



The great Russian composer N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov once marked that the art of the conductor is "an odd thing". To realize it, you need to live in the music world for years.

To lift the veil of mystery, let's take a fascinating journey into the world of music history. The art of music originates from magic. When a man began to identify himself as a part of society, he got the first mystical ideas about the origin of everything, which brought him closer to the World of Unknown – the one that is beyond the human mind. Magical rituals (Mysteries) made by the hierophant of ancient Egypt in the third millennium B.C. always involved singing, as the human voice was the first musical instrument. All present were moving in a circle ("circle" in Greek means "horos") and the singing was choral. It became possible to trace with the help of some survived Egyptian pictures. At the same time *heironomiya* emerged (Greek *xeironomia*; *xeir*, "hand"; *nomos*, "law") which involved the notional gestures applied to leading chorus and showing singers the rhythm, dynamics and nature of canticles' performance. At a later stage *heironomiya* started developing in ancient Greece. As we know, the texts of ancient Greek tragedies were chanted by actors and their performances always engaged chorus.

The profession of a contemporary choir conductor is much more complicated than that of a symphony orchestra conductor, as the former deals with the most perfect and at the same time the most whimsical musical instrument - the human voice. It is able to express all the elements of music, including melodic, rhythmic and tonal (major and minor) ones. The human voice can express joy, sadness, passion. Words help reveal the meaning of the composition being performed, make singing meaningful. Emotional coloring of words makes singing animate.

The choir conductor, first and foremost, is a teacher of singing not just for one singer but for the whole choir! He must be skilled in a voice training technique, know about the features of all types of voices (both male and female) and be a first rate singer himself! The choir conductor has to deal with a team of singers, which must be properly organized. To achieve maximum contact with choir forces the conductor requires communication skills. His ability to convince people is the basis for the conducting process. Performers need to trust the conductor, to follow him not just blindly obeying his will. The choir conductor must not only know the repertoire perfectly, but also select it in terms of the choir forces' abilities. It is necessary for the conductor to play different musical instruments to be able to help musicians go through some difficult segments in the score. The conductor must be a well-informed, continentally thinking person in art, literature, poetry and speak foreign languages. Choir is international by its very nature! In the genre of choral music composers work all over the world. Generally, choirs perform authentic works, without translation. That requires the conductor's and chorus's mastering deep knowledge in English, German, French and Italian. Due to the cultural globalization, the choral art has integrated into the international musical process, community members working in different countries. Therefore, knowledge of foreign languages is an integral part of this challenging profession.

To master his profession a conductor requires 16-19 years of continuous training and the real artistry may take the whole life. Sooner or later each choir conductor starts to realize that it is not just his occupation, it is his calling!

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