

Endorsements for Songs of Life

“Not only are the United States and Bulgaria allies, but we share common values and a belief in freedom. The Songs of Life International Choir Festival is a platform to share these values with the rest of the world.”

**Congressman Joe Wilson
U.S. House of Representatives**

“Bringing 300 superb choristers and instrumentalists on stage in what I can only describe as an impeccably organized and magnificently directed performance, sets the highest possible standards for such events.”

**Ambassador Elena Poptodorova
Bulgarian Ambassador to the USA**

“Your MAGNUS OPUS which we were privileged to see / listen to / absorb / reflect on at the world premiere. It was, in our view, simply stupendous.”

**Gregory Mattson
Former Special Advisor, Office of Holocaust Issues
US Department of State
Washington, DC**

“Your vision and energy for this project was unmatched: conceiving a major international work which united us with the people from Bulgaria and its performers...You have literally changed lives with this project and it is most appreciated!”

**Dr. Stan Engebretson
Artistic Director, National Philharmonic Chorale
Director of Choral Studies, George Mason University
Director of Music, The New York Avenue Presbyterian Church
Washington, DC**

“The Magnitude of your effort to achieve such artistic measures was daunting. Your commitment to bringing forward the story of Bulgarian humanity during WWII is admirable. This music should be performed again and again...The ICC experience with Varna International was truly top notch. It is gratifying to see a company who cares about the quality of musical experience as much as the nuts and bolts of travel. I would recommend Varna International wholeheartedly to

any choir touring in the future. Congratulations and thanks from a grateful conductor... You are first class!"

Prof. Henry Leck
Founder and Artistic Director
Indianapolis Children's Choir, Indiana

"From the combination of top level professional and educational performers from the USA and Bulgaria, passionately lead by Maestro Henry Leck, the well written score with its timely story, the individual group performance opportunities at the three world class performance venues – Kennedy Center, Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center and Wang Theater, Boston, and numerous tourist moments along the way, this was an experience my students and community singers will never forget. Add in a private directors' reception at the Bulgarian Embassy in D.C., and having "Beauty" composer Georgi Andreev and all of his Bulgarian performers traveling on our bus and you have the most unique of tour experiences. The excellent tour management was provided by knowledgeable, caring musician/managers under the direct personal supervision of the Festival Directors, Kalin and Sharon Tchonev. We recommend it highly!"

Dr. Thomas E. Miller
The College Singers, The Master Arts Chorale
Victor Valley College, California

"The rescue of Jews in Bulgaria during World War II holds lessons for us today about the importance of taking real risks and standing courageous against hate, racism and anti-Semitism. I welcome a Festival that can draw attention to this past and help transmit the values it embodies into the future in meaningful and immediate ways."

David A. Harris
Executive Director
American Jewish Committee