



World
Choir
Games

2012
cincinnati usa



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Dream Becomes Reality: Cincinnati Pops to Headline Opening & Closing Ceremonies at 2012 World Choir Games

Kunzel's vision takes focus as U.S. Bank Arena named host for marquee events

CINCINNATI (OH) – This was Erich Kunzel's vision when he led the charge to bring the 2012 World Choir Games to Cincinnati USA.

The beloved Cincinnati Pops founder and icon, who died Sept. 1, 2009, dreamed of watching the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra in the Opening Ceremony of the 7th World Choir Games at U.S. Bank Arena on July 4, 2012.

That's exactly what's going to happen.

The Pops, now designated as the Host City Orchestra of the 2012 World Choir Games, has signed an agreement to participate in the Opening *and* Closing Ceremonies of the World Choir Games, which will take place in Cincinnati USA from July 4–14, 2012. The Pops will be joined by the May Festival Chorus, the Official Chorus of the Cincinnati Symphony and Pops Orchestras.

"I am deeply honored to carry forward Erich Kunzel's vision for the World Choir Games and leading our world-renowned Cincinnati Pops and May Festival Chorus at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies," said Cincinnati Pops Conductor John Morris Russell. "With tours, television specials and 10 million recordings sold world-wide, our Pops is Cincinnati's greatest cultural ambassador."

Maestro Kunzel – who was named *In Memoriam* Artistic Director for the 2012 Games – led the Pops in its inaugural Fourth of July concert at Riverbend Music Center in 1984, which has become one of Cincinnati's favorite annual traditions. The popular "Red, White and Boom" concert celebration plans to return to Riverbend in 2013.

"We're thrilled to welcome guests from all over the globe to the World Choir Games and to celebrate Independence Day together at the Opening Ceremony next summer," Russell said. "This promises to be an extraordinary concert, as we share our rich musical traditions with thousands of new friends and fans."

In addition to the Opening Ceremony, U.S. Bank Arena will play host to the Closing Ceremony on July 14, 2012, and several awards ceremonies during which choirs will receive their diplomas (Open Competition) and medals

(Champions Competition) and the Champions of the World Choir Games in each musical category will be revealed.

“The World Choir Games are going to bring tens of thousands of people to Cincinnati, and we are going to give them quite a show, as one of the best orchestras in the world, the Cincinnati Pops, is headlining the Games,” Cincinnati Mayor Mark Mallory said. “The Games are a huge opportunity to expose people from around the world to Cincinnati. Today’s announcement is another key element to ensure that visitors who attend the Games have a first class experience in Cincinnati.”

The history and tradition of Cincinnati’s May Festival, the oldest continuous choral festival in the Western Hemisphere which dates back to 1873, was among Cincinnati USA’s selling points to INTERKULTUR, the Germany-based company that owns and operates the World Choir Games and choral festivals all over the globe, when bidding for the Games.

Cincinnati USA was selected as the first U.S. city to host the World Choir Games, which is expected to bring 20,000 participants and tens of thousands of visitors from more than 70 countries for what will be the largest and most significant global event in the region’s history. Already 150 choirs from 24 countries have registered.

“We knew from the start that to make the 2012 World Choir Games a truly successful Cincinnati experience, our most prominent people and businesses would need to step up and collaborate to make it happen,” said Dan Lincoln, president and CEO of the Cincinnati USA Convention & Visitors Bureau and director of the 2012 World Choir Games. “This is another great example of that collaboration, and we couldn’t be more pleased to have the Cincinnati Pops, the May Festival Chorus and U.S. Bank Arena involved at such a high level.”

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ABOUT THE WORLD CHOIR GAMES:

The World Choir Games is the largest international choral competition in the world, taking place every two years. The event is expected to have a local economic impact of \$73.5 million. The World Choir Games is the signature event of INTERKULTUR, a Germany-based organization that produces elite international choral events all over the world.

ABOUT THE CINCINNATI POPS ORCHESTRA:

The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra founded the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra in 1977 with the late [Erich Kunzel](#), Founder and Conductor Emeritus. The Cincinnati Pops, composed of musicians of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, ushers in a new era this season under the leadership of Conductor John Morris Russell. The Orchestra has sold 10 million recordings around the world, appeared in numerous national television specials and toured extensively. The Cincinnati Pops was also the only international orchestra invited to participate in the ceremonies surrounding the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing.

ABOUT THE MAY FESTIVAL CHORUS

Established in 1873, the May Festival is directly responsible for the development of Cincinnati’s modern music life. Music Hall, the city’s primary concert venue, was built specifically to house the Festival’s performance. The prestigious roster of Festival Music Directors has included, among others, Theodore Thomas, Max Rudolf, James Levine and, currently, James Conlon.

ABOUT U.S BANK ARENA

U.S. Bank Arena is a multi-function, 17,500-seat arena on the riverbanks of the majestic Ohio River in the heart of Cincinnati USA. The largest arena in Southern Ohio and Northern Kentucky, U.S. Bank Arena opened in 1975 and currently is home to the 2008 and 2010 ECHL Kelly Cup Champion Cincinnati Cyclones. In addition to hockey, the venue is the most active in the region, hosting a wide variety of high profile concerts, family shows and sporting events

Procter & Gamble is the first Presenting Sponsor of the 2012 World Choir Games