



CONTACT:

Julie Calvert,
Vice President, Marketing & Strategic
Development
Cincinnati USA Convention & Visitors Bureau
513.632.5378, or 513.910.6186 (mobile)
jcalvert@CincyUSA.com

Jon Reischel
ColorNine
jon@color-nine.com
513.237.7758

Ellen DePodesta
Ellen DePodesta Communications
edepodesta@sbcglobal.net
773.220.6068

**World Choir Games Selects Cincinnati USA
As First-Ever U.S. Host City**
***“The Olympics of Choral Music” to be Largest International Event in
the Region’s History***

- ***First time ever the World Choir Games will be held in the U.S.***
- ***An estimated 20,000 competitors and hundreds of thousands of spectators from around the world will descend upon Cincinnati USA in July 2012***
- ***11 days of competitions and performances throughout the region will energize the economy and leave a lasting legacy***

CINCINNATI – (June 18, 2009) – The largest and most significant international event in the region’s history is coming to Cincinnati USA for 11 music-filled days and nights in July 2012.

The World Choir Games, a prestigious competition of vocal groups representing 400 choirs from more than 90 countries, has selected Cincinnati USA — home to the oldest choral music festival in the Western hemisphere — as the site of its 2012 competition from July 4 to 14. The World Choir Games are a biennial competition and are referred to as the “The Olympics of Choral Music.” 2012 will be the first time in the event’s history it is held in the United States.

The announcement was made at a festive celebration on Fountain Square attended by hundreds of individuals including leaders from the hospitality, political, business, arts, cultural and international communities and highlighted by musical performances by local choral groups.

“Today’s announcement is a transcendent moment for Cincinnati USA as we prepare to host a global event of major proportions,” said Dan Lincoln, president and chief executive officer of the Cincinnati USA Convention & Visitors Bureau. “This win symbolizes the tremendous progress our

region has made and the successes we've achieved over the past five years in attracting and hosting the highest profile groups. This is a legacy-building event that encompasses the entire community and will energize, revitalize and transform the region."

Founded in 2000, the World Choir Games have quickly become the largest event of its kind in the world and is a prominent and coveted event aggressively sought-after by countries worldwide. Other cities to host the event are Linz, Austria (2000); Busan, People's Republic of Korea (2002); Bremen, Germany (2004); Xiamen, China (2006); Graz, Austria (2008); and Shaoxing, China (2010). The Games are organized and produced by INTERKULTUR Foundation, a German-based organizer of international choir competitions and festivals recognized throughout the world for its artistic and organizational excellence. In 2009, INTERKULTUR will hold its 100th international music competition.

"The World Choir Games celebrate the beauty, diversity and rich history of choral music around the world," said INTERKULTUR President Guenter Titsch. "Cincinnati demonstrated a level of preparedness, professionalism and enthusiasm that confirmed beyond doubt that it was the best candidate to host our 2012 Games."

Cincinnati Mayor Mark Mallory, a steadfast supporter of the arts who was instrumental in bringing the World Choir Games to Cincinnati, said this event will continue to transform Cincinnati into a major global center for arts, business and culture.

"The entire World Choir Games experience – from this grand announcement event to the actual Games in 2012 – will reshape the Cincinnati USA business, arts and hospitality landscape and leave a legacy of hope, optimism and potential like no other event in the history of the Cincinnati USA region."

The World Choir Games involves amateur choirs, both adult and youth, competing in 29 categories including gospel, jazz, contemporary, folk, religious, barbershop and popular choir music. Choral groups taking part in the 2008 Games in Graz, Austria, hailed from Russia, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Croatia, South Africa, Great Britain, Italy, Austria, China, Indonesia, the United States and more than 80 other nations. Much like the Olympics, the event features elaborate opening and closing ceremonies and a parade of costumed participants that will make its way through the streets of downtown Cincinnati. The Olympic-style friendly competition will award gold, silver and bronze medals to top contenders in various competition categories. Hundreds of free performances open to the public will take place concurrently at sites across the region.

Far-Reaching Impact, Benefits

An estimated 20,000 vocalists will compete in the 2012 World Choir Games. Competitor spending alone is estimated at \$14 million, and competitors and spectators are expected to consume more than 50,000 hotel room nights at properties downtown, in Northern Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. The 2008 World Choir Games in Graz, Austria, attracted audiences of 250,000.

Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland, who joined the effort to bring the World Choir Games to Cincinnati USA, addressed the Fountain Square audience via video message. "It was an amazing team effort that brought the 2012 Games to Ohio, and now we have the opportunity over the next three years to

showcase the people, places and spirit that make Cincinnati USA and the State of Ohio a great place to live, work and play.”

The 11-day competition will attract visitors from around the globe and bring an influx of new spending to area businesses including hotels, restaurants, retailers, attractions and transportation companies. It will showcase Cincinnati’s arts and cultural institutions, with a special spotlight on redevelopment in the Over-the-Rhine neighborhood, where many of the competitions will take place.

“Cincinnati showed a passion and an energy regarding this event that mirrors ours,” Titsch continued. “From the Governor of Ohio to the Mayor of Cincinnati and the arts and cultural institutions, they showed us how much they wanted these Games. We are delighted to be bringing this magnificent event to the United States for the first time and to the great City of Cincinnati.”

When the Games convene in 2012, they will cast an international spotlight on Cincinnati USA, showcasing the region as a destination with the caliber and capabilities to host an Olympic-scale production. Local choirs will have the opportunity to perform while spectators will enjoy a number of free concerts, competitions and gala events. The event will infuse the region with excitement, civic pride and international flavor.

Concerts at Venues Across the Region

The headquarters for the 2012 World Choir Games will be the Duke Energy Convention Center and the new School for the Creative and Performing Arts. Proposed competition venues include:

- Music Hall
- Memorial Hall
- US Bank Arena
- Aronoff Center
- Emery Auditorium
- Corbett Auditorium
- Cathedral Basilica
- St. Peter in Chains Cathedral
- St. Xavier Church
- Christ Church Cathedral

Tickets will be available for sale to the public; ticket prices have not yet been established. In addition, more than 300 free public performances by competing choirs are planned for locations including Fountain Square, the Cincinnati Zoo, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Devou Park, Coney Island and Kings Island.

Unprecedented Teamwork Contributes to Winning Bid

Representatives of INTERKULTUR conducted several site visits in 2008 and 2009 before selecting Cincinnati USA as the 2012 host city. A team of Greater Cincinnati business entities, hospitality industry leaders, CVB members and partners, the Cincinnati Arts Association, foundations, and political leaders made significant contributions to the effort to win the 2012 World Choir Games.

Hamilton County Commission President David Pepper, among the many leaders to actively pursue the Games, said Cincinnati’s readiness to host a group of this magnitude was a major contributor to the victory, as well as its rich arts and cultural heritage.

“Cincinnati USA has indisputable momentum through growth and development success in recent years, and today we invite the world to see the people and places that made this win possible,” Pepper said. “Our region will do an outstanding job in orchestrating the Games and we all look forward to the excitement and energy it will generate.”

Cincinnati USA will collaborate with INTERKULTUR to introduce the world’s choral music community to the Queen City leading up to the 2012 Games. INTERKULTUR has a history of bringing the World Choir Games to cities and neighborhoods where they can have a significant and meaningful impact, and that tradition continues with Cincinnati USA. With the new School for Creative and Performing Arts as the centerpiece, significant plans are under development for downtown Cincinnati and the Over-the-Rhine neighborhood to spur economic development, infrastructure improvements and growth.

Social Media Efforts to Engage Visitors

The Cincinnati USA Convention & Visitors Bureau will also launch a social media program on June 18 to engage and communicate with local participants and venues as well as visitors expected from around the world.

On June 18, the CVB will launch a 2012 World Choir Games in Cincinnati Facebook Fan Page and a 2012 World in Cincinnati Twitter page. Over the summer, the CVB will continue to roll out social media platforms using Ning.com and Flickr working to maintain the momentum from the June announcement.

Future plans for the social media effort also call for foreign language Facebook Fan Pages along with videos and photos from choral groups located around the world that will be posted on CVB social media sites.

About INTERKULTUR

INTERKULTUR has ties to 120,000 choirs made up of 4.8 million choral singers around the world. In the 20 years since it was established, more than 5,000 choirs and some 230,000 singers from 100 nations have taken part in the World Choir Games and INTERKULTUR's regional choir competitions. The World Choir Games (WCG), which are dedicated to the founding Olympic ideal, take place every two years on a different continent. The next WCG will be held in 2010 in Shaoxing, China. For more information, contact Hugh Ballou, USA INTERKULTUR Representative at 1.888.398.8471 or ballou@interkultur.com or visit us at: www.interkultur.com.

About the Cincinnati USA Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Cincinnati USA Convention & Visitors Bureau is an aggressive sales, marketing and service organization whose primary responsibility is to positively impact Hamilton County’s and the City of Cincinnati’s economy through convention, trade show and visitor expenditures. The travel and tourism industry traditionally has been a \$3.4 billion industry in Cincinnati USA, employing 81,000 people in a variety of fields and, historically, bringing five million visitors to the region annually.

###

Stay in touch with the 2012 World Choir Games on Facebook!
Follow the 2012 World Choir Games on Twitter!