-level / university /college choirs.

While our competitions take place on Saturday, we also have concerts throughout the county of Mayo on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday. These performances are a great opportunity to meet other choirs and share musical experiences.

Choir members are encouraged to explore the county of Mayo when you visit, from it's spectacular scenery along the Wild Atlantic Way to the various archaeological sites and monuments and quaint

towns and villages. Indeed all of our concert venues have significant histories including Ballintubber Abbey which dates back to the 12th century, and all are noted for their great acoustics. Our Saturday competitions are held in the third-level college in Mayo - the GMIT Mayo Campus.

We also have a Songway Choral Trail on Saturday where choirs are invited to give short performances throughout the town of Castlebar and, following competitions and Gala concert, we have an 'after-gathering party' at the festival club.

Our closing date for entries is December 31st for International Choirs and January 31st for choirs from Ireland.

OUR FESTIVAL IS ONE OF QUALITY, FUN AND GREAT EXPERIENCES ~ JOIN US!

Frank Murray
Chairman, Mayo International Choral Festival.

Festival Timetable Clár

WEDNESDAY, 20TH MAY

- Concert / Presentation to honour one of Mayo's Musical Maestros
- Sight-seeing opportunities

THURSDAY, 21ST MAY

- Evening concerts with local and visiting choirs in various venues throughout Mayo
- Sight-seeing opportunities

FRIDAY, 22ND MAY

- Evening concerts with local and visiting choirs in various venues throughout Mayo
- Mini-performances on the Songway Choral Trail during the day
- Sight-seeing opportunities

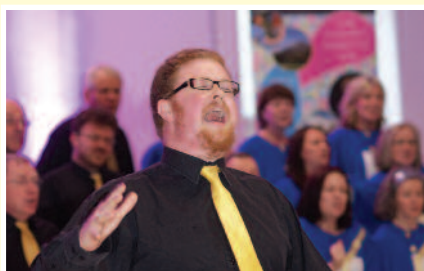
SATURDAY, 23RD MAY

- Competitions and Adjudications
- Mini-performances on the Songway Choral Trail during the day
- Gala Concert and afterwards the after-gathering at the Festival Club

SUNDAY, 24TH MAY

- Choirs perform at church services
- Closing Event, details to be confirmed
- Sight-seeing opportunities

All details subject to change



Ballintubber Abbey.



Knock Basilica. Image Courtesy Knock Shrine

Competitions Comórtais

A choir can enter up to three different categories (plus the Premier Competition).

Premier Competition

The first-prize-winners of all competitions below (with the exception of First Time Competitors Competition), automatically qualify for entry to the Premier Competition. Programme should consist of two contrasting part songs. One of the pieces must be chosen from the repertoire already performed in the qualifying competition. The second piece must not have been previously sung by your choir, in any of the other 2020 competitions as below.

Please note, a choir can qualify to enter the Premier Competition in one competition category only, in each year of the festival. In 2020, should a particular choir win in two or more competition categories during the day, it may choose which one of those categories it wishes to represent in the Premier. The competition(s) that the winners do not represent, will be represented by the runners up of that competition(s) instead.

Choirs taking part in the Premier Competition (which takes place at the Gala Concert), and any guest choir at the Gala Concert, in addition to those attending the Gala Concert, will join together as one large group to sing Handel's 'Hallelujah Chorus'. Choirs are encouraged to rehearse this piece in the weeks prior to the festival. Please feel free to bring your scores as scores will not be provided. PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €1,000. Runner-up: €200.

Four Part Choirs

Any combination of voices. (Four Part or more). Programme should consist of two contrasting part songs, and be chosen as follows:

- (i) A piece composed before 1800
- (ii) Any part song contrasting with (i).

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

Choirs from Ireland, 4-part

Any combination of voices. Four Part or more. Programme should consist of two contrasting part songs.

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

Female Voices Margaret Bourke Sheridan

Programme should consist of two contrasting 3 or 4 part songs.

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

Male Voices Jack Feeney

Programme should consist of two contrasting 3 or 4 part songs.

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

Sacred Music

Programme should consist of two contrasting part songs.

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

Gospel Choirs

Programme should consist of two contrasting part pieces from the Gospel choral music repertoire.

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

Gaelic or Celtic Language Delia Murphy

Amhrán is Fearr i nGaeilge nó i dTeanga Cheilteach.

Programme should consist of two contrasting 3 or 4 part songs in

Irish or any Celtic Language.

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

Barbershop Chorus

Programme should consist of two contrasting pieces from the Barbershop repertoire

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

Barbershop Quartet

Programme should consist of two contrasting pieces from the Barbershop repertoire

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

First Time Competitors

For choirs who have never entered into competition before and would love to do so with choirs of a similar standard. Programme should consist of two contrasting 3 or 4 part songs. Winning choir of this competition is not eligible to enter the Premier Competition. PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €200. Runner-up: €100.

Songs from a Musical, Light Opera, or a Pop / Chart song.

This is also open to musical societies and associations as well as choirs - all must be formed for at least a full year or academic year (Sept to May). Programme should consist of two contrasting 3 or 4 part songs.

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

A Cappella Groups

Open to groups of a minimum of four to a maximum of eight members. Programme should consist of two contrasting 3 or 4 part songs/pieces, **in any genre**, sung without accompaniment. PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

Smaller Choral Groups

Open to groups of a minimum of four to a maximum of eight members. Programme should consist of two contrasting 3 or 4 part songs.

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

New: Third-level, University / College Choir

Any combination of voices. (Three or Four Part or more). Programme should consist of two contrasting part songs.

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

New: Work-place Choir

For choirs consisting of members working in the same organisation/business/company. Any combination of voices. Three or Four Part or more. Programme should consist of two contrasting part songs.

PRIZES Winner: Trophy and €300. Runner-up: €150.

All details subject to change



Golfing at Ballina. Image Courtesy Fáilte Ireland.



Great Western Greenway. Image courtesy Fáilte Ireland.

FAQ's - Frequently Asked Questions Ceisteanna coitianta

What's it all about?

The festival takes the form of several competing and non-competing choirs participating in a series of concerts, mini-performances and events that take place over four to five days, all over the county (region) of Mayo, in the west of Ireland. All events are open to a public audience. There are many beautiful and exciting scenic locations and interesting attractions in Mayo and choirs are encouraged to visit some of these during their visit and to experience the friendliness of people from Mayo.

Where's the best place to get every bit of information?

The entry form, which contains all the rules and regulations, is the best source of information about the festival. In order for choirs to get the best experience from the festival, we can't stress enough the benefit of the choir reading the entry form in detail, at a very early stage in the participation planning. Entry forms can be downloaded from the festival website www.mayochoral.com.

Where is Mayo?

The county of Mayo is located on the west coast of Ireland. Geographically it is the third largest county (region) in Ireland, and arguably the most scenic! The Wild Atlantic Way route trails it's way around the coast.

How do we get to Mayo?

Mayo is serviced by Ireland West International Airport, Knock, located in east Mayo, with connections to all major UK airports (average of just over one hours flying-time to UK). There is very good road access from Dublin if travelling by ferry. There is a very good direct rail service to many train stations in Mayo, from Dublin to the towns of Claremorris, Castlebar and Westport, and connections to Ballina.

How about transport while in Mayo?

Public bus transport is limited. Choirs are advised to check in advance if they will need to hire transport during their visit. While the festival does not book or pay for transport, we will advise on reputable and good value local coach and taxi providers. Transport may be necessary for travel to evening concerts (various towns), and competition venues (located in Castlebar).

Do we have to source and pay for our own accommodation?

Yes. However we can recommend accommodation considering your festival event participation and any other indicated accommodation requirements. There is a big choice of good quality and good value accommodation. We have visited all hotels and they have assured us that accommodation and meal costs will be at a very good value rate for visiting choirs – please mention that you are taking part in the choral festival to avail of this rate. **We advise strongly to book your accommodation as early as possible, as rates tend to rise closer to the festival dates and when occupancy is high.**

When should we book our own accommodation?

Immediately! The better-quality and better-value hotels tend to book out months in advance. If your choir is taking part in a competition, these take place on Saturday from early morning, so if travelling more than 30km from Mayo, we strongly recommend to book Friday and Saturday nights, at a minimum, as soon as the choir decides to participate in the festival. Some hotels may accept a provisional booking and we highly recommend to avail of same.

In summary, to avail of the most comfortable and the best-value-for-money accommodation, and to avoid limited availability and possible high rates closer to the festival dates, please book your accommodation as many months in advance of the festival as possible.

How long should we come for?

The duration of stay is the choice of each choir. We encourage choirs to stay a few days either side of the festival dates, to experience the beautiful scenic locations in Mayo and the attractions and culture and heritage of the area. The festival programme starts on Wednesday, with a presentation honouring one of Mayo's heroes or heroines in song and music. On Thursday, Friday and Sunday evenings, our community concerts take place, each featuring a visiting International or national choir, a local adult choir and a local youth choir, in venues that are most suitable to singing – from the quaint to the quirky! Saturday is the day for competitions, starting early in the morning, and finishing Saturday night with the premier competition, featuring the winning choirs of each category. There are also mini-performances throughout the towns on Saturday by the choirs. Our closing event will take place on Sunday. A full programme is announced in early March, once all entries have been processed.

Continued on next page



Croagh Patrick, Westport.



Achill Island on the Wild Atlantic Way.



National Museum of Country Life. Fáilte Ireland.

FAQ's - Frequently Asked Questions - Continued

How many events are choirs involved in?

Competing Choirs are asked to participate in at least one other event, other than a competition (maximum number of competitions a choir can enter is three competition categories). Non-competing choirs are equally as welcome. Events vary from singing in formal concerts to mini-performances on the Songway Choral Trail - some locations in pubs!

Are there facilities available for special needs?

It is helpful if we know in advance of any requirements for members with reduced mobility or other requirements, and we request this to be noted on our entry form. All our venues are wheelchair accessible.

Can non-competing choirs enter the festival?

We welcome equally non-competing choirs and are involved in whatever events they wish to participate – and don't forget there is a category (and prizes!) for choirs who have never competed in any choral festival before - 'First Time Competitors'. There are two separate entry forms, one for competing choirs and one for non-competing choirs. Entry forms are available to download www.mayochoral.com

How do the evening concerts work?

We ask on our entry form if and what day your choir would like to participate in one of our evening concerts. At each concert, we strive to feature a visiting International or national choir, a local adult choir and a local youth choir. The duration of performance for the International or National Choir is on average 15 to 20 minutes. Depending on the choir's schedule, there are the customary complimentary light refreshments immediately after the concert and this gives a chance for choirs to meet each other and share their experiences. The festival committee will advise in advance the locations and details of evening concerts. Choirs performing in the evening concert submit by email closer to the event time, a list of the songs/pieces that they will sing at the concert.

What does participation cost and how do we enter?

The entry fee to participate in the festival is €85, which also includes entry to one competition category. Entry to each competition category thereafter is €85. €5 of each entry will go towards the 'greening our festival' programme, in order to minimise the festival's carbon footprint. There are two separate entry forms, one for competing choirs and one for non-competing choirs. Entry forms are available to download from our website www.mayochoral.com or email info@mayochoral.com and we will email a copy to you.

Compiled by Declan Durcan, Festival Producer, 2.08.2019

All details subject to change

Contact Us Déan Teagmháil Linn

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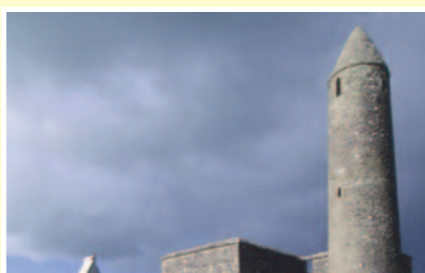
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Turlough Round Tower. Image courtesy Fáilte Ireland.



Choir singing in St. Mary's Hall, GMIT Mayo Campus.



Rockfleet Castle. Image courtesy Fáilte Ireland.



Ashford Castle, Cong, County Mayo. Image courtesy Ashford Castle.



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