

CHORAL COMPOSITION COMPETITION – MUNTRA MUSIKANTER 150 YEARS

BACKGROUND

The competition is organized by Sällskapet MM rf (“MM”). Founded in 1878, MM – Muntra Musikanter – is Finland's second oldest active choir and will celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2028. MM has been a central part of the choral and musical life in Finland throughout its history.

Among the many composers who have composed for MM over the years are Jean Sibelius, Toivo Kuula, Selim Palmgren, Nils-Eric Fougstedt, and Erik Bergman. MM is the publisher of the songbook “250 Kvartettsånger utgivna av Sällskapet MM”, more commonly known as the “Blue Book” (Blå Boken). This collection has become the “bible” of male choral singing in Swedish-speaking Finland and is also frequently used across the other Nordic countries. In addition to traditional treasures, the Blue Book contains many Finnish and Nordic male choir classics by composers such as Jean Sibelius, Selim Palmgren, Hugo Alfvén, and Edvard Grieg.

ORGANIZER, TIMELINE, THEME, AND PRIZES

§ 1 The composition competition is open **from March 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026**, to all composers regardless of nationality or place of residence. By participating in the competition, the composer agrees to abide by the competition rules.

§ 2 MM seeks new male choral music with “classic potential”. The intention is for the winning compositions to be eligible for inclusion in a future edition of the Blue Book. Therefore, a composition submitted to the competition should have a level of difficulty suitable for an amateur choir and possess qualities that can make it a future male choir classic. The composition should relate to one or more aspects of the choir's anniversary theme (see Appendix 1). The text may be in any language. The composer must ensure the text is either in the public domain or that the composer has obtained the author's permission for its use.

§ 3 The jury will award prizes from a total prize pool of 30,000 euros, distributed at the jury's discretion. The jury's decision is final and cannot be appealed.

FORMAT AND PARTICIPATION

§ 4 Competition entries should be ca 2–6 minutes in duration. The work must be written for male choir a cappella in four parts (TTBB), though divisi is permitted. No instruments may be used. Short vocal solo passages are permitted if they can be performed by choir soloists, but the choir must maintain a prominent role. The work may consist of several movements, provided the total maximum duration is not exceeded. If a composition has multiple text verses, all verses written in the score must be performable within the maximum duration. The submitted work must be final material.

§ 5 The entry must be previously unpublished and unperformed, and it may not be published or performed before the competition results are announced.

§ 6 Submissions must be made under a **pseudonym**, which must be clearly marked on the score. A participant can submit multiple works but if submitting multiple works, each work must be submitted under a different pseudonym. Entries should be submitted in PDF format to tavling@muntramusikanter.fi or by mail to:

Kompositionstävling

Sällskapet MM rf

Elisabetsgatan 2

FI-00170 Helsingfors

FINLAND

Only entries received before the deadline will be considered. The email or letter must separately include: (i) the name of the work, (ii) the composer's name, (iii) the pseudonym, (iv) contact information, and (v) a declaration that the composer has the right to use the text.

COPIES AND LEARNING MATERIALS

§ 7 MM reserves the right to make electronic or paper copies of the composition for the jury and for the singers to practice and perform the work, without further compensation to the composer.

§ 8 If a work is awarded a prize, the composer agrees to provide part-predominant learning files (e.g., in .sib, .mid, or MP3 format) upon request by MM.

JURY

The jury consists of:

Riku Laurikka. Artistic Director and Conductor of MM)

Saara Aittakumpu

Elisa Huovinen

Jaakko Mäntyjärvi

Henrik Wikström

Visa Yrjölä.

Kimmo Norrena, Competition Secretary and Secretary for MM's Music Committee.

RESULTS AND PERFORMANCE

§ 9 The winning entries will be announced on MM's website (www.muntramusikanter.fi) no later than **September 1, 2027**.

§ 10 Selected winning works will be **premiered in Autumn 2028 at MM's 150th Anniversary Concert**, in connection to which the award ceremony will also take place. The entries may also be performed at other concerts organized by the choir. Where possible, MM will cover reasonable travel and accommodation costs for composers attending the premiere of an awarded work.

§ 11 MM reserves the rights to the winning entries until the end of 2028. Thereafter, the composer is free to publish the score. Additionally, MM reserves the exclusive right to make the first recording of the works until the end of 2030.

CONTACT

Questions can be directed to the Competition Secretary, Kimmo Norrena, at kimmo.norrena@icloud.com (no competition entries should be sent to this address).

APPENDIX 1 – MM 150TH ANNIVERSARY THEME:



MM 150th Anniversary Theme:

Responsibility

Responsibility in things great and small - what does it mean?

*What is the responsibility of the individual, and what do we leave behind for the next generation?
How do we pass on the baton?*

We are responsible for our traditions, but also for the present and the future. We have a responsibility to constantly evolve.

We have the responsibility and the courage to defend a humane worldview, justice, Western values, and democracy. We are brave enough to go against the current when our fundamental values are threatened.

We take responsibility for a humane approach in dialogue. We stand by what we say. We let facts and truth prevail in our statements. We remain critical of our sources.

We take responsibility for what is important in our individual lives: family and loved ones.

What is the responsibility of the choir?

We aim to maintain our position as standard-bearers for choral culture. With our feet firmly planted in choral tradition, we seek to courageously develop both the choral repertoire and the performance experience. We take responsibility for carrying the message and conveying the narrative in choral works: the interplay between music and lyrics.

We recognize our responsibility as documentarians of the male choir repertoire. MM has published The Blue Book since 1909 and considers it our duty to maintain this task and evolve the repertoire for future editions.