CONSTRUCTING A WEB OF CULTURE: 
THE CASE OF akKOORd, AN OVERBERG COMMUNITY CHOIR

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Musicae in Choral Conducting in the Faculty of Arts at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

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DECLARATION BY STUDENT

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QUALIFICATION:  _______________________________________________

DECLARATION:

In accordance with Rule G4.6.3, I hereby declare that the above-mentioned treatise is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment to another university or for another qualification.

SIGNATURE:  __________________________________________________

DATE:   _____________________________________________________
DECLARATION OF ETHICS

I hereby declare that this research was conducted with due cognizance of the ethical considerations involved, and that it was approved by the Ethics Subcommittee of the NMMU Arts Faculty RTI Committee. To this end:

- Research subjects were informed of the aims and the objectives of this study
- Research subjects participated in this research on a voluntary basis
- Research subjects gave the researcher permission to use their responses in the writing of her treatise.

Signature:

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Place: Bredasdorp, South Africa
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ABSTRACT

akKOORd, a community choir in the relatively small southern region of the Overberg, was formed in 2006, and although the choir has only a brief history, its spirit, activities, and concerts have inspired and touched many people. This qualitative study pays attention to aspects of the choir’s history, its performance practice and of the “web” of community members connected to and involved in its activities. Through interviews and personal notes this in-depth study provides a “micronarrative” of this choir within the “web” of the Overberg community itself. It aims to not only interpret this narrative with regard to the meaning behind actions and their symbolic importance in society, but also to explore its relevance in the broader context of current South African cultural discourse.

During this research it became evident that policy makers and potential funders regard this predominantly white choir with its Western repertoire as a form of undesirable exclusivity and elitism. This study opposes such a point of view, contending instead that elitism in the form of excellence has the power to defy barriers of social standing and ethnicity, and to unite people through a collective sense of ownership.
KEY WORDS
Web of Culture; Community Choir; Choir; Elitism; Micronarrative; akKOORd; Overberg.
Windy City Songs | Sunday 22 June 2008 | Cape Town City Hall

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Choir, a.k.a. OORd, Kenmere Primary School Choir, The Erub Children’s Choir
Soloists: Pretty Yende & Musawenkosi Ngcungwana and
Cape Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Péter Louis van Dijk
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION TO THIS STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Believing, [...] that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning (Geertz 1973: 5).

Over the past decade, numerous impact and value studies on choral music have been conducted in America and elsewhere abroad. These include two studies by Chorus America in 2002 and 2003, CNYCAC in 2002, and Cindy L. Bell in 2004. Many of these studies were initiated to assert the significance of choral music, and have indicated the widespread impact it has on choir members and their immediate communities.

Although several studies in the South African choral context (for example the history of a few prominent South African choirs) have been conducted and documented, the catalogue of masters’ and doctoral dissertations provided in Engelbrecht and Parker (1997) as well as a wider search of internet sites and library catalogues, has indicated that, in this country, this specific area of interest has not been adequately studied, particularly from the point of view of it being more than a mere historiographic exercise but rather ‘an interpretive one in search of meaning’.

1.2 MOTIVATION, RATIONALE AND CONTEXT FOR THIS STUDY

In the relatively small Overberg region, a community choir called akKOORd was formed in 2006 by the conductor and researcher of this study. Although the choir has a brief history, its spirit, activities and concerts have inspired and touched many people, calling for further scrutiny of its impact on its own choir members as well as on the Overberg community as a whole. An in-depth study of this nature will not only provide a

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1 Central New York Community Arts Council
2 One example of this type of study is Lombaard, D. 2008. “Die Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosch Libertaskoor en sy bydrae tot 'n multikulturele musieklewe”. Unpublished master’s dissertation, Stellenbosch University.
3 For the purposes of this study, the term “Overberg” will refer to the region of the Western Cape in South Africa incorporating the towns Napier, Bredasdorp, Struisbaai and L’Agulhas.
“micronarrative” of this choir in a small community, but will also aim to interpret this narrative in the broader context of current South African cultural discourse.

The idea of Western art music as an unwelcome form of elitism, one which opposes the democratization of culture in the post-colony, is well on its way to becoming a meta-narrative of the New South Africa. When I recently applied for local government funding to support and expand the activities of my choir, I was told in no uncertain terms that my choir was ‘too white’ (despite its non-white members) and our music ‘too Western’. This reaction is an understandable throwback of colonial domination and especially of the perceived alliance between art music, Afrikaner Nationalism and apartheid (Muller 1998); a period, in other words, when metropolitan discourse prevailed and Western art music itself was the musical meta-narrative. These perceptions could and should be deconstructed and changed for the following reasons:

Firstly, there are many grounds on which to argue for the lack of congruence between South African art music and Afrikaner Nationalism. Muller argues that ‘South African art music under Apartheid […] does not simplistically constitute a colonialist text emaciated by a political system that forced it to become a ventriloquist’s dummy for a temporally and geographically removed Europe’. Instead ‘it can also be read as postcolonial text critically scrutinizing the colonial relationship and setting out to resist colonial relationships from within the music’ (Muller 1998: 80).

Secondly, the above mentioned meta-narrative is an inaccurate representation of the history of South African art music composition and performance practice because it belies the many instances of transculturation, the many ‘third spaces’ in which South African culture happens, spaces that may be described as both the ‘Africanisation of art music’ and the ‘metropolitanisation of African music’. These transcultural ‘third spaces’, as Bhabha (1994: 37) describes them, are the vital locations of post-colonial culture. To perpetuate the binary opposition Western/African is to perpetuate the meta-narrative, and to miss out on this vitality entirely. The result may well be ‘the abandonment of the

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4 The small stories of individuals that differ from each other in given contexts, and that give rise to a perception of history as a multiplicity of genealogies (Lyotard 1979).

5 Meta-narratives – sometimes also called ‘grand narratives’ – are large-scale theories, perceptions and philosophies of the world, such as the progress of history, the knowability of everything by science, and the possibility of absolute freedom. Lyotard argues that today we have ceased to believe that narratives of this kind are adequate to represent and contain us all. We have become alert to difference, diversity, the incompatibility of our aspirations, beliefs and desires, and for that reason postmodernity is characterised by an abundance of micronarratives (Lyotard 1979).
aesthetic perspective in favour of the amalgam of society – an “open-air prison” where all difference is obliterated and replaced by nuanced versions of the same in a miraculous resurrection of the meta-narrative from the ashes of high modernism and the Apartheid State’ (Muller 1998: 81).

Thirdly, it will be argued that art music may therefore rather be understood as one of the many micronarratives of the post-colony. The place of akKOORD is thus one of a ‘micronarrative within a micronarrative’. As the voice of one particular community that continues to flourish despite the many challenges it must overcome, it represents a microcosm of the Rainbow, a sublime expression of democracy. “This renaissance of the amateur spirit in music is an expression of democracy. It affords the opportunity and encouragement of each person young and old to use the music that is in him in co-operation with others. Music, like all the fine arts, has its aristocracies, but in its community expression it is increasingly democratic” (Birge 1939: 226).

1.3 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

Several theoretical and methodological approaches are applied in this study, all of which may be collected under the umbrella of postmodernism.

According to the online Glossary Definition, postmodernism is generally understood as

[...] a reaction to the assumed certainty of scientific, or objective, efforts to explain reality [...] [and] stems from a recognition that reality is not simply mirrored in human understanding of it, but rather, is constructed as the mind tries to understand its own particular and personal reality. For this reason, postmodernism is highly sceptical of explanations, which claim to be valid for all groups, cultures, traditions, or races, and instead focuses on the relative truths of each person. In the postmodern understanding, interpretation is everything; reality only comes into being through our interpretations of what the world means to us individually6.

Palmer adds the following:

Postmodernism [...] places emphasis on lived experience, people’s narratives and voices, and discourses that are taken as negotiating and constructing epistemologies, political and social relationships, organization and culture (Palmer 2008: 205).

6 http://www.pbs.org/faithandreason/gengloss/postm-body.html
Jean-François Lyotard is known for his articulation of postmodernism and its impact on the human condition. His work is characterized by a persistent opposition to universals, meta-narratives, and generality. The essence of postmodernism is to move away from universal “meta-narratives” and concentrate on micronarratives instead ([http://www.iep.utm.edu/l/Lyotard.htm](http://www.iep.utm.edu/l/Lyotard.htm)). Rider further explains:

[...] the overarching meta-narrative [...] that forms our worldview has failed to fulfil our needs. The world is now seen as intersecting micronarratives; people can relate because their personal explanation of the world connects with another’s explanation, but are recognizably individual because no two world-views are identical. All micronarratives are equally valid in Lyotard’s theories, and this fits in nicely with postmodernism’s push towards inclusion rather than marginalization (Rider nd: 1).

In this particular study, the “small story” of akKoor will be seen as one of the many micronarratives of the rural people of South Africa, but one which may ultimately also be shown to have relevance to broader cultural discourse in this country.

In order to describe such a micronarrative, this study also aligns itself with Clifford Geertz’s notions of “thick description” and a “web of culture”. Geertz’s approach asserts the essentially semiotic nature of culture and has implications for the social sciences in general. According to Geertz (1973), “thick description” is aimed at a rich, detailed description of specifics and is intended to explain the meaning behind actions and their symbolic importance in society. The ethnographer’s job is to observe, record, and analyze a culture. More specifically, he or she must interpret signs to gain their meaning within the culture itself. This interpretation must be based on the "thick description" of a sign in order to see all of its possible meanings (Sies et al. 2009). The “web of culture” refers to the elements (in this instance of choral activity) that form internal relationships with other elements of culture and the community (in this instance the Overberg specifically, and South Africa in general). By “specifying the internal relationships among these elements, the whole system can be characterized in a general way – according to the core symbols around which it is organized, the underlying structures of which it is a surface expression, or the ideological principles upon which it is based” (Geertz 1973: 17).

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7 French philosopher and literary theorist
8 “A global or totalizing cultural narrative schema which orders and explains knowledge and experience” (Stephens 1998)
9 An important cultural anthropologist
10 A philosophical theory of the functions of signs and symbols
Gary Tomlinson, an influential postmodern music historian, relies heavily on Geertz’s writings, and thus serves as a further point of reference for the theoretical underpinning of this treatise. This is aptly reflected in his 1984 article entitled “The Web of Culture: A Context for Musicology”. In constructing our musical histories, says Tomlinson, we benefit by such insights because:

[…] judgement, guesswork, and intuition are […] involved in every act of human discourse, across cultures as well as within them. Every attempt at understanding involves an act of translation, the entangling, so to speak, of slightly or greatly differing webs, one man enriching this web of significant signs with the novelties that he perceives in another’s (Tomlinson 1984: 351).

1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN
This historical micronarrative of akKOORd has been designed as a qualitative case study11. The qualitative research approach allows for “emphasis […] on studying human action in its natural setting and through the eyes of the actors themselves, together with an emphasis on detailed description and understanding phenomena within the appropriate context […]”(Babbie & Mouton 2001: 278)

1.4.1 DELIMITATION OF THE FIELD
In addition to a study of the relevant literature and secondary data, this study is based on responses from a sample of choir and community members, limited to four choristers and two supporters of akKOORd, a choir based in Bredasdorp in the Western Cape, South Africa.

In this regard the following limitations apply:

- Although there are many choir supporters outside this area, only community members of the Napier, Bredasdorp and L'Agulhas/Struisbaaiarea who have attended one or more of the choir’s performances were considered for interviews.
- Only current choir members were considered for interviews.
- As a qualitative study, its interviewees were selected on the basis of non-probability, purposive sampling. As such this empirical study makes no claims about the universal relevance of its findings, although it does defend the “external

11 A case study is the collection and presentation of detailed information about a particular participant or small group, frequently including the accounts of subjects themselves, (http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/research/glossary/)
validity” and “reliability” (Soy 1997: 1) of its findings by means of cross references to similar studies conducted elsewhere in the world, most notably in the United States of America.

1.4.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
The primary objective of this study has been to determine, evaluate and describe the impact akKOORd has on its members and the Overberg Community.

The secondary objectives of the study were:
- To write a detailed document of the choir’s history and accomplishments
- To document the choir’s performance practice
- To describe the “web” of people involved in the choir’s concerts and projects
- To position and describe the choir in the broader South African context as “micronarrative” within the web of South African culture.

1.4.3 METHODOLOGY FOR THE EMPIRICAL SURVEY
According to Babbie & Mouton, qualitative research designs share a few typical features, namely, a detailed engagement/encounter with the object of study, a small selection of cases to be studied, a multi-method approach and flexible design features (2001: 279).

The above qualitative features have had the following implications for me as the researcher:
- The researcher “is the most important instrument in the research process” (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 270) and needs to “get close to the research subject in order to generate legitimate and truthful ‘insider’ descriptions” (2001: 273).
- The emic\textsuperscript{12} perspective will be taken with the aim not only to “describe and understand the participants own actions, decisions, behaviour, practices, rituals”, but also to highlight the idiographic motive of this study as it places these aspects “within the concrete natural context in which they occur” (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 272).
- These descriptions should be “in-depth (‘thick’) descriptions […] that capture the sense of actions as they occur [and] places events in contexts that are understandable to the actors themselves” (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 272).

\textsuperscript{12} The actor’s or insider view
With the researcher so close to the subject, this also implies that the researcher should be “unbiased in his or her descriptions and interpretations” (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 270) and objective through “generating truthful and credible inter-subjectivity” (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 273).

As a qualitative research process is often inductive in its approach, I have attempted throughout this study to ensure my “immersion in the natural setting, describing events as accurately as possible, as they occur or have occurred and slowly but surely build second order constructs […] that will make sense of the observations”. The emphasis has therefore been on developing and building inductively based interpretations of first-order descriptions and events, rather than approaching the social actors with deductively derived research hypotheses (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 273).

A general design principle for this case study research is that it was conceptualized and constructed within the framework of the literature review and my own experience in the field. It is on this basis that I define the purpose of the study, present the principles guiding the study and define important concepts (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 282).

1.4.3.1 The Measuring Instruments

In a case study design, a very important aspect is the use of multiple sources of data, as well as multiple methods and sources of evidence (sometimes called triangulation) in order to give a “thick description” (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 282). In this case the primary source of data collection derived from basic semi-structured interviews with the six respondents in question. Secondary data used includes newspaper articles and archive material of the choir’s activities.

Semi-structured interviews with the six respondents were conducted where and whenever it suited the respondents best, which for the most part ended up being in the cosy surroundings of the local coffee shop! According to Babbie & Mouton, a qualitative interview is essentially a conversation in which the interviewer establishes a general direction for the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent (2001: 289). The design in qualitative interviewing is iterative and this continuous nature of interviewing implies that questioning will be redesigned throughout the project (Rubin &
Rubin 1995: 46-47 in Babbie & Mouton 2001: 289). To achieve adequate “thick descriptions”, interviews need to probe and encourage detailed in-depth descriptions and to let respondents speak freely (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 274). In this case validity and reliability was ensured by writing extensive field notes, using a recorder to tape these conversations, and doing member checks of the transcriptions13.

1.4.3.2 The Sample
For this study purposive sampling as a type of non-probability sampling method was used. As the conductor of akKOORd and the author of this treatise, I took it upon myself to use my own judgement in the selection of sample members (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 202). Four choir members and two community members were ultimately included in this study, and their anonymity was guaranteed. Selection was based on my intention to deliberately seek out respondents I knew would engage in effective, meaningful conversations, as “sampling in the interpretive paradigm is often purposeful and directed at certain inclusive criteria…” (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 288). Although my primary aim in selection was never to include representative respondents (e.g. according to gender, age, ethnicity and geographic location), I did attempt as far as possible to take such representivity into account.

1.4.3.3 Analysis Procedures
After organizing all the empirical data in this study and pointing to the emergence of clear conceptual categories, these were matched and compared to other sources of textual data (my own personal notes as conductor, newspaper reports, sources in the literature review) to represent further dimensions of thick descriptions (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 283) and to ultimately work towards Susan Soy’s four requirements for meaningful case studies, namely, 1) construct validity, 2) internal validity, 3) external validity, and 4) reliability. She further explains each of these four requirements as follows:

Construct validity requires the researcher to use the correct measures for the concepts being studied. Internal validity [...] demonstrates that certain conditions lead to other conditions and requires the use of multiple pieces of evidence from multiple sources to uncover convergent lines of inquiry. The researcher strives to establish a chain of evidence forward and backward. External validity reflects whether or not findings are generalizable beyond the immediate case or cases; the more variations

13 According to Babbie & Mouton member checks take place when we take our transcripts and analysed texts back to our respondents and check with them whether what we have constructed from our data is actually what they said. (2001: 276)
in places, people, and procedures a case study can withstand and still yield the same findings, the more external validity. Techniques such as cross-case examination and within-case examination along with literature review helps ensure external validity. Reliability refers to the stability, accuracy, and precision of measurement. Exemplary case study design ensures that the procedures used are well documented and can be repeated with the same results over and over again (Soy 1997: 1).

Ultimately, therefore, this treatise attempts to demonstrate the reliability and eternal validity of its case study findings by relating these to broader aspects of social, cultural and political discourse in South Africa today.

1.5 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS
In the forthcoming chapter I provide a brief historical narrative of akKOORd, including aspects of its performance practice and of the “web” of community members connected to and involved in its activities. In Chapter Three I present and interpret data gained from the interviews conducted with the sample of interviewees, within the context of the secondary data previously described. In both Chapters Two and Three observations are interpreted against the findings of impact studies conducted elsewhere in the world, particularly prevalent in the United States of America. The fourth and final chapter of this treatise presents a brief interpretation of the nature and musical activities of akKOORd, both locally within the Overberg region, and ultimately also in its broader South African social and cultural context.
CHAPTER 2
A BRIEF HISTORY AND PROFILE OF akKOORd

2.1 PASSION PLAY
From 11 to 13 April 2006, despite predictions of stormy weather and heavy rains, an estimated 3 000 people from as far away as Pretoria attended the Cape Agulhas Passion Play which took place in an open-air venue, the Bredasdorp High School Sports Arena. Initiated by the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church in Bredasdorp (and under their patronage), this community project was an attempt to unite all denominations, races and cultures through the arts. The Passion Play, the first local production of its kind in the history of Bredasdorp (Suidernuus: Friday 21 April 2006: 2 and Friday 5 May 2006a: 15) was produced by the author of this treatise, the current conductor of akKOORd. Over the course of six months, auditions and rehearsals for the choir were held, the play was constructed, planned and rehearsed, costumes were made, beards were grown to suit characters, the stage was built and preparations were made for this extensive, large-scale project, all of which was accomplished by the amateur, local residents of Napier, Bredasdorp and L’Agulhas (Suidernuus: Friday 21 April 2006: 2). Not only did it involve the 86 choir members and 28 “actors” who were to portray the various biblical characters, but also an enormous production team, numerous stage builders, costume makers, make-up artists, choreographers, sound- and lighting experts, photographers, video-recorders, and even a local donkey leader.

Over a hundred people from the local area devoted their time, talents and skills to the production. This spiritual, emotional and memorable event was a huge success, and the synergy and impact on the Overberg community, enormous and wide-spread (Suidernuus 21 April 2006: 12).

2.2 FORMATION AND AUDITIONS
This community project had another, important spin-off: In the course of preparing singers and conducting the mass choir for the event, I was struck by the amount of musical and vocal talent amongst the members of my community. I began to consider the possibility
that such a local community choir might become a permanent fixture in future. A subsequent visit to choral friends of the NMMU\textsuperscript{14} lead to my enrolment as a masters’ student in Choral Conducting that year, and the need for me to have an “instrument” at my disposal for this degree was the final catalyst in my decision to form a permanent community choir in the Bredasdorp area.

Every member of the Passion Play mass choir, as well as a few potential additional choristers from the community that I approached, received an invitation to re-audition for a brand new independent\textsuperscript{15} choir which would perform a repertoire comprising classical and lighter music, secular as well as non-secular. Auditions were held over a period of two weeks. Given the type of chorister with whom I would be working I resolved early on that sight reading skills or the lack thereof would not be a deciding factor. Instead I tested candidates’ aural abilities, vocal skills and musical potential, as well as their ability to blend their voices with others.

Though most of the 86 passion play choir members were auditioned, only fourteen sopranos, eleven altos, five tenors and five basses were selected. Ages varied from 21 up to 67 and were all working adults, including (amongst others) teachers (four music teachers), architects, lawyers, beauticians, secretaries, builders, ministers, architects, dentists, shop owners and assistants, farmers, business owners and housewives. On 8 May 2006, a new choir, at that stage still without a name, was formed and had its first formal rehearsal in the Dutch Reformed Church Hall in Bredasdorp from 18:30 until 20:30. Of the 35 members, almost everyone had previous choral experience\textsuperscript{16} and only sixteen were sight-readers (a mere 6%). Although a few easy pieces were rehearsed at this first rehearsal, note-bashing on the repertoire for the choir’s first performance, the Overberg Eisteddfod, was also started (\textit{Suidernuus} Friday 25 August 2006: 14).

2.3 \textbf{NAME}

For the first two months of the choir’s existence, it did not have a formal name. Choir members were encouraged to come up with an original name, preferably an Afrikaans

\textsuperscript{14} Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
\textsuperscript{15} The choir is not associated or affiliated with any church, organization or institution.
name since Afrikaans is the prevailing language in the Bredasdorp community, and one which would capture the uniqueness of the group. In the end it was I who came up with the name “akKOORd”, which was immediately accepted by the group. This word, meaning both chord – “the simultaneous sounding of three or more tones” – and accord – “agreement, harmony, unity” - also has the signature capital letters of the word “KOOR” (“CHOIR”) within it, thus simultaneously signifying “accord”, “concord” and “choir”. This name is a true reflection of what the choir represents – a group united in song, creating harmony in their community. Daugherty summarises this significant role of a choir as follows:

Perhaps more importantly, choral singing engenders relationships among the people who participate in its various phenomena, whether as singers, conductors, or listeners (Daugherty 2009: 1).

2.4 VISION/MISSION STATEMENT

The choir aspires to establish cultural awareness and activity in the community, as well as an active choral culture throughout the Overberg. This we aim to do through participating in workshops, competitions, eisteddfods and performances, as well as hosting and performing with outstanding visiting choirs and other musical ensembles. As working side by side with the best professional musicians benefits and educates the choir, we always try to invite the best musicians we can afford.

2.5 REHEARSALS

2.5.1 VENUES, TIME SCHEDULES

Over the past four years, rehearsals have taken form in a sequence and time that has stayed more or less the same. The choir rehearses every Monday from 18:30 to 20:30 and a specific voice group some Thursdays between 18:00 and 19:00. The latter sectional rehearsals play an important part in developing and forming the voices – establishing a homogeneous sound within each group. At these sectional rehearsals, any questions and problem areas regarding the music are answered and rehearsed.

16 In the empirical survey conducted as part of this treatise, the results of which are discussed in chapter 3, all four
Rehearsals take place in the Dutch Reformed Church Hall in Bredasdorp, which has the essentials like music stands, piano, chairs and choir stalls. This spacious venue is ideally suited to music: it has rich acoustics and is often used for choral workshops and performances.

Respecting the time and families of these working adults, rehearsals start at 18:30 and end strictly at 20:30 and there are no rehearsals or performances during school holidays or on public holidays. Although these rehearsal times are convenient for most of the choir members, the real challenge lies in preparing more difficult pieces for performances within the same amount of rehearsal time. At the beginning of each semester, choir members are given a time and date schedule with details about rehearsals, performances and rehearsal venues, in order to plan ahead. Little if any changes are made to these schedules.

2.5.2 STRUCTURE OF REHEARSALS

A typical rehearsal starts with breathing exercises, stretching the body, vocal warm-ups, and working on vocal skills and exercises. As master’s student at NMMU, I was fortunate to have had akKOORD exposed to various expert lecturers in the field. On one such occasion, we were visited by celebrated teacher and baritone, Dr. Brad Liebl\textsuperscript{17}, who shared with us his own vocal exercises. I have found these to be extremely good vocal warm-ups for akKOORD. They promote excellent vocal diction and a homogenous sound. Apart from a few of my own customized exercises, I mostly continue to this day to use these exercises during my rehearsals.

After the initial warm-ups, the rehearsal proceeds with note-bashing of new music and interpretation of works already learnt. After an hour’s rehearsal there is a break of five minutes, during which choir members and I make important announcements regarding the choir and its members, communicate any personal matters (for example a birthday), celebrate collective accomplishments and achievements, or discuss any matters which need support. The rehearsal then continues until 20:30.

\textsuperscript{17}Dr. Brad Liebl (summa cum laude from University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music) is an Associate Professor of Classical Voice and Co-ordinator (from 1998 to 2003) of that division at the College of Music, University of Cape Town. He is also contracted as vocal coach in the NMMU masters’ choral conducting program.
When rehearsals start for new, big performances such as the Vivaldi *Gloria*, *Windy City Songs* and the *Sān Gloria*, a “Musical Marathon”, mostly doing note-bashing, is scheduled on a Saturday. These musical marathons start early in the morning at 08:00, with each voice group rehearsing individually for two hours in order to attend to the details of their individual parts. The aim of these special rehearsals is to give the group a basic idea of the musical content and learn most of the work’s notes. During these rehearsals I usually play a recording of the work, go through the pronunciation of the words and make sure everyone learns the correct notes. After each group has rehearsed for an hour, we take a short break, have coffee and biscuits and socialize a bit.

2.5.3 REPETITEUR, NOTE-BASHING AND ACCOMPANIMENTS

The choir has no permanent *repetiteur* and I usually do note-bashing and accompaniments during rehearsals myself. When we have final rehearsals for concerts, a local professional musician is paid to help. This fee is normally included in the budget for the forthcoming concert.

Note-bashing is done group by group, combining the parts as soon as possible and attending to musical detail right from the start. Although this method takes many hours of careful planning on my part, it has proved to be the most productive way of rehearsing in the case of this particular choir. Rehearsals are always focused on the next performance and always include a new, exciting, challenging piece of music to keep everyone interested.

As such a large number of the choristers have little or no sight-reading skills, they rely on learning new music aurally. This takes longer, but it has become evident that – with this technique – choristers listen more attentively, memorise music faster, grasp the musical nuances from the start, and remember the music longer. When new music is studied, I always make sure everyone understands the meaning and interpretation of all the musical terms. Over time, choir members have learnt the important musical terms which appear in the music being studied.
2.6 RELATIONSHIPS

A special bond between these choir members of completely dissimilar backgrounds has developed over the past four years to create a very strong group with a prominent position in the Overberg community. Their common goal – making music – unites them. In my experience the value of this shared experience in cementing a sense of community cannot be overestimated. This phenomenon is particularly well described by a respondent in VAN:

We believe that everyone ought to have a place to sing, and that singing strengthens the community by drawing its members together in mutual respect and enjoyment of the many styles of music that represent their varied backgrounds (VAN 2007. In Bell, 2008: 233)

At the beginning of a new year, each choir member is allocated a new “choir buddy”. This system was implemented to make administrative tasks a bit easier and to ensure that everyone is informed about everything. Should members not be able to attend a rehearsal, their buddy will make sure they get any new music handed out during a rehearsal or critical information, such as important dates that need to be diarised. At the rehearsal closest to a member’s birthday, their buddies will congratulate them and hand over a small gift. According to one respondent, this system not only has administrative advantages, but also results in getting to know other choir members better through communicating about mutual choir matters. Choristers take it upon themselves to inform me about any personal matters involving their choral buddy when they think it is important for me to be aware of such matters. Therefore this system not only has numerous advantages for the smooth running of the choir itself, but also helps to create a social web amongst its choristers.

A fine balance between discipline and pleasure must always be kept. Careful planning, preparation and administration on my part ensure that the maximum amount of quality work gets done, in limited time, with maximum success and pleasure experienced. Collins describes this important, sensitive balance particularly well: “Singing is the gift, discipline is the way, and making music is the art. […] Only through discipline and sacrifice are we able to transform that gift of singing into something valuable […] We must take that simple gift of singing and apply to it choral technique, musicianship, and long hours of concentrated practice so that it will become valuable and useful to others. Then, at that

18 Vocal Area Network
Almost all the choir members are working adults for whom this “hobby” takes up precious family time. Choir members have a lot of respect for each other and the group they have created and become part of. Should anyone be late or not able to attend a rehearsal, members will always contact me to excuse themselves. Their commitment has to a great extent been the energy and driving force behind the choir. Mussulman (in Bell 2004: 9) describes this particularly well: “The wonderful thing about the amateur chorus is that nobody can buy its attendance at rehearsals, or the sweat, eyestrain and fatigue that go along with the glow; and nobody but the most purposive and creative of music minds – from Bach in both directions – can invite and sustain its devotion”.

Due to the very limited time during weekly rehearsals, there is not much time for socialising during or after rehearsals. Over the past three years, many friendships have developed and choir members enjoy the company of each other. At the end of the year we have a Christmas function, when choir members and their spouses socialise together by sitting at one long table, telling jokes, and reflecting on the year’s activities.

2.7 MANAGEMENT
Although I organise and administer most of the choir’s concerts and activities, a management team of three is nominated and voted every year to assist me. These three people take care of tasks such as finding accommodation for visiting choirs, sponsorship for advertisements in programs and special treats during important rehearsals. An enthusiastic choir supporter manages the financial aspects of concerts and ticket sales. A choir member is responsible for making copies of sheet music and makes sure every choir member receives the music.

2.8 CHOIR UNIFORM
Until 15 March 2008, the choir had no uniform/robes and wore black from head to toe during performances. Although this diversity in unity was interesting, there was a huge need for a distinctive choir uniform. Two well known figures in fashion from Bredasdorp
worked closely with a local dressmaker to design a stylish, yet simple uniform. All the women’s measurements were taken and three local seamstresses worked for a month to finish thirty uniforms with a striking white collar detail. A black shirt was chosen and bought for the men. Every choir member had to “pay” for their uniform by selling a certain number of tickets for the New Canaan High School Madrigal Ensemble Concert (21 February 2008)\(^{19}\) and the Vivaldi *Gloria*\(^{20}\) concert that was held on 15 March 2008. It was at this concert that the new uniform was presented with great pride for the first time. (Suidermuus, 7 March 2008d: 12).

### 2.9 RITUALS

Since its formation the choir has had a few “rituals” before every performance. After warm-ups and singing through the first few bars of every song on the program, I will communicate the last important interpretational detail. Everyone then gathers for a small glass of sherry to ease any excess stress. I then make sure that everyone is comfortable, energized and focused. After lining up in the correct formation for that performance, a choir member will say a prayer and we walk onto the stage in a very distinctive, energetic manner.

### 2.10 REGISTRY

After *akKOORd’s* first concert on 21 October 2006 I was struck by the overwhelming community support that the choir enjoyed and the need to inform our supporters of our future concerts. We therefore started a registry that we leave in the hallway of the concert venue where members of the audience can leave their comments, names and addresses. We constantly update this registry and when we start advertising a new concert, we either call them or send a bulk sms message to them via the internet.

### 2.11 REPERTOIRE

During the first year, repertoire focused mainly on short, easy four-part classical pieces to work on basic choral aspects, choral blending and to boost the choir’s confidence.

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\(^{19}\) See section 2.12.5.4 of this chapter

\(^{20}\) See section 2.12.1.2 of this chapter
Programs over the past four years illustrate how I deliberately chose music in different languages (for example Latin, German, French, Norwegian, Dutch, English and Afrikaans) and periods to give the choir exposure to many styles of music. Negro Spirituals as well as Afrikaans, Xhosa, Zulu, Ovambo, Israeli, Norwegian and Swedish folk tunes provided easily accessible pieces with which to start.

The texts of foreign-language pieces are usually studied as follows: I begin with translation and an explanation. Thereafter, if I or any of the choristers are not able to assist in the pronunciation of these foreign languages, I contact local residents in the Bredasdorp area who coach the choir with pronunciation.

Although the choir began with repertoire I considered easily manageable, they have since progressed way beyond any such considerations. As the choir started preparing for my choral examinations, the repertoire became progressively more difficult. In this regard they have risen to the challenge most admirably.

Interviews with choral respondents – discussed in greater detail in the forthcoming chapter of this treatise – indicate that choristers enjoy performing in a variety of styles, from classical to informal, light secular music. The variety, the sheer beauty of the melodies and the many challenges presented to them (singing *a capella*, for example) is what keeps them interested. As indicated in the forthcoming chapter, community respondents also prefer the choir to present different styles of music, indicating that they would not have attended concerts if we only performed classical music.

Some of the repertoire the choir has performed over the past four years includes the following:

**First Concert (Kleine Orgelmesse: 5 May 2007)**  
*Gloria in Excelsis Deo* (III) from *Christmas Cantata* – Daniel Pinkham  
*Laudate Dominum* (from *Vesperae Solennes* KV 339) – W.A. Mozart  
*Locus Iste* (from *Seven Motets for Unaccompanied Chorus*) – A. Bruckner  
*Unser lieben Frauen Traum* (from *8 Geistliche Gesange*) Op. 138 – Max Reger  
*The Lord Bless you and Keep you* – John Rutter

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21 Discussed in section 2.12.1.1 of this chapter
Festival Sanctus – John Leavitt
Kyrie (from Missa Brevis in C Minor) – Imant Raminsh
Song of Praise – Knut Nystedt
Missa Brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo – Frans Joseph Haydn

Second Concert (Vivaldi Gloria: 15 March 2008)\textsuperscript{22}
Gloria in D RV 589 – Antonio Vivaldi

Third Concert (Sân Gloria: 29 March 2009)\textsuperscript{23}
Beatus Vir (from Selva morale e spirituale) – Claudio Monteverdi
The Benediction – Knut Nystedt
Cantique de Jean Racine Op.11 – Gabriel Fauré
Sân Gloria – Péter Louis van Dijk

First UNISA Examination (Unisa Report)\textsuperscript{24}
Song of Praise – Knut Nystedt
Al lê die Berge – Peter Louis van Dijk
Carrousel – P. Kaelin

Second UNISA Examination (Unisa Report)
Cantique de Jean Racine – G. Fauré
Herre Jesus gi meg nåde – arranged B. Sløgedal
Kinders moenie in die water mors nie – arranged A. Louw

Kaap-Rapport Choir Competition
Al lê die Berge – Péter Louis van Dijk
Carrousel – P. Kaelin

Windy City Songs – Péter Louis van Dijk

Folk Tunes

\textit{Wedding Song from Valdres} (Norwegian folksong) – arranged Joar Rørmark

\textsuperscript{22} Discussed in section 2.12.1.2 of this chapter
\textsuperscript{23} Discussed in section 2.12.1.3 of this chapter
\textsuperscript{24} Discussed in section 2.12.2 of this chapter
Bonk'abaphandle (Zulu Traditional)
Värmlandsvisan (Swedish folksong) – arranged Jan Åke Hillerud
Mazurka from Lom (Norwegian folksong) – arranged Joar Rørmark
Dikgomo di Matjoba (Xhosa Traditional)
Thula Sizwe (Zulu Traditional)
Shalom Aleichem (Israeli folksong)
Meguru (Traditional from Ovamboland)
Al lê die Berge (South African folksong) – arranged Péter Louis van Dijk
Kinders moenie in die water mors nie (South African folksong) – arranged Albie Louw

Negro Spirituals
Down by the Riverside – arranged by Moses Hogan
Hear my Prayer – arranged by Moses Hogan
Glorious Kingdom – arranged Wolfgang Kelber

Other Languages
Morgengezang in droewige tyden – H. Temmingh
Come again, Sweet days – J. Dowland
Abendlied – Josef Rheinberger
O Jesulein süß, o Jesulein mild! – J.S. Bach
Jesus bleibet meine Freude – J.S. Bach

2.12 CONCERTS
To keep everyone motivated and interested, I always arrange or organize a concert well in advance.

Concerts provide a raison d’être for the organizations and a motivating factor for their members to work to their highest attainable standards (Palmer 2008: 203).

All respondents in the empirical survey conducted for this treatise agreed on the importance of performances and that the choir should perform more regularly. They confirmed that performances are the essence and motivation of the choir’s existence and the only way to “advertise” themselves. They enjoy the fact that upcoming concerts require the choir to work to a time schedule and deadline, to keep them focused and to ensure progress. Performances energise them and make them feel good and sociable.
Apart from a few performances given at other venues, all the local performances are held either at the Dutch Reformed Church in Napier or the Dutch Reformed Church Hall in Bredasdorp. Growing up in this church, it has always been special to me with its unique, sacred atmosphere. This church seats over a thousand people and has excellent acoustics. The *Suidernuus* of 21 March 2008 reported: “The church building is extremely well suited to performances of this nature and magnitude as it also seats a large audience comfortably.” Informal performances with smaller audiences mostly take place at the Dutch Reformed Church Hall in Bredasdorp, which seats approximately eight hundred people.

2.12.1 EXAMINATION CONCERTS

To satisfy examination requirements for the masters’ degree in choral conducting at NMMU I had to prepare my choir to present three full-length concerts of forty minutes each. In my case, the challenge was forming a brand new choir with no prior experience to perform choral pieces with an appropriate level of difficulty and the highest level of professionalism. For all these concerts we hired musicians and ensembles from Cape Town. Gavin Julius, an accomplished organist, has been our accompanist for all three examinations which took place in the Dutch Reformed Church in Napier.

2.12.1.1 Kleine Orgelmesse: 5 May 2007

I began 2007 with auditions for more choir members as the choir prepared and rehearsed for the first of three concerts for my master’s degree.25

The *Kleine Orgelmesse* performance marked the choir’s first anniversary. On Saturday 28 April 2007, the choir drove all the way to Cape Town to rehearse with the string ensemble “Camerata Tinta Barocca”, soprano Marianne Serfontein and the organist Gavin Julius at the St. Cyprians School Chapel. The choir performed this Haydn choral work as well as a selection of choral music with string ensemble, organ and soprano, on 5 May 2007 in the Dutch Reformed Church in Napier.

One of the choir members is a building contractor and, together with some of his co-workers, set up a huge stage and choir stalls in front of the pulpit. Flowers were donated...

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25 *Suidernuus*, 12 January 2007: 12
by some choir members and arranged in the foyer as well as the gallery. Spotlights were set up to enhance the choir and musicians. Over 485 tickets were sold at R45 each and the Suidernuus reported that the church was fully packed and that the choir was working towards its mission statement and vision, namely to establish a choir culture as well as a culturally aware and active community (Suidernuus, 11 May 2007: 12).
akKOORD presents

A selection of choral music with string ensemble, organ and soprano

*Haydn’s*

“Kleine Orgelmesse”

*Missa Brevis Sancta Mariae de Deo,*

*Masse No. 7 in B-flat major*

akKOORD, conducted by Sunell Jacobs
Marianne Serfontein - Soprano
Camerata Tinta Barocca – String Ensemble
(Leader: Quentin Crida)
Gavin Julius - Organ
Gretha Graham - Piano

SATURDAY  |  5th of May 2007  |  19:30
DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH | NAPIER

Tickets: R45  |  No reserved seating
Available at Bredasdorp Square Restaurant
or
Contact: akKOORD-choir members
Emmi 082 789 6813
2.12.1.2 Vivaldi Gloria : 15 March 2008

A month prior to my second examination concert, posters for the performance of the Vivaldi Gloria went up and choir members started selling their tickets.26 This performance celebrated the choir's new uniforms (Suidemuus, 21 March 2008: 12).

As usual, I organised the local lighting company and professional musicians from Cape Town, which left the budget for this concert at approximately R36 000. The tickets were divided between the forty choir members and a total of 514 tickets were sold – 29 tickets more than the previous concert. The Suidemuus of 21 March 2008 reported: “The beautiful old Dutch Reformed Church in Napier's main road which dates back to the early 1920s, was once more packed with concertgoers from all over the Overberg who came especially to hear the akKOORd choir conducted by Sunell Human. […] Performances by the choir have become extremely popular events on the area’s musical calendar and music lovers have become accustomed to travelling to Napier from all over in order to attend.”

Two weeks prior to the concert, the choir drove all the way to Cape Town with a Twin D bus to rehearse with the ensemble at the St. Cyprians School Chapel27. After this draining four-hour session the choir enjoyed lunch together at a restaurant.

On the Saturday morning, the day of the performance, we had a final rehearsal at the Dutch Reformed Church in Napier with the seven musicians (violin, viola, cello, bass, oboe, trumpet and continuo) and two soprano soloists. To lengthen the program, solo performances were also arranged and given by the organist, soprano and oboist. These artists stayed overnight at Firlane Guesthouse28.

After this concert it became clear that aKOORd had gained the full support and respect of its community. A supporter wrote in the Suidemuus of the sense of pride the choir had come to instil: “…we have great respect for the quality work – you are definitely world

26 As for all the concerts, tickets, posters and programmes were designed by a choir member and printed by the local printers called Suiderpers. See poster on following page
27 See footnote 65
28 Firlane Guesthouse is owned by two choir members in Bredasdorp.
class! [...] Even if we have to sit like sardines in a tin and even if some of us have to use
our food money for an akKOORd-ticket – we will support akKOORd” (“Julle is ons trots” :
Suidernuus, 21 March 2008b: 12) 29.

29 “Ons het groot respek vir die gehalte werk – julle is definitief wêreldklas!” “[...] Al sit ons ingeryg soos makriel in
’n blik, en al gebruik sommige al hul kosgeld vir ’n kaartjie, akKOORd sal ons aanhang.”
akKOORd presents
Sacred work for choir, string orchestra, oboe, trumpet, continuo and soloists

Antonio Vivaldi’s
Gloria in D

akKOORd, conducted by Sunell Jacobs
String ensemble: Leader: Marc Uys
Organ: Gavin Julius
Soloists: Filipa van Eck
Caryn Wolf

SATURDAY | 15th of March 2008 | 19:30
DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH | NAPIER

Tickets: R45 | No reserved seating
Available @ Bredasdorp Square Restaurant or
akKOORd choir-members
Emmi: 082 789 6813
2.12.1.3  

**Sān Gloria: 29 March 2009**

Rehearsals for the *Sān Gloria* concert, my final examination concert, started in November 2008. This choral piece for choir, organ and chamber orchestra was composed by Dr. Péter Louis van Dijk, and as the choir was familiar with his music, they enjoyed rehearsing this challenging work.

In preparation for the performance, akKOORd rehearsed with the instrumental ensemble at the St. Cyprians School Chapel in Cape Town. The musical ensemble of sixteen players was organised and led by Petri Salonen. As with all the previous examination concerts, Dr. and Mrs van Dijk gave a workshop on this work the weekend prior to the performance, giving guidance on my technique and personal notes on his composition.

On 29 March 2009, akKOORd held the last of the three examination concerts in the Dutch Reformed Church in Napier with an audience of 739 people – the biggest akKOORd has yet attracted. This performance was dedicated to Dr. Péter Louis van Dijk and Mrs. Junita Lamprecht van Dijk for all their contributions towards the choir’s development, exposure, opportunities and friendship over the three years (*Sān Gloria* Program. See Appendix 5).
akKOORd presents

A selection of choral music by Monteverdi, Fauré and Van Dijk

“Sān Gloria”

Gloria on San (Bushmen) themes for choir, organ and chamber orchestra
akKOORd, conducted by Sunell Jacobs
Chamber Orchestra - (Leader: Petri Salonen)

SUNDAY | 29th of March 2009
19:00 | DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH | NAPIER

Refreshments for sale after performance | Programmes at doors | No reserved seating

Tickets: R50 | Choir Members
Bredasdorp Square (028 4251420) | Emmi (082 789 6813)
2.12.2 **UNISA EXAMINATIONS**

Constantly challenging itself, the choir sang their Unisa Intermediate Examination for Amateur Adult Choirs on 11 September 2007 and passed with distinction. The mark of 90% was honoured by Unisa’s Roll of Honour for Outstanding Achievers. The examiner, Mr. Danie Smit, praised the choir for the balanced program which delivered choral music of a high standard.\(^{31}\) (“Unisa Verslag van Punte vir Praktiese Eksamens”, 11 September 2007).

On 8 September 2008 *akKOORd* did its second Unisa Advanced Examination for Amateur Adult Choirs. A program of three varying pieces from different periods was presented and the examiner commented that the coherence of the voices gave uniformity which accentuated the choir’s professionalism; furthermore, that this was “a performance which stood out above the ordinary”.\(^{32}\) (“Unisa Verslag van Punte vir Praktiese Eksamens”). The choir was awarded 93% and, for the second year in a row, was honoured with a place in Unisa’s Roll of Honour for Outstanding Achievers.

2.12.3 **OTHER CONCERTS**

2.12.3.1 **Choral by Candlelight**

*akKOORd’s* first full-length concert – “Choral by Candle-Light”, a festival of secular and sacred choral music – was held on 30 November 2006 in the Dutch Reformed Church Hall in Bredasdorp. Tickets were sold at R25 and more or less 470 people attended the concert. The *Suidernuus* reported “a program like this contributes in creating the calm and religious atmosphere a festive season should have […] Keep going choir members, we’ve missed quality choral singing and music like this at our southernmost point” (*Suidernuus*, 3 December 2006c).

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\(^{30}\) University of South Africa

\(^{31}\) “\'n Gebalanseerde program waarin daar koorsang van hoogstaande gehalte gelever is.”
2.12.3.2 Spring Concert

Celebrating spring, the choir gave a light concert on 8 October 2008 in the Dutch Reformed Church Hall in Bredasdorp. The program consisted of traditional songs, secular pieces and solo-items by choir members. This was another fund-raising concert for the forthcoming Windy City tour to Port Elizabeth and over 402 tickets were sold at R25 each. The *Suidernuus* commented that, although the concert was light and informal, the impression they made on the packed audience was not light. Once again *akKOORD* gave a performance that every resident of Cape Agulhas and the Overberg could truly be proud of (*Suidernuus*, 17 Oktober 2008a: 12).33

2.12.3.3 Flower Club

To conclude a very busy year, our last concert at the Flower Club’s Annual Christmas Function on 17 November 2008 was organised by the financial manager of the choir, who is also a member of this club in Bredasdorp. *akKOORD* gave a performance at this dinner which was held in the Dutch Reformed Church Hall and was attended by 110 members. After a light program with a combination of secular and Christmas pieces, the choir enjoyed dinner at a long table.

2.12.4 WINDY CITY SONGS

Being an NMMU student enabled me to sing in the NMMU Choir in 2007 and 2008. The choir toured Chicago, New York and Jacksonville in 2007, where they performed the *Windy City Songs*, composed by Dr. Péter Louis van Dijk34. This work, written for mass choir, children’s choir, soloists and orchestra, was a new composition and had at that stage not yet been performed in South Africa. Upon our return Mrs. Junita Lamprecht van

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32 “Samehang tussen al die stemgroepe tot een uniforme verbintenis het die professionaliteit van die koor onderstreep. ‘n Uitvoering wat uitgestyg het bo die alledaagse. Bravo!”

33 Die aanslag was inderdaad “lig en informeel” maar die indruk wat hulle gemaak het en die uitwerking op die gehoor in die propvol saal, was alles behalwe “lig”[…]akKOORd [het] weereens ’n uitvoering gelever waarop elke enkele inwoner van Kaap Agulhas en die Overberg opreg trots kan wees”.

34 Dr. Péter Louis van Dijk is an internationally performed composer, conductor and arranger. Dr. van Dijk has conducted most major South African orchestras as well as the CYSO, Chicago. He has lectured at the University of Cape Town, the University of the Western Cape, and is currently a contract lecturer at NMMU in Port Elizabeth.
Dijk\textsuperscript{35}, conductor of the NMMU-choir and wife of the composer, invited \textit{akKOORd} to be part of the first South African performance of this exciting cantata. This concert, called “Vivaldi & Van Dijk” took place in the City Hall in Cape Town, with the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra and soloists Pretty Yende\textsuperscript{36}, Lucretia Geswint and Musawenkosi Ngqungwana on 22 June 2008. A repeat performance was scheduled for the Feather Market Hall in Port Elizabeth in October 2008, and \textit{akKOORd} was invited for this as well.

With only two-and-a-half months to study this intricate, modern piece, the choir had to rehearse every Monday and Thursday. As quite a few members cannot sight-read, learning this very difficult composition was a painstaking process that took a lot of motivation from my side. A choir member commented that if we could manage to keep up with the rest of the choirs in the \textit{Windy City Songs}, \textit{akKOORd} would surely be able to hold their own anywhere in the world.

On 9 June 2008, Dr. van Dijk visited the choir to work on the details of the \textit{Windy City Songs}. It was a wonderful experience for the choir to work with the composer of the music they were singing and to experience his personal input (\textit{Suidernuus}, 27 June 2008b: 12)\textsuperscript{37}.

The choir drove through to Cape Town on Friday 20 June to attend the full rehearsals at the Artscape Theatre that evening and the next day. On Sunday evening Dr. van Dijk conducted that work, as well as the Vivaldi \textit{Gloria in D}, which \textit{akKOORd} was keen to perform once more (“Van Dijk en Vivaldi sorg vir gawe konsert”. \textit{Die Burger}, 24 June 2008:10). One of the respondents in this study commented that, although he had sung with many other ensembles, it was when singing the opening notes of the \textit{Windy City Songs} that he experienced an absolute sense of communitas\textsuperscript{38}. It was an experience he would remember for the rest of his life. He enjoyed the exposure and being part of a performance that included world class musicians such as Pretty Yende. Another choir member commented that she enjoyed the experience and was amazed that even her

\textsuperscript{35} Junita Lamprecht-van Dijk is senior lecturer in choral music studies at NMMU and has been the conductor of the uniquely multi-cultural NMMU Choir since 1994. She is married to the conductor Dr. Péter Louis van Dijk.

\textsuperscript{36} See chapter 3, p.64

\textsuperscript{37} “Wat ’n voorreg was dit om eerstehands met die komponis te kon werk en sy persoonlike insette te kon hoor”.

31
family enjoyed this difficult, dramatic music. Even though Bredasdorp is more than two hundred kilometres from Cape Town, a few local supporters drove all the way to hear and see *akKOORD* at the City Hall. A group of supporters, who call themselves “the six choir notes” (*Suidernuus*, 21 March 2008b: 12) asked a friend with a minibus to transport them to the concert and back. The leader of this group (Respondent 5 in the empirical survey conducted as part of this study) is a very keen supporter and a philanthropist of the choir and never misses an *akKOORD* performance. When the choir needed money for the Windy City tour to Port Elizabeth, she literally emptied what she had in her pockets that day. When the choir left for Port Elizabeth, she was there to say good bye and hand out bags with refreshments for the trip.

Both the community and choir were very excited about the tour to Port Elizabeth, which took place from 24 to 26 October 2008. The choir drove all the way to Port Elizabeth (the windy city of South Africa) for the *Windy City Celebration* which was held on the Sunday afternoon at 15:00 in the Feather Market Hall (*The Herald*, “Musical delight at Windy City concert”, 28 October 2008: 14). As most of the choir members are working adults with families, touring anywhere is quite a challenge. The biggest challenge though was raising enough money for this project, but this memorable trip was an enormous spirit builder as some of the respondents in this study have commented. According to a choir respondent it was during this trip that the choir bonded and spirit developed. The *Suidernuus* reported that it was an unforgettable weekend of pleasant singing and gathering, and although driving by bus took several hours, enthusiasm and jokes shortened the distance. (*Suidernuus*, 7 November 2008c: 12)\(^39\). Most of the choir members stayed at two nearby guest houses. Dr. van Dijk conducted this performance with the East Cape Philharmonic Orchestra, NMMU Choir, *akKOORD*, the Eastern Cape Children’s Choir and soloists Pretty Yende and Brad Liebl (*The Herald*, “Musical delight at Windy City concert”. 28 October 2008: 14).

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38 A brief ecstatic and emotional state involving a sense of union with everyone present and physiological responses such as “shivers down the back”. Description by Cottrell in Professional Music-Making in London: Ethnography and Experience.

39 “Vir koorlede was dit ‘n onvergetlike naweek van lekker saamsing en -kuier. Alhoewel die busrit vele ure in beslag geneem het, het grappe en geesdrif die pad korter gemaak.”
2.12.5 HOST-CONCERTS

My strong relations with the NMMU choral program and the NMMU choir have resulted in hosting quite a few concerts with them and the musicians and choirs they have invited over the years.

2.12.5.1 Magnificat

The first opportunity for akKOORd to act as hosts for a visiting choir to the Overberg presented itself through my connection with the NMMU Choir and the Sontonga String Quartet, who were on tour and stayed overnight with guest parents in Bredasdorp. On the Saturday morning of 21 October 2006, the NMMU Choir, conducted by Junita Lamprecht van Dijk, performed at the first “Art in the Park”. Artists and exhibitors from the Napier, Bredasdorp and L’Agulhas area were invited to present and sell their local artworks and produce in the Roux Memorial Garden in front of the Tourism Office and Bredasdorp Square Restaurant. The NMMU Choir provided entertaining music and flair to the first of these monthly open-air events, which was praised by exhibitors, audience and buyers alike (Suidernuus, 27 October 2006b). Tickets for the concert that evening were sold at the restaurant and an audience of 595 people listened to the NMMU-choir performing the Magnificat, composed by Peter Louis van Dijk. This joint concert marked the beginning of a new era of concerts hosted in Napier’s Dutch Reformed Church by akKOORd.

The Suidernuus reported “the sympathy, great appreciation and pleasure audience members experienced, has shown that there is a need in our area for opportunities like these. We have experienced music of international standard and we hope akKOORd will host similar concerts in the future. After the concert […] very few people wanted to leave the church. […]. Not only did the audience experience the high standard of music, but also a unique example of the music of the rainbow nation”40 (Suidernuus, 27 October 2006b: 22). Choir members also enjoyed the experience. As one reported: “what a privilege it is to perform with hand-picked musicians of different cultures and bring music of high quality to our fellow Overbergers”41 (Napier Info Issue, 4 November 2006: 4).

40 “Die meelewing, groot waardering en genot wat konsertgangers uit die aand geput het, wys dat daar ’n behoefte in ons streek is aan sulke geleenthede. Ons het musiek van internasionale standaard ervaar en ons hoop akKOORd gaan in die toekoms weer soortgelyke konserte aanbied. Na afloop van die program […] was min mense lus om die kerkgebou te verlaat. […] Die skare het bo en hehalwe vir die hoë vlak musiek, ’n unieke voorbeeld van die reënboognasie se musiek ervaar.”
2.12.5.2  Pro Cantu Youth Choir
In August 2007, the Pro Cantu Youth Choir under direction of Mr. Leon Starker held a performance in the Bredasdorp Dutch Reformed Church Hall on their way to Stilbaai. The choir members stayed overnight with guest parents, organized by one of akKOORd’s management. The Pro Cantu Choir donated funds from the concert to akKOORd.

2.12.5.3  NMMU Choir
In September 2007, akKOORd again hosted the NMMU Choir after their tour to America. This well attended performance was held at the Dutch Reformed Church Hall in Bredasdorp. The students stayed overnight with guest parents from the Bredasdorp-Struisbaai area and, as some of them had already made friends and built relationships on their previous visit, they enjoyed seeing one another again.

2.12.5.4  New Canaan Madrigal Ensemble
On 21 February 2008, akKOORd hosted a High School Madrigal ensemble from New Canaan on their two-week tour of South Africa. Their conductor, Arthur Sjögren, professor in choral conducting at the Music Conservatorium in Gdansk Poland, has connections with NMMU, who suggested a joint concert with akKOORd. The thirty pupils stayed with guest parents (who all received complementary tickets), organised by one of our choir members. akKOORd also performed a short program that evening and was responsible for selling tickets at R25 per person. The performance started at 19:30 and was held at the Bredasdorp Dutch Reformed Church Hall. As a gesture of appreciation, the ensemble presented the choir with their latest CD-recordings, sheet music and books, and donated all the proceeds towards our uniform funds.\(^{42}\)

2.12.5.5  Clockwise
Since his first performance (Magnificat concert in Napier) with akKOORd, as violinist and manager of the Sontonga String Quartet, Marc Uys\(^ {43}\) was impressed with the acoustics of the Dutch Reformed Church in Napier and with the huge audience akKOORd always

\(^{41}\) “Wat ’n voorreg om met uitgelese musici van verskillende kulture te kon meedoen en musiek van hoë gehalte te bring aan ons mede-Overbergers.”

\(^{42}\) Discussed under section 2.8 of this chapter

\(^{43}\) Marc Uys has built a loyal following in South African music circles, both as the founder and leader of the former Sontonga Quartet, and as one of the country’s most accomplished violin soloists. He has played in venues such as the Victoria National Gallery in Melbourne, Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Barbican in London, and in Central Park and the Lincoln Centre in New York.
attracts. Uys also led the ensemble for the Vivaldi *Gloria* concert in March and afterwards requested that *akKOORD* organise a performance for “Clockwise” at this venue. This duo, on tour through South Africa, consists of himself and the harpist Jacqueline Kerrod. Again choir members sold R45 tickets and part of the ticket sales went towards *akKOORD*’s funds for transport to Port Elizabeth for the *Windy City* performance in October.

### 2.12.5.6 University of Stellenbosch Choir

Always keen to host and perform with excellent ensembles, it was with great pleasure that the choir welcomed the world famous University of Stellenbosch choir in the Bredasdorp Church Hall on 21 August 2009. This choir, under direction of Mr. Andre van der Merwe, is one of the oldest and most celebrated choirs in South Africa and has four members who were former pupils of local schools in Bredasdorp. The students again stayed with guest parents who were all treated to complementary tickets. The University Choir was given dinner before the performance. *akKOORD* members sold tickets at R30 and 267 people attended this concert. Proceeds went towards *akKOORD*’s CD-fund. After this informal concert, a keen concert-goer wrote a letter to *Suidernuus*, stating “What fortunate people we are in this section of the Overberg, to have such talent in our midst. We attended the wonderful evening of music provided by the University of Stellenbosch Student Choir and our own *akKOORD* – such a pleasant evening.” The conductor and manager stayed in the Firlane Guesthouse and wrote a letter of thanks to the choir. They were impressed by the big audience.

### 2.13 EISTEDDFODS, WORKSHOPS AND COMPETITIONS

During the first three months of *akKOORD*’s existence, rehearsals were focused on learning new repertoire, establishing the correct projection of voices and creating a homogeneous choral sound. No time was wasted during the first rehearsal, as the choir’s first public performance, the Overberg Eisteddfod on 14 August 2006, was already scheduled. At this performance, the choir obtained the highest mark of 96%, and the adjudicator complimented the choir on their “outstanding choral sound and neat rounding

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44 André van der Merwe is the conductor of the Stellenberg Girls Choir, University of Stellenbosch Choir and the South African Youth Choir. He is often invited to act as adjudicator and clinician across the world.

45 *Suidernuus*, 28 August 2009

46 Letter sent by e-mail on 24th of August 2009
off" *(DistriksPos)*

47. This achievement led to the choir’s performance at the prize-winning concert on 5 October at Hermanus High School. In August 2007, *akKOORd* again participated in the Overberg Eisteddfod and received an A+.

The choir’s first workshop took place on 26 August 2006 when Dr. Brad Liebl gave *akKOORd* the first of numerous voice-training sessions, working on the choir’s voice-production and choral blending. Dr. Liebl also performed as soloist in October 2008 at the *Windy City* Concert in the Feather Market Hall in Port Elizabeth, where *akKOORd* performed in the mass choir.

The choir ended 2008 with a workshop on 1 and 2 December. As part of my masters’ degree training sessions, Dr. Péter Louis van Dijk and Mrs. Junita Lamprecht Van Dijk worked on choral sound and Baroque interpretation in preparation of the choir’s performance of the Vivaldi *Gloria* that was to occur early the next year. Four violinists, one viola player, one cellist, one double bassist and a continuo player from Cape Town accompanied the sessions and gave insight into Baroque style, articulation and bowing.

Opportunities for participation in choral competitions are few and the choir continues to need the exposure to and the experience of competing against other choirs. On 3 February 2008, *akKOORd* drove to Cape Town to participate in the Cape-Rapport Choral Competition in the Artscape Theatre. The competition was adjudicated by Messrs. Ronnie Samaai and Hennie Loock, who awarded us a gold certificate (80% and more) and commented on the choir’s wonderful potential.

49 Although the choir was disappointed at not being selected for the final concert, experiencing other choirs and cultures made the trip worthwhile.

On Saturday 1 March 2008 the choir had another workshop with Dr. Péter Louis van Dijk and Mrs. Junita Lamprecht van Dijk as part of the preparations for my second examination. These workshops focussed on the improvement of my choral conducting.

In die volwasse afdeling kan besondere melding gemaak word van Sunell Jacobs se groep, *akKOORd* van Bredasdorp. Hulle het die hoogste persentasie (96%) van almal behaal, met ’n uitstaande koorklank en netjiese afronding.”

48 See footnote 17 of this chapter

49 Kaap-RAPPORT Korekompetisie verslag
technique and on Baroque style and interpretation. Although the workshops were therefore primarily aimed at improving my work as conductor and choral director, the choir was always made to feel actively involved. Members were encouraged to give feedback on their experience and interpretation of my conducting. As we could not afford the ensemble for this four-hour rehearsal, we were assisted by our *repetiteur*, Philippus Hugo.

### 2.14 GIVING BACK TO COMMUNITY

As part of a small community, *akKOORd* is acutely aware of how important it is to invest in good relations with its members and to maintain its good reputation amongst the local people. Because we depend so heavily on the community for funding nearly all the concerts held in the Napier-Bredasdorp area, it is very important that funders and the audience keep on giving and coming back to our concerts. The choir therefore has a strong sense of the saying “you are only as good as your last performance”. Supporters have become used to our “product” and the quality and value for money they get when they buy a ticket for the concerts we both give and host.

According to the community respondents who formed part of the empirical survey for this treatise, an increasing number of local people have started attending *akKOORd’s* concerts and both the audience and their perception of the choir has grown over time. Audience members always bring new people. Our community is small and its members long to be part of something, but there are not many opportunities for this. *akKOORd* can be such an opportunity where people can congregate, relax and enjoy themselves.

It is not at all unusual after a concert to have several members of the community approach me or my choristers to tell us how pleasantly surprised they were with the quality and standard of the choir, and that they had not expected such a high standard from a community choir. The empirical survey confirms that both choir and community respondents experience a deep sense of pride in this choir and feel privileged to be a part of and to have such a choir in this area. One respondent even mentioned that *akKOORd* can be regarded as representative for Bredasdorp. It enriches and educates the community as many people have not been exposed to this type of music. Many people have developed an interest in choral music as a direct result of *akKOORd’s* local performances. One community respondent said that after several years of not attending choral performances, *akKOORd* has inspired and motivated her to attend these types of concerts.
concerts again. It is also mostly after a local performance that I receive calls from people who are interested in auditioning for the choir.

One of the choir respondents in this study, discussed in greater detail in the forthcoming chapter, feels that the state has impoverished our culture in South Africa by not fostering an interest in and a love for classical music amongst today’s youth, and that music should be part of our everyday lives. Furthermore nearly all the respondents indicated that it is the task of the choir to perform more often at local schools, because the youth are no longer exposed to this art form and should learn how to behave as a member of the audience. In an attempt to expose scholars to music and particularly choral music, children under the age of 18 only pay half price for a ticket and block bookings by any of the region’s choirs receive a discount on the price of their tickets.

However, although the choir has such a high regard for its community and although it receives so much support in return from some members of that community (so much so that one respondent has described the choir as ambassadors for Bredasdorp), this support is unfortunately not equally apparent in all quarters. The local municipality, for example, has thus far shown little interest in supporting akKOORd or providing it with the funding it so desperately needs. In September 2008 the choir urgently needed money to be able to perform in the Windy City Songs in Port Elizabeth. Several requests and presentations were given to both the local and regional municipality, to get funding for this prestigious invitation. I contacted and presented the local municipal leaders with a document about the choir’s activities and achievements. The local leaders were also invited and complimentary tickets for the next concert were given to them in the hope that they would attend the concert and come to value the worth of akKOORd in the Overberg community for themselves. After several discussions it was evident that their only interest and concern was in how many non-white members there were in the choir and what I, as individual, was prepared to do to musically educate the disadvantaged community. After several suggestions from my side regarding the choir’s vision for greater community engagement and a request that the choir be formally regarded as cultural product of the

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50 For example the United Reformed Church Choir in Bredasdorp.
51 Aansoek om Finansiering | Windy City Songs | Oktober ’08
Cape Agulhas Municipal Area, it was only a DA-representative\textsuperscript{52} (who bought his own ticket) who gave a donation from his very limited area-funding.

The choir strongly believes in giving back to the community and since 2007 has performed at the SAAF\textsuperscript{53} Memorial Service for the deceased. On 20 May 2007 we started this annual tradition which resulted in the choir being treated with a reception after the service, and in 2008 a flight over the De Hoop and Arniston area in one of the air forces helicopters.

The second and third Memorial Services were held in May 2008 and 2009. This memorial service of wreath-laying and public worship is an important tradition, in remembrance of and respect for those who died in the line of duty.\textsuperscript{54} The \textit{Suidernuus} of 22 May 2009 reported that the Bredasdorp choir, \textit{akKOORd}, under direction of Sunell Jacobs lent a splendid quality to the event with their choral performance.\textsuperscript{55}

Nearly a quarter of \textit{akKOORd}'s members live in Napier, a neighboring town only 17 kilometres from Bredasdorp. In September 2007 I was approached by the matron of Huis Klippe Drift, Napier's home for the elderly, to perform for their 20\textsuperscript{th} birthday celebrations on the 18\textsuperscript{th} of that month. This concert, held at Napier High School, was their fund-raising project for building renovations. \textit{akkOORd} performed a light program with a variety of songs in different languages and styles. Soloists and two smaller groups (\textit{Cantare} and \textit{Figaro}) also performed at this fund-raising event. Tickets were sold at R20 and R15 for pensioners.

As there are more or less 26 different denominations\textsuperscript{56} in the Bredasdorp area and \textit{akKOORd} does not represent any of them in particular, the choir does not normally participate in church performances. However, when the opportunity arises, and when the

\textsuperscript{52} The Democratic Alliance (DA) is a South African political party, the governing party in the Western Cape province, and the official opposition to the ruling African National Congress. The party was formed when the former Democratic Party entered into a short-lived alliance with the New National Party (NNP) and a smaller party in 2000.  
\textsuperscript{53} South African Air Force base is situated between Arniston and Bredasdorp.  
\textsuperscript{54} “Die gedenkdiens is ’n belangrike deel van tradisie om gestorwe lede te onthou en respek te toon deur ’n krans te lé tydens ’n erediens”.  
\textsuperscript{55} “Die Bredasdopse koor akKOORd, onder die bekwame leiding van me. Sunell Jacobs het luisterryke smaak aan die geleentheid verleen met hul kooruitvoerings”.  
\textsuperscript{56} According to “Church Services” in \textit{Suidernuus} of 11 December 2009
choir is in full agreement, we do try to help or participate. In their aim to promote unity among the different churches and communities, management of the “Hartklop Christusfees”, requested akKOORD’s participation in a mass choir performance on Sunday 24 May 2009\(^57\). The choir performed in a huge tent accommodating two thousand people. The mass choir, which consisted of members of the local United Reformed Church Choir (URC), the Anglican Church Choir and akKOORD, accompanied by the Elim Brass Band, and was conducted by the URC minister (Respondent 3 in the empirical survey that forms part of this study), who is also a member of akKOORD.

Although the choir does not formally decide which special community project they should support every year, we do try to give every town in the Overberg district a chance. As akKOORD performed at the birthday celebrations of Huis Klappe Drift in Napier the previous year, we visited Suideroord\(^58\) on 10 August 2009 as part of Women’s Day. The choir did warm-ups in the dining room and sang a short program of eight items for the appreciative elderly. The head of Suideroord wrote how they appreciated akKOORD’s willingness and beautiful disposition. She also mentioned that the joy with which the choir members sang also elated the residents’ hearts. She thanked the choir for valuing the elderly and for treating them with so much respect.\(^59\) Amongst the audience was the elderly former music teacher of several of akKOORD’s members. After the performance, one of the elderly prayed for the choir. After this informal performance, the choir returned to the nearby church hall to continue rehearsing for their performance with the Stellenbosch University Choir scheduled for the following week.

### 2.15 FINANCES

#### 2.15.1 GENERAL EXPENSES AND FEES

As with any organization or society, funds are necessary to keep it up and running. This is an ongoing concern. The choir has applied for financial support from various funding groups, as well as the local municipality, but with no success (\textit{Suidernuus}, 3 April 2009, “n Kultuur-juweel van die Overberg”). Personal donations and ticket sales have been the

\(^{57}\) E-mail of 6 November 2009

\(^{58}\) Home for the aged in Bredasdorp

\(^{59}\) Letter of appreciation from Karin Dickason. “Hiermee ons opregte dank vir julle bereidwilligheid en pragtige gesindheid met jul optrede by Suideroord. Die vreugde waarmee die koorlede dit gedoen het, het ook die inwoners se harte verbly. Baie dankie dat ons vir jul van waarde is en dat jul ons met soveel respek behandel het.”
major sources of financial support over the past four years. In 2008 the choir opened a savings account to make payments easier.

Membership fees are not charged, but the choir works together as a team/group for performances, which double up as fundraising projects. For each concert, a budget is carefully planned not only to cover costs, but also to raise money for the choir’s general and sometimes specific expenses, for example choir uniforms (Suidermuus, 15 February 2008a, “Madrigal Ensemble besoek Bredasdorp!”).

The choir’s general expenses include annual rental fees for the rehearsal hall, photocopies of rehearsal schedules, sheet music, repetiteurs and accompanists. Once the final budget is drawn up, the price and numbers of tickets to be sold are calculated. Choristers then have a minimum number of tickets they have to sell for a specific concert. Over the years a “bonus system” has been developed, where choristers receive a free incentive ticket after they have sold a certain number of tickets. Having to sell their packet of tickets encourages choristers to reach out to community members to advertise and “sell” the choir.

In the survey undertaken for the purposes of this study, discussed in greater detail in chapter 3, 50% of choral respondents indicated that they always sell all their tickets and even more. Some have a well-established web of clients whom they contact when akKOORD has a concert or hosts another musical ensemble. Posters always indicate that tickets are available from choir members and at Bredasdorp Square – a well-known local restaurant owned by two of the choir members. For further motivation of ticket sales, the choir member selling the most tickets receives a gift voucher from Bredasdorp Square, valued at 10% of the funds he/she raised.

2.15.2 FINANCIAL BENEFITS FOR COMMUNITY
akKOORD has an unwritten policy that we will always first support our local suppliers and products. Not only does the choir benefit financially from concerts, but other organizations in the Overberg do as well.

When the choir needs money for a project, for example uniforms or transport, the members are never expected to pay or raise money on their own. Instead the whole
group works together to organize a performance or host a musical ensemble to raise funds.

Tickets for performances from 2006 to 2008 were R45 for bigger concerts including instrumentalists. Smaller, informal concerts with an accompanist were usually R25. From 2009 the bigger concert tickets were raised to R50 and to R30 for the smaller concerts.

Before the first concert held in Napier’s Dutch Reformed Church on 26 October 2006, I negotiated a rate with their minister and financial manager. A fee of 10% of the total ticket sales for the concert was set and paid to them after every performance. After one of these concerts, the church used this extra income to install striking exterior lighting of the church for evening performances. Apart from the rental for the use of the church hall once a week, the choir pays a set fee when the hall is used for a concert.

Concerts held in the spacious Dutch Reformed Church in Napier always require extra lighting and flowers (Suidernuus, 27 October 2006: 13). For these concerts, akKOORd makes use of specialized lighting to enhance visibility of the musicians and choir. Since the choir’s first concert, we have used the services of a pupil from Bredasdorp High School, who has bought his own equipment and offers this service for extra income. Although two eager choir supporters always do the flower arrangements in the church and choir members often sponsor some of the flowers used, we always buy extra from the local florists.

Although the choir sold refreshments during or after the concerts of 2006 and 2007, the choir decided not to continue with this attempt to raise further money, since too little was gained for all the extra effort. akKOORd now gives organizations or individuals the opportunity to sell refreshments at the concerts, to raise funds for the needy. Quite often concertgoers make an evening out of it and go to restaurants after the performance. Suidernuus therefore reported: “Needless to mention – all the restaurants in town were fully booked by concertgoers who wanted to round off their evening in a suitable way!” (Suidernuus, 21 March 2008b: 12).

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60 Overberg Klank en Beligting
Before the performance with the Stellenbosch University Choir, all the students were served dinner. Catering was supplied by a local company in Bredasdorp.

akKOORd supports local businesses for all their concert needs and offers advertising opportunities in concert programs. Only high quality advertising at reasonable rates is offered in our concert programs and often the same advertisers appear in every program. One of the advertisers indicated that they are “proud to be associated with the high quality performances akKOORd delivers”.

Suiderpers, the local printer in Bredasdorp, is co-owned by one of the choir members, and offers us discounts on our projects. They are responsible for printing high quality tickets, posters and programs. They also copy the choir’s sheet music, important notes and information during the year. According to the co-owner, the high quality printing they have done for akKOORd has earned their business more clients.

Another example is Bredasdorp Square and Firlane Guesthouse, a local coffee shop and Bed and Breakfast establishment. Bredasdorp Square is the official sales office for concert tickets and often caters for choir events. Firlane Guesthouse provides accommodation for musicians when concerts are held. Though both the owners are choir members and offer some services at cost price, ticket buyers often spend money in the coffee shop. After the “Art in the Park” concert, Suidernuus reported that “local restaurant owners indicated that they were literally swamped by audience members who stayed longer and simultaneously looked for something for the inner self” 61 (Suidernuus, 27 October 2006: 13). When a gift is bought for a choir member or for any other choir related gifts, we usually support this business by buying a gift voucher from them.

Since the choir was formed in 2006, the local “Twin D” bus service62 has been used for all our transport to and from eisteddfods, competitions and performances. A wonderful relationship with the owner and driver of this local bus company has developed over the years and he has been a part of the choir family ever since.

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61 “Ook plaaslike restaurant-eienaars het angedui dat hulle na afloop van die uitvoering letterlik oorval is deur konsertgangers wat verder kom kuier het en terselfdertyd iets vir die innerlike mens kom soek het!”
62 Twin D is owned by a coloured member of the Bredasdorp community.
2. 16 CONCLUSION TO THIS CHAPTER

Although my enrolment as a masters’ student in choral music was the important initial reason why *akKOORD* was formed, in more ways than one the spirit of the original Passion Play of April 2006 continues to play an important role in what the choir is today and has achieved over the past three-and-a half-years. The “birth” of the choir took place in the spirit of this event – the unforgettable community spirit that the whole Overberg district experienced. This brought the community closer together (*Suidemuis*, 5 May 2006a:15). Since this landmark in the history of Bredasdorp, *akKOORD* has had many performances which have been attended and supported by exactly the same community.

Through many performances, mostly local, the community has supported the choir who in their turn continue to aspire to present and host performances of the highest quality. Being able to attract audiences of as many as 739 people in a community as small as that of the Overberg, has enabled *akKOORD* to afford quality musicians to accompany the choir and to reward their loyal supporters with beautiful music.

The entire culture of *akKOORD*, including its rehearsals, repertoire, administration and rituals, the relationships amongst its choir members, its discipline and hard work, its close association with the NMMU Choir and its conductor, and its involvement in numerous workshops and performances beyond its own borders, has resulted in a choir that attained a very high standard of performance, evident in its excellent examination results.
Choir members at the Vivaldi Gloria rehearsal at St. Cyprians School Chapel Cape Town
(See 2.12.1.2)

akKOORd performing at the Spring Concert on 8 October 2008 in the Dutch Reformed Church Hall in Bredasdorp
(See 2.12.3.2)
CHAPTER 3

HOW CHORISTERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS EXPERIENCE akKOORd

3.1 INTRODUCTION TO THIS CHAPTER

In this chapter, I present and interpret data gained from interviews conducted with the sample of interviewees within the context of the secondary data described in chapter two.

The main objective of the interviews was to determine what impact the choir has on choir members as well as members of the Overberg community. The questions I asked choir members focused on their experience of the choir, rehearsals and performances and how being part of akKOORd affects their relationship with members of their family and the community. Questions directed at respondents from the community also enquired about the community’s perception of the choir, how they experience concerts and the impact the choir has on the community (See attached Appendices 1 – 4).63

At first I presumed that the small interview groups would respond in more or less the same way, but it soon became evident that each had their own opinion and perception about the impact of the choir.

The interviews were all conducted over a period of ten days, at a local coffee shop at times that suited the interviewees. Being both the conductor and manager of the choir, as well as personally knowing all the interviewees of both the choir and community, I was fully aware of my responsibility as researcher to be as unbiased as possible in my descriptions and interpretations and to generate truthful and credible inter-subjectivity (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 273).

After explaining what the study was about and that the interview will be recorded, I started with the questioning – using the basic questions as guideline and probing more detail from the respondent’s answers, capturing the sense of actions as they occur and placing events in context (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 272). As I had no idea what the answers to my

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63 The seven respondents preferred their interviews to be done in Afrikaans. For the sake of completeness, these interviews are also translated into English in Appendices 2 and 4.
questions would be, I took an inductive approach, beginning with an immersion in the natural setting, describing events as accurately as possible, as they occur or have occurred, and slowly building second-order constructs and ultimately a theory that will make sense of the observations (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 273).

3.2 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH CHOIR MEMBERS

The purposive sample used for the choir interviews consisted of both male and female interviewees of different ages. As these interviews were “directed at certain inclusive criteria” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 288), I selected four choir members who have been part of the choir since its formation in 2006.

From the first interview I could clearly sense the pride and excitement the respondents had, being one of a few selected people to be interviewed. To all the respondents, *akKOORD* is not a choir they just know from somewhere, it is the choir they are either part of or fully support by attending most of their concerts – both presented and hosted.

Although four respondents are not nearly representative of the whole choir, all interviewees indicated choral experience from their early childhood. All the respondents had their first choral experience in schools and those who attended university also sang in their university's choir.

In the following pages I present the questions and answers given by the choir respondents.

3.2.1 GENERAL QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO MEMBERSHIP

*Why do you sing in a choir?*

Most of the respondents indicated that they sing in *akKOORD* for musical growth, because they enjoy singing, and want to meet new people. Respondent 1 said she had always had a dream to sing in a small group, but the choir has satisfied her need to an even greater extent. Respondent 4 said she was so impressed with the quality of the choir, had always wanted to sing in a good professional choir, and now had one on her doorstep!
What is the best part of singing in akKOORd?
Answers to this question indicated that all respondents enjoy rehearsals, socializing and performances. Respondent 4 even described it as a “rejuvenating cure.” She enjoys being part of a heterogeneous group and being part of something that is both good and enjoyable, and that crosses borders through music.

Does singing in akKOORd have any impact on your daily life?
A few of my questions were directed at determining whether the choir has an impact on their daily lives. All four respondents gave different opinions. Respondent 1 feels that participation in akKOORd has changed her way of thinking and has become an important part of her life, while respondent 2 indicated that the vocal technique she has learnt in the choir is something she is able to usefully apply to other musical areas in which she is involved. Respondent 3 is himself a director of a choir in the Overberg district and commented on how being part of akKOORd has had a positive impact on the way in which he rehearses his own choir and how, furthermore, it has inspired him to make an extra effort with their sound.

How does singing in the choir affect your relationship with your family?
Although all the respondents gave different answers to this question, it is clear that their families support them in what they do. Respondent 1 indicated that her family attends all akKOORd’s concerts and that they enjoy conversations about the concert afterwards. The family members of respondent 3 are all involved with akKOORd in one way or another. Only one of his children shows no interest in singing in a choir, but nevertheless eagerly attends akKOORd’s concerts. Respondent 2 reported that both the father and son in her family – who initially showed no interest at all – have begun to show enthusiasm in and appreciation for choral music. Respondent 4 said that her family took great pride in their mother and grandmother for singing in such a prestigious choir that had thus far done so well for itself.

Would you say singing in the choir affects your relationship with members of the community?
As respondent 1 is not employed at the moment, singing in a choir takes her out of her home (for example the trip to Port Elizabeth), challenges her, and forces her to broaden her horizons. On the other hand, respondent 3 is already very involved in community
work, so being an akKOORd member does not have a significant impact on his relationship with members of the community. Respondent 2 commented that strangers with different interests often approach her to talk about the choir’s activities and that she in turn now has more confidence to approach others about performances. This has also affected her business in a positive way, as the community has had increased exposure to her products through business generated by the choir.

Do you find yourself connecting to people you wouldn’t otherwise have met?
Respondents indicated that, although they make new friends and learn more about the old ones, they are not necessarily best friends with everyone in the choir (nor do they feel the need to become so). The buddy-system however requires them to become more involved with the buddy in question, although under other different circumstances that person might not be someone they would have befriended. When the choir toured to Port Elizabeth in September 2008, the concerns of the group as a whole took precedence over any individuals and choir members were given the opportunity to get to know each other better. According to respondent 4 this was not as important for social reasons as much as it has had a positive impact on their working together in rehearsals and performances. She further commented: “The other day at the petrol station X, who sings with me in the choir, came up to me and we had a nice conversation. I did not know him before and it was so nice getting to know him a bit better.”

Has being involved in akKOORd caused you to become involved in community activities?
In response to this question, respondent 1 confirmed: “I have always been involved and it was nice to perform at the home for the aged\textsuperscript{64} and the SAAF Memorial Service\textsuperscript{65}. You become aware of their needs [...] feedback from them proves that we should never stop reaching out to the community. My husband often drives three or four older people to our concerts”. Respondent 3 believes his membership of akKKORd has not brought him any new and direct contact with the community, but that he has learnt and developed a lot in the choir over the past four years and, as conductor of his own church choir, has been able to put what he has learnt to very good use. The other two respondents indicated that they are either too busy at work or with their families and were therefore not any more active in the community as a result of their being members of akKOORd. Respondent 4 commented that when she was younger she had been very active in her church

\textsuperscript{64} Performance held at Suideroord on the 10 August 2009
community. Since her involvement in akKOORd, however, she had made new friends amongst the English community in Napier where there is a great interest in choral music.

*What does it mean to you to be able to sing in / be associated with akKOORd, and what are the personal benefits of belonging to an organization like the choir?*

Responses to this question proved that these four choir members enjoy the many positive responses from community members, praising the work and role of the choir in the community. Comments received include the following:

An unknown woman approached me this morning in the gym and said we were fabulous – I enjoyed this regard for our choir. We do get many compliments and the community is very appreciative and proud of the choir. I never thought our choir would get this amount of recognition (Respondent 1).

I enjoy being associated with the choir – it is definitely positive and it is always good to hear people say positive things about us (Respondent 2).

The community has a lot of pride and respect for us. I enjoy meeting famous musicians, for example Marc Uys and Pretty Yende – they are world class musicians to whom we would otherwise not have had exposure (Respondent 3).

It means a lot to me – it gives me status. It (the choir) has become a prestigious choir and that makes me feel good (Respondent 4).

To the following statements, respondents were requested to respond by indicating one of the following: 1) agree strongly 2) agree somewhat 3) disagree somewhat 4) disagree strongly.

- **Being involved with akKOORd has caused the members in our household to meet and socialize with people we would not ordinarily meet or has caused us to become more involved in community activities**

  Here responses varied from “agree somewhat” (respondents 1 and 4), to “disagree somewhat” (respondent 2), and even to “disagree strongly” (respondent 3). Respondent 1 added: “Yes, to a certain degree; being without children at the

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65 Performances at SAAF were held in May 2007, 2008 and 2009.
moment, this has given our social life a new dimension. We socialize with the children of the guest choirs”.

- **I socialize with fellow choristers (outside of rehearsals and performances)**
  All four respondents agreed strongly and respondent (commented: “When we see each other somewhere we always chat and have something to say.”)

- **I develop new friendships with members of the choir**
  Here all four respondents agreed strongly. Respondent 1 went on to comment that this was especially true: “[…] with my choir buddy who gives me a lift nowadays and we chat a lot more […] with each other, something we normally would not have done.”

### 3.2.2 REHEARSALS

*Describe your general feeling/attitude before a rehearsal.*

All four respondents indicated that the rehearsals energize and affect them in a positive way and two indicated that they do not like missing a rehearsal. The following comments were received:

It has become part of my routine – I go to rehearsals tired and return refreshed – and then I do not want to go to sleep […] especially the closer we get to the finishing touches of a piece (respondent 1).

It depends on what happened during the day, but even when I feel depressed during the day, I always look forward to rehearsals. During holidays I feel as though I am wandering and at the first rehearsal it is always nice to see everybody again (respondent 2).

Sometimes I get to rehearsals in a rush. In the beginning I was very frustrated with the slow progress at rehearsals, but nowadays I am prepared and excited to go to a rehearsal (respondent 3).

When we do not rehearse I feel lost and miss it. I always look forward to rehearsals, because I learn so much. When I have not been there I feel I am ten steps behind. I enjoy it and am never bored (respondent 4).
Do you sometimes feel a change of mood or energy during or after a rehearsal?
To this question all four responded positively and indicated that they felt energized after a rehearsal. Comments received include: “I feel energetic and inspired!” (respondent 3); “Always better than I feel when I go to a rehearsal…afterwards I find it difficult to switch off” (respondent 2); “Energized and energetic; when I get home I first want to do a few other things” (respondent 4).

3.2.3 REPERTOIRE

What is your general feeling/opinion about akKOORd’s present repertoire?
All four respondents said they enjoy the variety in the repertoire, the constant challenges it presents, and the fact that they always have something new to learn. Further responses include:

My husband enjoyed last Friday’s program – it had a few difficult songs, something in Afrikaans and beautiful romantic music you can just relax and enjoy … astounded that I and my family enjoyed [The Windy City Songs] so much – it is difficult music, but it is enjoyable, dramatic music (respondent 1).

I feel good about the wide variety of music we sing, some easy and others more challenging and it feels more like a professional choir – not something a high school choir could have sung (respondent 4).

3.2.4 THE "WOW FACTOR"

What are the “wow” moments in the choir?
Answers received to this question prove again the old adage that “nothing succeeds like success”, as all of the respondents pointed towards their sense of achievement as the “wow factor”.

When you say to us: “julle, maar dit was mooi”66, when we succeed and everything comes together; when I recognize the entries of the different voice groups and I no longer have to count (respondent 1).

66 “hey, that was beautiful”.
When you compliment the altos and when there is a specific piece that I have struggled with that I no longer do for example the rhythm (respondent 2).

When I do not struggle with the difficult parts anymore and the whole piece comes together (respondent 3).

When everything comes together – when all the voices have been individually rehearsed and we then do it together [...] when I experience everything is going well (respondent 4).

3.2.5 TICKET SALES
For all akKOORd’s concerts, each choir member receives a certain number of tickets to sell to members of the public. This driven method of ticket sales has resulted in enormous audiences over the past four years.

How many tickets do you generally sell for an akKOORd-concert?
Varied responses were received to this question. Both respondent 1 and 4 indicated that they always sell their full quota of tickets and more. Respondent 2 has several regulars who buy concert tickets from her. Because she runs her own business, she is able to advertise concerts and sell tickets to her customers from these premises. Respondent 3 replied that “I often find it difficult to sell all my tickets, because at one stage we were more than one family member in the choir. I encourage many less fortunate people in other choirs to attend our concerts and sell them tickets at a reduced price.”

Do the same people buy tickets from you for each of akKOORd’s performances?
Varied responses were received to this question.

I try to stick to my regulars, but some choir members steal my clients! Others ask for tickets and we drive them to our concerts (respondent 1).

I advertise through my business and often people who see the advertisement buy from me (respondent 2).
Not really, other choir members more regularly sell tickets [to members of] the coloured community (respondent 3)\(^{67}\).

There is a client base and others as well. I eagerly invite family and friends from outside the Bredasdorp district. There is a core group in Napier (respondent 4).

_How do you sell your tickets? Door-to-door, phone?_  
Nearly all respondents actively seek out audience members by phoning their list of previous customers or visiting their door-to-door to friends (Respondent 1 said: “I often sell tickets to my tennis friends.”) However, word spreads fast in a rural community and in many cases they are contacted by members of the public, asking for tickets.

### 3.2.6 CONCERTS / PERFORMANCES

_Describe your feelings when you perform in front of so many people._  
Respondents all indicated a positive, enjoyable feeling. Respondent 1 added that she is proud to be able to do it for her own community and enjoys singing “here where people have so much appreciation for it”. Respondent 3 said he feels very stressed before the choir walks on stage, but once the choir is in position and all attention is on the conductor, he begins to relax and enjoy the experience very much.

_What does it mean to you when you sing with orchestral or instrumental accompaniment?_  
All respondents said that even though they enjoy _a capella_ music, they feel privileged to be able to sing with instrumental accompaniment, especially since we always hire the best musicians we can afford. Respondent 3 said that although we have performed quite often with ensembles, in his opinion the choir’s performances of Van Dijk’s _Windy City Songs_ with full orchestra was a truly exceptional experience.

_What do you think is the importance of performances? How important is/are performing/concerts to you?_  
All respondents agreed that performing is what drives their interest in choral singing. Comments received include:

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\(^{67}\) Respondent 3 is the minister and conductor of the choir of the United Reformed Church.
One should not just rehearse the whole year and perform only once. It is also important to have a time schedule and deadline which speed things up and force you to be on your toes, concentrate and work faster (respondent 1).

Performances are important for me and for the choir, and I think we can do it even more often. It is our driving force and motivates us (respondent 4).

**How do you generally feel after a performance? / Do you sometimes feel a change of mood or energy during or after a concert?**

Responses to this question were particularly rewarding:

I have to go and do the dishes first! I am on such a high when we have done our best (respondent 1).

Energetic – I want to go out and socialize (respondent 2).

Tired, but happy afterwards. It’s good to hear the applause and know it was worth the effort (respondent 3).

Always on a high! (respondent 4).

**Can you remember a specific song/concert that gave you the notion of communitas (a brief ecstatic and emotional state involving a sense of union with everyone present and physiological responses such as “shivers down the back”)?**

Three of the four respondents recall this state of emotion while singing Van Dijk’s *Windy City Songs*. Respondent 1 replied as follows: “Yes I had it with the *Windy Cities* – the silence at the end, the audience stunned and then the burst of applause”. Respondent 3 also had this experience with *Meguru* – a song he found strange when we first began rehearsing it. Respondent 2 recalls this feeling even during some rehearsals.

### 3.2.7 IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

Do you ever get feedback from audience members after an akKOORd concert? What are their general comments? How do you think akKOORd is regarded by your community?

According to most respondents the choir has often been the subject of discussion, and comments from different quarters are nearly always positive. Members of the local

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community generally have a very high regard for the choir and are proud of the quality music it produces, often remarking that they did not realize Bredasdorp has such a good choir. “Most people say it is far more than they expected and one should never underestimate the rural areas. Two people, one from Johannesburg and the other from Free State University, said they never expected this quality choir from rural people and the choir is just as good as many other choirs they have heard in big cities” (Respondent 4). “I feel the community is very proud of us, because we produce quality work and the audience really appreciates what we have put into our performances” (Respondent 1).

Respondents also indicated that in their opinion the perception of the community towards akKOORD has developed over time in a positive way and our following has grown and spread. “People from Hermanus said they thought we would be like a church choir, but were pleasantly surprised” (Respondent 4).

Do you think it is important that akKOORD performs locally? Do you think it is important that the choir performs in other cities and even overseas? Why?

All the respondents indicated that they think it is important that the choir should perform locally. “Local support is important – we move around it on a daily basis, but it is also important to perform elsewhere and advertise” (respondent 2).

But touring means a lot for the overall spirit of the choir and it is on such tours that choir members bond and team spirit develops. “I think if we can keep up with the Windy City Songs we can definitely go overseas […] it means a lot for the choir’s spirit. We drove into Bredasdorp at four o’clock that morning and the choristers were still singing!” (Respondent 1). Respondent 2 and 4 suggested that the choir should expand the borders of its regular performance venues and begin to represent our region elsewhere. “We can reach a lot more people if we are prepared to go out as ambassadors and representatives of our community and it will also mean a lot to the choir. There is definitely more familiarity and commitment to each other – unfortunately your family cannot always share in this. We have built morale and have been closer because we spent some time on an informal basis. All the choristers are working adults with little time and it is difficult to spend time together. […] it would be wonderful if akKOORD could be an export product!” (respondent 2).
What impact do you think the choir has on the community? How does the community regard the choir?

All four respondents indicated their belief that the choir has a positive impact on the community.

The community is very proud of us and we started in the right way from the beginning. We kicked off in a positive way and when people heard we’re still going strong they kept on supporting us (respondent 1).

We educate people – even elderly people who have not been exposed to choir music (respondent 4).

A few years ago nobody really listened to choir music or was exposed to choir music – we started small but made a huge impact and after our first concert we already had a lot of positive comment (respondent 2).

Respondents all regard the choir as an asset. Having thus far performed twice at homes for the elderly, they believe more performances should be given to service-providing organizations. Most also indicated the importance of performing at the local schools. “We must show them your choir career does not have to stop at school level” (respondent 2).

Respondent 1 was particularly adamant about the value of akKOORd as community cultural capital. She responded as follows:

The government has impoverished our culture. It is the duty of the government to give our schools culture […] not superficial bands, but classical background. We are a lot poorer – it should be part of everyone’s life, a shortcoming in our society. I suggest we offer to sing at prize-giving functions and cultural evenings. […] in East-Germany, Poland and Hungary every child learns to play an instrument up to grade 7. It is part of their curriculum.

3.3 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY

Although there was some common ground between the two, my interviews with two community members were naturally approached somewhat differently to those with the four choir members, the most obvious reason for which being that their purpose was to focus on reception rather than on participation (see Appendices 1 and 2). Here interviewees were selected on the basis of thorough enculturation and their current
involvement (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 288) with akKOORd. As co-members of a relatively small rural community they are acquainted with almost everyone in the choir.

### 3.3.1 CONCERT ATTENDANCE

These respondents indicated that they have attended nearly all akKOORd’s concerts, both those presented by the choir themselves and those where guest artists were hosted. Reasons given for their support of the hosted concerts ranged from an “interest in the specific kind of music” (respondent 5) to a regard based on the fact that “they are all of a particularly high standard” (respondent 6).

Both community respondents indicated that they hear about akKOORd’s concerts from choir members and the local paper. They buy their tickets from choir members and the Bredasdorp Square Restaurant. They consider the price of the tickets as very affordable. “I think it is very cheap for all the effort choir members and the conductor puts into such a concert, but on the other hand it is more accessible members of the public who cannot afford it” (respondent 5).

### 3.3.2 RESPONSE TO REPERTOIRE

These respondents enjoy the variety of sacred, classical, traditional and lighter music akKOORd sings. Respondent 5 commented that if we should only sing classical music she would not attend the concerts. They both describe their attraction to the “lively spirit” the choir radiates. “I think we are very privileged to hear such music in our little community. You69 have made an enormous impact and with your expertise have planted a seed that has grown a lot” (respondent 6).

Respondent 5 said she remembers quite a few songs that gave her the notion of communitas, but that Van Dijk’s Sān Gloria, in particular, was “on another level” […]. Although it is an intricate work, the total commitment with which the choir made contact with the audience was an experience”. In contrast respondent 6 particularly enjoyed the Mazurka from Lom70 – a traditional folksong from Norway.

I asked the community respondents how much of the music sung during any one or all of akKOORd’s concerts they have heard before. Both indicated that they were quite familiar

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69 Here the respondent refers to me as the choir’s conductor.

70 This refers to a traditional song from Norway.
with classical music, but that a lot of the repertoire was nevertheless new to them. They enjoy being exposed to a combination of familiar and new, unfamiliar works.

3.3.3 RESPONSE TO CONCERTS

Regarding the quality and type of concerts akKOORd presents, respondent 5’s reply was that “your wide knowledge of music rubs off and the concerts are always of a very high standard and quality”\(^\text{71}\), while respondent 6 mentioned the interesting formations the choir used for some of their performances and was stunned by the fact that choristers of different voice types could be made to stand next to each other.

Both reported experiencing positive feelings after an akKOORd performance. Respondent 5 said it relaxes her and places her “in harmony”, while respondent 6 said the performances make her feel very excited as she enjoys classical music enormously. Respondent 5 remarked on the way in which audiences for akKOORd’s concerts have continued to grow over the years, as the choir itself has continued to grow in stature.

3.3.4 IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

Upon asking these two respondents whether they think it is important that members of the community should support neighbourhood concerts, it is interesting that both began by pointing out the important educational opportunity such concerts held for local children:

   It is important that people should know the choir and what goes on in your community [...] you should go out of your way to attend performances of the choir, because when you do, you not only financially support the choir, you also support your community. I brought the choir of De Heide Primary School\(^\text{72}\) to the Spring concert to come and listen – it is important to make children aware and give them exposure to choral music (respondent 5).

   I feel children should attend these concerts more often [...] they should learn how to appreciate and behave themselves at concerts – it is an educational task we have (respondent 6).

\(^{70}\) See Chapter 2, section 2.11 for previous reference to this work.
\(^{71}\) Refers to me the conductor.
According to respondent 6, the community is very proud of akKOORd and believes that it could hold its own anywhere in the world. “I think very highly of akKOORd and drive all the way from L’Agulhas to attend the choir’s performances. People make an effort, because they enjoy the concerts” (respondent 6).

When asked whether they think the community’s perception of the choir has changed over the years, it became clear that akKOORd has an enormous following. “We never miss one of your concerts – we follow you wherever you go!” (respondent 5). Our concerts have a snowball effect as “people always bring new people; as the audiences have grown, so have the people’s perception of the choir.” (respondent 6).

In response to the question of whether akKOORd should focus its efforts locally or whether it should make greater efforts to become better known outside of the region, respondent 6 made this interesting comment: “I think it is important, but not only locally, because every time the choir sings in front of another audience they have a new experience. People tend to applaud their own people and it is important for the choir to be acknowledged by other people as well.” Respondent 5 agreed that akKOORd should also perform and introduce itself in other towns, and that such tours might become an important future source of revenue for the choir. She also stressed the importance of reaching out to educational institutions in other regions of the country. Both respondents nevertheless reiterate their belief that akKOORd has a potentially valuable role to play in local community outreaches – particularly through involvement at local schools – and also at other important events within the community:

The choir can perform at Agrimega Week73 as well as at the Voet van Afrika marathon74 (respondent 6).

Both respondents indicated their belief that the Overberg community has changed for the better as a result of akKOORd’s existence:

akKOORd definitely has an impact on the community. People want to listen to quality music and do not want to waste their time or money […] we are a small community

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72 A primary school from the local coloured community.
73 Agrimega Week is an agricultural week that takes place every year in Bredasdorp, with exhibitions and demonstrations for farmers, farm workers and any visitors. It is attended by people from all over South Africa and abroad.
74 The Voet van Afrika marathon takes place every year with the route going around Bredasdorp and Napier. It attracts athletes from far and wide.
and want to be part of something, but the opportunity is not always there […] The performance during the Christusfees\textsuperscript{75} led to the foundation of a new young choir through an Anglican church group. One of the “koornote”\textsuperscript{76}, a member of this community, was inspired by this performance, as their choir only consists of elderly people. \textit{akKOORd} is a mixed choir with a very unique sound and people from all the levels of society sing in this choir (respondent 5).

I think the community has become very proud of you – they are proud of the fact that \textit{akKOORd} comes from Bredasdorp and that we have our own choir. We regard you as representative of Bredasdorp (respondent 6).

Despite the generally positive perception of \textit{akKOORd} by these members of the community themselves, the notable lack of any official support from community leaders has not gone unnoticed. Respondent 5 commented on this sad fact as follows:

I think people do not realize what an asset the choir is in our community – many of them in high positions […] who say they reach out to the community. But, if you have not heard a choir from your local community, how can you say you are reaching out? They all had to be given tickets – come and listen to what’s happening in your community – that is pathetic\textsuperscript{77}.

3.4 CONCLUSION TO THIS CHAPTER

In preparation for this study, I read three relevant Impact and Value studies conducted in America:

1. “America’s Performing Art: A Study of Choruses, Choral Singers, and Their Impact”\textsuperscript{78}, conducted by the organisation \textit{Chorus America} in 2002.
3. “Update on Community Choirs and Singing in the United States”, written by Cindy L. Bell in 2004.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{75} A Christian festival involving a mass choir with \textit{akKOORd}, the Anglican- and United Reformed Church choirs. This mass choir was accompanied by the Elim Brass Band.

\textsuperscript{76} \textit{Suidernuus}, 21 Maart 2008b:12.

\textsuperscript{77}“Ek dink mense mense weet nie watter bate die koor in die gemeenskap is nie – baie van hulle wat in groot posisies sit […] wat se hulle reik uit na die gemeenskap. Maar as jy nie ’n koor uit jou plaaslike gemeenskap gehoor het nie – hoe kan jy se jy reik uit? Hulle moes almal laas kaartjies gegee word – kom luister na wat in jou gemeenskap aangaan – dis pateties”.

\textsuperscript{78} This impact study is available in its entirety at \url{www.chorusamerica.org}.

\textsuperscript{79} This impact study is available at \url{http://www.chorusamerica.org/about_choralsinging.cfm}.


61
Although the scale and amplitude of these studies was much bigger and wider than the one conducted for the purposes of this treatise, the similarity in their findings is clearly evident:

The broad appeal of choral singing is based on the unsurpassed opportunity it gives each singer to participate in an activity that involves them artistically, builds community, and results in a product of great beauty. In working toward a beautiful choral sound, people contribute to an artistic product greater than themselves and forge friendships that change the course of their lives. The synergy of this musical mission infuses choral organizations with energy and purpose that result in extraordinary contributions to their communities.81

Quite a few patterns emerged from the empirical data I gathered from the six respondents in this survey.

From the choir members’ responses it is very clear that they enjoy singing in akKOORd. The two main reasons why these people sing in this choir is: a) they want to develop their musical abilities, and b) they want to meet new people. This is also the case in an investigation by Simmons (in Bell, 2004: 8) who indicated that the important reasons that motivate people to sing in choirs are musical reasons and social needs. Choir respondents enjoy both rehearsals and performances alike and although the rehearsal schedule does not always allow time for it, socializing with their choir friends is very important to them. The buddy-system proved to play an important role in connecting with other choir members. Notwithstanding the significance of social connections made through choral singing motivation, Bell's study concludes that musical reasons are the ultimate motivating factor in that the chorister participates primarily in order “to satisfy through the medium of singing a longing for something beautiful and spiritual in his life. There may be social motives but the musical motive is invariably stronger” (Bell, 2004: 8).

Singing in akKOORd has an enormous impact on the lives of the respondents in this study – personally as well as towards the Overberg community. To some it has broadened their horizons. To others it has given confidence to converse with strangers about a mutual interest. In the study conducted by Chorus America in 2002, participants reported that “the requirements of choral singing – discipline, attention to detail, teamwork, and the social

81 This article, entitled “Why Choruses Matter”, was written by Chorus America on the basis of the above impact studies and made available on the website of the Chester County Choral Society. Accessed on 3 December 2009
value of the experience – combine to improve their daily lives, in both their work and in family relationships.\(^{82}\)

Rehearsals energize and inspire them to such an extent that even though they sometimes feel depressed beforehand, they always feel better afterwards. They are also able to apply what they have learnt outside of their participation in \(akKOORd\). Some choir members apply Dr. Brad Liebl's vocal techniques for general singing and in song leading in church. One of the choir members is himself a conductor of a choir and has put \(akKOORd\)'s rehearsal and vocal techniques into practice there.

The Port Elizabeth Windy City tour was significant in that it has clearly had a huge impact on the spirit and confidence of the choir. Both respondent groups indicated that touring builds familiarity and commitment. This intricate, difficult work has been by far the biggest challenge and musical experience the choir has faced thus far. Respondents recall that the relentless, excruciating rehearsals with the composer and orchestra were amongst the most memorable. The choir enjoyed the trip by bus and came back a united group.

To choir respondents concerts are the driving force and motivation for being in the choir. The respondents from the community attend most of the concerts the choir presents, because they have a very high regard for the quality of the performances. Regarding the ticket sales for concerts it was clear that most audience members find the tickets affordable and obtain them from choir members and the Bredasdorp Square Restaurant. The choir members sell their tickets from door-to-door, or contact their regular “clients”.

Both choir and community not only enjoy performances with ensembles and outstanding musicians such as Marc Uys and Pretty Yende, but also the wide variety of repertoire the choir has sung in the past three-and-a-half years. According to the community respondents to this research, this has an affect on the lively spirit and confidence the choir radiates from the moment they enter the hall until the final bow. Community respondents enjoyed the \(S\ddot{a}n\ Glória\) by Péter Louis van Dijk, while most of the choir respondents said the \(Windy City Songs\) was a real challenge. This work, as well as the short and easy piece

\(^{82}\) http://www.chestercountychoralsociety.org/whycm.asp
\[^{82}\) http://www.chorusamerica.org/impact03_press.cfm
Meguru, gave them the feeling of *communitas*. According to Holmquist, “Most had good experiences with music, which they remember well enough to recount in considerable detail, and through the years they came to associate music making with pleasure and positive experiences” (Holmquist in Bell, 2004: 9). The 2003 *Chorus America* study states: “It is the choral repertoire, the scale of choral singing, and the grandness of the sound that provide choristers with the satisfaction and exhilaration that keep [them] committed” (2003: 15).

My survey in the case of akKOORd has shown this Overberg community choir to be an equal source of ‘grandness’, ‘satisfaction’, ‘exhilaration’ and ‘commitment’ amongst choristers and community members alike. In the forthcoming and final chapter of this treatise, I consider the significance of such findings within the current South African cultural context.

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83 A traditional song from Ovamboland (now northern Namibia and southern Angola)
CHAPTER 4
ON CONSTRUCTING A WEB OF CULTURE

The chorus is a musical instrument and a social organization that crosses cultural, historical, and geographical boundaries (Ahlquist nd: 1)

4.1 INTRODUCTION
The first three chapters of this treatise have between them already provided much in respect of all four of Soy’s requirements for a case study. Chapter 1 gives a theoretical and methodological grounding for the survey conducted and analysed in chapter 3, thus providing this study with a measure of external validity and construct validity. Cross-case examination of similar surveys conducted in the United States of America supports the external validity of the within-case examination, that is, the survey conducted and analysed in chapter 3. The historical narrative of chapter 2 further strengthens the internal validity of conclusions drawn from the within-case examination. What remains to be said in this chapter, therefore, is merely to provide some brief concluding remarks, particularly as they pertain to two of Soy’s requirements: internal validity and external validity, although these certainly also have bearing on the fourth and final requirement, reliability. I link these in particular with Geertz’s notion that, in order to access a “web of culture” (Geertz 1973: 5), we make use of “thick description” by “specifying the internal relationships among these elements”, on the basis of which “the whole system can be characterized in a general way – according to the core symbols around which it is organized, the underlying structures of which it is a surface expression, or the ideological principles upon which it is based” (Geertz 1973: 17). This we do in order to gauge the meaning behind actions and their symbolic importance in society.

We begin with the internal validity of akKOORd as micronarrative within the “web” of the Overberg community itself, and then conclude by considering some aspects of the external validity of this micronarrative, that is, the extent to which it may be said to have some relevance to the current “web” of South African culture as a whole. The lens through which this reading is done is admittedly selective, but this is done with due cognisance of Tomlinson’s reminder that historical writing is necessarily selective:
The web is a construction of the historian taking shape and gaining coherence from the reciprocal (and rich and haphazard) interaction of his evolving assumptions with his increasingly meaningful data, the events he selects for inclusion in the context (Tomlinson 1984: 357).

4.2 INTERNAL VALIDITY – \textit{akKOORd AS OVERBERG Micronarrative}

In order to ensure reliability, this unique choir in the unique area of the Overberg needs to be presented or “thickly described” in its own terms – not in terms of universal theories or laws of cultural analysis. According to Tomlinson (1984: 354), cultural analysis that dictates the application of theoretical models, with its isolation of single strands from their contexts, entails a debilitating loss of meaning, a rent in the web of thick description. The interaction of the unit of study (in this case \textit{akKOORd}) with its context is a significant part of the investigation.

Socially and culturally, \textit{akKOORd} is a very heterogeneous choir. The choristers of \textit{akKOORd} represent a diverse scope of occupations and of financial and social standings within the Overberg community, as previously described in chapter 2 of this treatise. Members are male and female, young adults and not-so-young adults, and hail from the white and coloured communities. In this \textit{akKOORd} is truly representative of the broader society in which it is located. In contrast to a homogeneous choir such as a university choir (which basically consists of students), \textit{akKOORd} is made up of a small sample in a closed community, more representative of the different levels of society one would find in a specific suburb or organisation in a big city. Although there are more white members than coloured members in this choir, the community does not regard the choir as one of a certain “colour” or “class”. It is evident that respondents in this study all regard \textit{akKOORd} as accessible “public property” – something they already belong to or can belong to should they so choose. Respondent 5, a supporter and sponsor of \textit{akKOORd} who is a member of the coloured community in Bredasdorp, said the following:

People want to listen to quality music and do not want to waste their time or money […] we are a small community and want to be part of something, but the opportunity is not always there (respondent 5).
It is precisely on the coloured community of Bredasdorp that two of the most “visible” of akKOORd’s impacts can be seen, as previously described in chapter 3:

- The foundation of a new young choir through the local Anglican Church \(^{84}\)
- Respondent 3 in this study, who is both a member of akKOORd and the conductor of the United Reformed Church Choir in Bredasdorp, has commented on how being part of akKOORd has had a positive impact on the way in which he rehearses his own choir and how it has inspired him to make an extra effort with their sound \(^{85}\).

The Overberg community is patriotic towards akKOORd and has taken full ownership of the choir. They associate their own “product” with the wide variety of European and African music we sing \(^{86}\). The issue here is not whether we sing European or African music – but rather that the choir always presents concerts of very high standard in which the community takes great pride \(^{87}\). Auditions do not exclude anyone on the basis of creed or colour, nor on whether they have been privileged enough to have been previously exposed to choral music or formal musical learning of any kind. The choir is open to all members of the community and they themselves decide whether they want to be a part of the choir.

But although there is an undoubted sense of ownership on the part of choristers and community supporters of the choir in both white and coloured communities, the same can unfortunately not be said of the (predominantly coloured) leaders in the Overberg community. Earlier in this treatise \(^{88}\) I described an incident wherein akKOORd approached the local municipality for funding to assist with the costs involved in travelling to Port Elizabeth for Van Dijk’s *Windy City Songs* with the NMMU choir in October 2008. In my conversations with the Cape Agulhas mayor about this matter it became clear to me that, because akKOORd has fewer coloured members than white members, the local municipality regarded the racial representation of the choir as elitist, exclusionist, and reserved for predominantly white singers that are able to sight-read. Of course this last remark was wholly unfounded, as the ability to sight-read plays no role in akKOORd auditions whatsoever \(^{89}\). Instead he was more interested in knowing what I (as a white

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84 See section 3.3.4 of this treatise.
85 See section 3.2.1 of this treatise.
86 See responses discussed in section 2.11 of this treatise.
87 See responses discussed in section 3.2.7 of this treatise.
88 See section 1.2.1 of this treatise.
89 See section 2.2 of this treatise.
person) could do to educate the “disadvantaged” coloured community. Although he was therefore quick to accuse akKOORd of exclusionism, and wrongly so, he certainly had no qualms about acting that way himself!

Two local residents openly expressed criticism of the local municipality for their stance in this matter. Respondent 5, herself a member of the coloured community, said:

I think people do not realize what an asset the choir is in our community – many of them in high positions […] who say they reach out to the community. But, if you have not heard a choir from your local community, how can you say you are reaching out? They all had to be given tickets – come and listen to what’s happening in your community – that is pathetic⁹⁰.

Orton King reported the following in Suidernuus:

[…] for a rural community, a choir of this standard and stature deserved more than just a compliment. […] akKOORd has become a cultural jewel in the Overberg and should be protected like porcelain. I trust that the local government in this regard will take notice of this precious asset. Government should use ratepayers’ money to invest in the choir for further development and elaboration – especially in these times where high standards are no longer common. Let us [the local government] support this truly deserving and worthy cause (Suidernuus, 3 April 2009)⁹¹.

Chorus America impact study of 2002 reports the following:

When social scientists talk about community building in democratic nations, they speak about “civic engagement” and building “social capital”. […] Social capital is generally defined as the social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. It is a key block for building community. Sadly, most social research suggests that our social fibre is fraying because most of us are not engaged in our communities. On the other hand […] social scientists have cited choral singing and participation in the arts as important components in building community.

⁹⁰ This quote has been used on p.61 for the purpose of summarising the comments by the respondents. In this paragraph the quote is placed in context and a new perspective.

⁹¹ ’n Vertoning van hierdie standaard en formaat vir ‘n plattelandse gemeenskap verdien meer as net ‘n pluimpie. […] akKOORd het ‘n kultuur-juweel in die Overberg geword en behoort deur Overberg soos porselein beskerm te word. Ek vertrou dat ons plaaslike owervere in hierdie gebied kennis neem van hierdie kosbare bate. Owerhede behoort die beursies oop te maak en ‘n aandeel van die belastingbetalers se gelde hierin te belê vir verdere ontwikkeling en uitbouing, veral waar ons in tye leef waar produkte met hoë standaarde nie alledaags is nie. Kom ons ondersteun ‘n saak wat ondersteuning verdien!
It is a sad irony therefore, that the opportunity for “civic engagement” and the building of “social capital” through \textit{akKOORd} has been entirely overlooked by the very people whose task it is to facilitate and foster “social networks”, “reciprocity” and “trustworthiness” in the Overberg district.

\section*{4.3 EXTERNAL VALIDITY – \textit{akKOORd} AS MICRONARRATIVE IN POST-APARtheID AND POST-HEGEMONIC SOUTH AFRICA}

This impasse between local government and community, although regrettable, is nevertheless understandable. Community leaders see it as their duty to redress imbalances in past South African society, and if this means rejecting “white” music, then this is what they believe they ought to do. Despite the varied musical styles included in \textit{akKOORd}'s repertoire, this repertoire does lean heavily on Western classical music. Add to this the fact that its conductor and most of its members are white, and \textit{akKOORd}'s fate is sealed. For those who stand on the periphery of its “cultural web” it is seen as no more than a somewhat devious attempt at what Christine Lucia calls “reinvention” through “alignment […] with new bedfellows”. Lucia continues:

\begin{quote}
In this kind of narration the entire history of orchestras, symphony concerts, recitals, music festivals, competitions, art councils, censored state radio and television and the unimaginable damage of unequal education and cultural opportunities that drove this Western hegemonic order along under grand apartheid (and before that British colonial rule) are here erased [...] as if they had never existed. The origins are remade and classical music reborn with a new link forged [...] What under Western hegemonic discourse before 1994 was just ‘music’ because it was music of the dominant minority has, reasserting itself under the pressure of post-Apartheid South Africa, renamed itself (Classical Music) and redrawn its boundaries (International) (Lucia 2005: xxii).
\end{quote}

Understandable as this point of view may be, there are a significant number of South Africans for whom so-called “elitist” music is experienced very differently indeed. The popularity of opera amongst black South Africans is a case in point, as is the extent to which black choralism – as evidenced in the prescribed repertoire of its many national eisteddfods and competitions – embraces music from a wide variety of genres, including Western classical music. As a previously disenfranchised South African, respondent 5 in this study expresses these sentiments very poignantly when she says that “people want to listen to quality music” and “want to be part of something”. Her sentiments strongly resonate with Bell’s findings that the value in such experience lies precisely in its ability “to
satisfy through the medium of singing a longing for something beautiful and spiritual in [...] life” (Bell 2004: 8).

Given the pressing social problems and the continued economic recession experienced in this country, it seems to me that South Africans are all hungry for “something beautiful and spiritual in life”. If they find this in music that is extraordinary, beyond the mundane and familiar, music that requires effort, concentration, discipline, motivation, vision, leadership, structure and order, music that inspires them to aspire towards excellence, then it is indeed a great pity that this should be seen by some policy makers and potential funders as undesirable exclusivity and elitism. Democracy should never be allowed to equal mediocritiy, just as the pursuit of excellence should never be allowed to be equated with hegemony and prejudicial elitism. On the contrary, elitism in the form of excellence has the power to defy barriers of social standing and ethnicity, to unite people through a collective sense of ownership.

Zelda Potgieter therefore asks:

Is there something wrong if so many South Africans – across all ethnic divides – continue to perform and compose in those genres generally held to belong to Western music? (Potgieter 2009: 9).

She engages with Bhabha’s notion of “mimicry” (Bhabha 1994: 86 in Potgieter 2009: 11) as an inevitable and prominent cultural “third space” (2009: 37) in the post-colony, and subsequently concludes:

The music that belongs to South Africa is the music that is (re)made in South Africa, where ever it may have begun (Potgieter 2009: 11).

Therefore, perhaps the only conclusion to be drawn from this study, and particularly the “web of culture” in which akKOORD is located, is that this is a choir somewhat ahead of its time in certain respects. Its members and supporters have long since shed the shackles of the past, not – as Lucia suggests – to falsify the past or pretend it never existed, but rather to refuse to be caught up in and thus debilitated by that past. Music has the power to transcend the contexts of its past and to be remade in its new contexts. In turn it offers its significant ability to transform those very contexts, the “webs” of culture in which it finds a home, and to rekindle belief in “something beautiful and spiritual in [...] life” (Bell 2004: 8).
Let us hope the day will soon dawn when more politicians and potential funders will come to appreciate that fact.

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*akKOORd at the SAAF Memorial Service in May 2008*

*(See 2.14, page 37)*
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APPENDIX 1
INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH CHORISTERS
AFRIKAANS
APPENDIX 1:
INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH CHORISTERS
AFRIKAANS

Die navorser verduidelik die volgende aan die respondente:

a) Die omvang van die navorsing, insluitende die kwalitatiewe aspekte van die studie.
b) Die doel van die ondervraging, naamlik om informasie in te win oor sy/haar koorervaring en wat die koor (akKOORd) se impak op sy/ haar persoonlike lewe en die van die Overberg gemeenskap is.
c) Die ondervraging sal opgeneem word, aangesien ’n verslag geskryf sal word.
d) ’n Kode sal aan elke respondent gegee word en niemand se naam sal in die finale verslag gebruik sal word nie.

Die volgende vrae het as basis vir die semi-gestruktureerde ondervraging vir koorlede gevorm:

**Algemeen**

1. Vra respondent om sy / haar kode, en waar hy / sy tans woonagtig is.
2. Verduidelik kortliks jou koorondervinding en wanneer jy in akKOORd begin sing het.
3. Waarom sing jy in ’n koor?
4. Wat is vir jou die beste / lekkerste om in akKOORd te sing?
5. Het jou huidige koorervaring in akKOORd enige impak op jou daagliks lewe?
   Verduidelik hoe.
6. Hoe affekteer dit jou verhouding met familielede?
7. Sou jy sê dit affekteer jou verhouding met mense van die gemeenskap?
8. Vind jy dat jy meer aanklank vind by koorlede wat jy nie normaalweg sou nie?
9. Sou jy sê jou betrokkenheid by die koor ook het meegebring dat jy ook meer by gemeenskapsaktiwiteite betrokke is?
10. Wat beteken dit vir jou om in akKOORd te kan sing / om met akKOORd geassocieer te word? Wat is die persoonlike voordele om aan ’n organisasie soos die koor te behoort?
11. Dui asseblief die volgende aan: stem baie sterk saam / stem redelik saam / verskil effens / verskil heeltemal:
a. Om by akKOORd betrokke te wees het meegebring dat ons huishouding mense ontmoet en mee sosialiseer wat hul nie normaalweg doen nie of meebring dat ons meer by gemeenskapsaktiwiteite betrokke is.
b. Ek sosialiseer met mede-koorlede (buite repetisies en uitvoerings).
c. Ek nuwe vriendskappe met koorlede ontwikkel.

Repetisies
13. Voel jy soms ’n verandering in gemoedstemming of energievlak gedurende of na ’n repetisie?
14. Hoe voel jy oor die tipe musiek wat akKOORd oor die algemeen sing?
15. Wat is vir jou die “wow” (ekstatiese) oomblikke gedurende repetisies.

Vertonings / Optredes
16. Hoeveel kaartjies verkoop jy gemiddeld vir ’n akKOORd-vertoning?
17. Koop dieselfde mense telkens kaartjies by jou vir die akKOORd-vertonings?
18. Hoe verkoop jy jou kaartjies? Deur-tot-deur, bel hulle?
20. Wat beteken dit vir jou om met orkestrale of instrumentale begeleiding te sing?
21. Wat sou jy sê is die waarde van akKOORd se sang vir die gehoor?
22. Wat dink jy is die belangrikheid van vertonings? Hoe belangrik is uitvoerings / optredes vir jou? Wat is die waarde daarvan vir jou?
23. Hoe voel jy gewoonlik na ’n vertoning? Voel jy soms ’n verandering in gemoedstemming en energie gedurende of na afloop van die vertoning?
24. Kan jy ’n spesifieke lied / vertoning onthou wat jou die gevoel van “communitas”92(‘n kort ekstatiese en emosionele gevoel wat ’n eenheidsgevoel met almal teenwoordig gegee het en fysiologiese reaksies soos “kou rillings teen jou ruggraat af” gegee het?

Gemeenskap
Ons het nou oor jou persoonlike ervarings rakende kooraktiwiteite gesels. Nou gaan ons op die impak wat die koor op die gemeenskap mag hé fokus.

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25. Kry jy ooit terugvoering van gehoorlede na 'n akKOORd-vertoning? Wat is hulle algemene kommentaar?

26. Hoe dink jy word akKOORd in die gemeenskap geag / gesien / gereken?

27. Dink jy dis belangrik dat akKOORd so veel moontlik plaaslik optree? Hoekom?

28. Dink jy dis belangrik dat akKOORd ook uitwyk na ander dorpe en selfs oorsee? Hoekom?

29. Dink jy die persepsie van die gemeenskap teenoor akKOORd word minder of meer positief? Motiveer / hoe so?

30. Dink jy akKOORd verruk die gemeenskap / watter impak het dit op die gemeenskap indien enige?

31. Dink jy die gemeenskap kan akKOORd as 'n bron / bate ag?

32. Is akKOORd by enige spesifieke aktiwiteite betrokke wat die gemeenskap op enige wyse bevoordeel? (bv. Deelname aan gemeenskapsfondsinsamelings, lewer gemeenskapsdiens ens?)

33. Dink jy jou deelname / betrokkenheid in akKOORd is ondersteunend en bydraend tot die kulturele kapitaal?

34. Wat sou jy voorstel kan akKOORd doen om meer by die gemeenskap betrokke te raak?

35. Met alles waaroor ons so pas gesels het – wat is na jou mening die belangrikste rede waarom jy in akKOORd sing?

   a. Vir eie plesier
   b. Konnekteer met emosies / spirituele groei / geloof
   c. Laat my goed voel / maak my gelukkig
   d. Sosialiseer / ontmoet mense / meng met mense in groep
   e. Maak musiek / kreatiwiteit / musikale uitdrukking
   f. Stresontlading / psigiese ontlading / ontspanning
   g. Dra by tot die gemeenskap / vind aanklank met gemeenskap
APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH CHORISTERS

ENGLISH
APPENDIX 2
INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH CHORISTERS
ENGLISH

The researcher will explain the following to the respondents:

a) The scope of the research, including the qualitative aspects of the study.

b) That the aim of the interview will be to gain information about their choral experience, and the impact the choir (akKOORd) has on their personal lives and that of the Overberg community.

c) The interview will be recorded as a report will be written.

d) A code will be given to each respondent and no names will be used in the final report.

The researcher will inform the respondent that the interview will be recorded for the purpose of writing a report, but that no names will be used in the final report.

The following questions will guide the semi-structured interviews for choir members.

General

1. Ask participant to introduce him/herself, give his/her date of birth and residential town.

2. Briefly describe your current choral experience and when you first started singing in akKOORd.

3. Why do you sing in a choir?

4. What is the best part about singing in akKOORd?

5. Has the choral experience had an impact on your daily life? Mention how.

6. How does it affect the way you relate to other members of your family?

7. How does it affect the way you relate to other people in the community?

8. Do you find yourself connecting to people you would otherwise not have met?

9. Has being involved in the chorus resulted in you becoming involved in community activities?

10. What does it mean to you to be able to sing in / be associated with akKOORd? What are the personal benefits of belonging to an organization like the choir?

11. Indicate: agree strongly / agree somewhat / disagree somewhat / disagree strongly:
a. Being involved with akKOORd has caused the chorus members in our household to meet and socialize with people we would not ordinarily meet or has caused us to become more involved in community activities.
b. I socialize with fellow choristers (outside of rehearsals and performances).
c. I have developed new friendships with members of my chorus.

Rehearsals
12. Describe your general feeling/attitude before a rehearsal.
13. Do you sometimes feel a change of mood or energy during or after a rehearsal?
14. What is your feeling/opinion about the type of music akKOORd generally sings?
15. What are the “wow” moments in the choir?

Concerts
16. How many tickets do you generally sell for an akKOORd concert?
17. Do the same people buy tickets from you for akKOORd’s performances?
18. How do you sell your tickets? Door-to-door, phone etc?
19. Describe your feelings when you perform in front of so many people.
20. What does it mean to you when you sing with orchestral or instrumental accompaniment?
21. Does a performance by akKOORd have any value for audience members?
22. What do you think is the importance of performances? How important is/are performing/concerts to you?
23. How do you generally feel after a performance? / Do you sometimes feel a change of mood or energy during or after a concert?
24. Can you remember a specific song/concert that gave you the notion of communitas (a brief ecstatic and emotional state involving a sense of union with everyone present and physiological responses such as “shivers down the back”)?

Community
We’ve been discussing your personal experiences in connection with choral activities. Now we’ll focus on the impact the choir might have on the community.

25. Do you ever get feedback from audience members after an akKOORd concert? What are their general comments?
26. How does the community regard akKOORd?
27. Do you think it is important that akKOORd perform locally as much as possible? Why?
28. Do you think it is important that akKOORd should also perform in other cities and even abroad? Why?
29. Do you think the perception of the community toward akKOORd is becoming more or less positive? Motivate your answer.
30. How does akKOORd enrich a community or have a positive impact on quality of life?
31. In which ways might the community regard akKOORd as a resource or asset?
32. Does akKOORd engage in any specific activities that benefit the community in any particular ways? (E.g. participate in community fundraisers, provide community services etc.)
33. Do you see performing in akKOORd as supporting and contributing to your cultural capital?
34. What would you recommend to enable akKOORd to become more connected to the community?
35. Taking the discussion/interview into consideration, what is the most important reason why you sing in akKOORd?
   a. I like it/love it/it’s fun/for enjoyment
   b. Connect with emotions / spiritual growth / faith
   c. Satisfaction I get / it feels good / makes me happy
   d. Group of people /social /meet people /connect with people
   e. Making music/creativity/artistic expression
   f. Stress release/mental release/relaxing
   g. Contribute to community/connect with community/performing/service
APPENDIX 3
INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS
AFRIKAANS
APPENDIX 3
INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS
AFRIKAANS

Die navorser verduidelik die volgende aan die respondente:

a) Die omvang van die navorsing, insluitende die kwalitatiewe aspekte van die studie.
b) Die doel van die ondervraging, naamlik om informasie in te win oor sy/haar koorervaring en wat die koor (akKOORd) se impak op sy/ haar persoonlike lewe en die van die Overberg gemeenskap is.
c) Die ondervraging sal opgeneem word, aangesien ’n verslag geskryf sal word.
d) ’n Kode sal aan elke respondent gegee word en niemand se naam sal in die finale verslag gebruik sal word nie.

Die volgende vrae het as basis vir die semi-gestruktureerde ondervraging vir gemeenskapslede gevorm:

Algemeen
1. Vra respondent om sy / haar kode, en waar hy / sy tans woonagtig is.
2. Het jy as skolier in ’n koor gesing?
3. Het jy enige instrument op skool leer bespeel en bespeel jy tans nog enige instrumente?
4. Waar kom jou belangstelling in koormusiek / kunste vandaan?
5. Het jou ouers / familie na kooruitvoerings gaan luister toe jy nog ’n kind was?
6. Kan jy jou eerste koorondervinding onthou? Waar was dit?
7. Hoe baie is jy aan koormusiek blootgestel voor akKOORd se ontstan en optredes?
8. Hoeveel van akKOORd se vertonings het jy die afgelope 3 jaar bygewoon?
   a. Kleine Orgelmesse
   b. Vivaldi Gloria
   c. Blomskool Lentekonsert
   d. TVOS-optredes
   e. N.G. Kerk Bredasdorp Kerssangdiens
   f. Suideroord-optrede
   g. Huis Klippedrift Verjaarsdagkonsert
   h. Sān Gloria
9. Min of meer hoeveel akKOORd-lede ken jy / het jy al ontmoet?

**Vertonings**

11. By wie en waar koop jy jou kaartjies vir akKOORd se vertonings?
12. Dink jy die kaartjies is bekostigbaar of te duur?
13. Wat is jou gevoel / opinie omtrent die tipe musiek wat akKOORd in die algemeen sing?
14. Voel jy soms ’n verandering in gemoedstemming of energie gedurende of na ’n vertoning?
15. Hoe sou jy jou gevoel / houding voor ’n akKOORd-vertoning beskryf? Hoe voel jy na die vertoning?
16. Kan jy ’n spesifieke lied / konsert onthou wat jou die gevoel van *communitas*94 (’n kort ekstatische en emosionele gevoel wat jou ’n gevoel van eenheid met almal teenwoordig gee en fisiologiese reaksies soos “rillings teen jou ruggraat af”) gee?
17. Hoeveel van die musiek wat tydens ’n spesifieke / vertonings van akKOORd gesing is het jy voorheen geken/gehoor?
18. Verkies jy om musiek te hoor wat jy ken of hou jy daarvan om aan nuwe/ander onbekende koormusiek bekendgestel te word?
19. Wat is jou opinie oor die kwaliteit en tipe vertonings wat akKOORd aanbied? Varieer ons trant?
20. Het jy al enige ander vertonings wat deur akKOORd aangebied is bygewoon?
   a. *Clockwise* by Marc Uys en Jacqueline Kerrod.
   b. Pro Cantu Jeugkoor
   c. Potchefstroomse Universiteitskoor
   d. New Canaan Madrigal Choir.
   e. Stellenbosch Universiteitskoor
21. Waarom het jy hierdie vertoning/s bygewoon?
   a. Jy was geïnteresseerd in die spesifieke musiek
   b. ’n Koorlid het jou genader om ’n kaartjie te koop en jy wou hom / haar / die koor ondersteun

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c. Jy ag die vertonings deur akKOORd aangebied van 'n bepaalde standaard
d. Die gemeenskap moet vertonings in die gemeenskap / area ondersteun

Gemeenskap

*Ons het nou meestal oor jou persoonlike ervarings aangaande kooraktiwiteite gepraat. Nou gaan ons op die impak wat die koor moontlik op die gemeenskap kan hê fokus.*

22. Dink jy dit is belangrik om gemeenskapsvertonings te ondersteun? Waarom?
23. Hoe dink jy sien / ag die gemeenskap akKOORd? Dink jy ons gehoor het gegroei?
24. Dink jy dit is belangrik dat akKOORd hier in die Overberg optree? Indien wel waarom?
25. Dink jy akKOORd tree genoeg hier in die gemeenskap op?
26. Dink jy dit is belangrik dat akKOORd ook in ander dorpe, streke en oorsee moet optree? Waarom?
27. Dink jy akKOORd verryk die gemeenskap en het 'n impak daarop?
28. Dink jy die gemeenskap het enigsins verander as 'n gevolg van akKOORd se bestaan?
29. Op watter wyse kan die gemeenskap akKOORd as 'n bron/bate beskou?
30. Dink jy die persepsie van die gemeenskap teenoor akKOORd word minder of meer positief? Hoe so?
31. Beskou jy akKOORd se optredes as ondersteunend en bydraend tot die kulturele kapitaal van die gemeenskap?
32. Het jy enige voorstelle oor hoe akKOORd meer by gemeenskapsprojekte betrokke kan raak?
APPENDIX 4

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

ENGLISH
The researcher will explain the following to the respondents:
   a) The scope of the research, including the qualitative aspects of the study.
   b) That the aim of the interview will be to gain information about their choral
      experience, and the impact the choir (akKOORd) has on their personal lives and
      that of the Overberg community.
   c) The interview will be recorded and a report will be written.
   d) A code will be given to each respondent and no names will be used in the final
      report.

The researcher will inform the respondent that the interview will be recorded for the
purpose of writing a report, but that no names will be used in the final report.

The following questions will guide the semi-structured interviews for choir members.

General
1. Ask participant to introduce him/herself, give his/her date of birth and residential
   town.
2. Did you sing in a choir when you were at school?
3. Did you study any instrument at school/afterwards?
4. What is the origin of your interest in choral music/art?
5. Did your parents/family go to choral performances when you were a child?
6. Can you remember your first choral experience? Where was it?
7. How often were you exposed to choral music before akKOORd’s performances?
8. How many concerts by akKOORd have you attended during the past three years?
   a. Kleine Orgelmesse
   b. Vivaldi Gloria
   c. Flower Club
   d. Spring Concert
   e. Dutch Reformed Church Bredasdorp Christmas service
   f. Suideroord Performance
9. More or less how many people in akKOORd do you know / have you met?

**Concerts**

10. How do you hear about akKOORd's concerts?
11. From whom or where do you buy your tickets for akKOORd’s concerts?
12. Do you think tickets are affordable or too expensive?
13. What is your feeling/opinion about the type of music generally akKOORd sings?
14. Do you sometimes feel a change of mood or energy during or after a concert?
15. How would you describe your attitude/feeling prior to an akKOORd concert?
16. Can you remember a specific song/concert that gave you the notion of *communitas* (a brief ecstatic and emotional state involving a sense of union with everyone present and physiological responses such as “shivers down the back”)?
17. How much of the music sung during a specific/all the concerts of akKOORd had you known/heard before?
18. Would you prefer to hear music you know or do you like being introduced to other, unfamiliar choral music?
19. What do you think of the quality and type of concerts akKOORd presents?
20. Did you attend any other concerts hosted by akKOORd?
   a. Clockwise by Marc Uys and Jacqueline Kerrod.
   b. Pro Cantu Youth Choir.
   c. Potchefstroom University Choir.
   d. New Canaan Madrigal Choir.
21. Why did you attend this/these concert/s?
   a. Because you are interested in the specific type of music.
   b. Because a choir member approached you to buy a ticket and you want to support him/the choir.
   c. Because you consider concerts hosted by akKOORd of a particular standard.
   d. Because the community should support local concerts.

**Community**

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We’ve been discussing your personal experiences around the choral activities. Now we’ll focus on the impact the choir might have on the community.

22. Do you think it is important to support neighbourhood concerts? Why?
23. Does the community regard akKOORd? Do you think our audience has grown?
24. Do you think it is important that akKOORd performs locally? Why?
25. Do you think akKOORd performs enough locally?
26. Do you think it is important that akKOORd should also perform in other towns and abroad? Why?
27. Do you think akKOORd enriches or has an impact on the community?
28. Would you say that your community has changed in any way as a result of the existence of akKOORd?
29. Mention ways in which the community might regard akKOORd as a resource / an asset?
30. Do you think the perception of the community toward akKOORd is becoming more or less positive? Motivate your answer.
31. Do you consider performing in akKOORd as supporting and contributing to your cultural capital?
32. Do you have any suggestions enabling akKOORd to become more involved in community projects?
APPENDIX 5

EXAMPLE OF akKOORd CONCERT PROGRAMME
Beatus Vir (from Selva morale e spirituale)  
Claudio Monteverdi (1567 - 1643)

Claudio (Giovanni Antonio) Monteverdi was arguably the greatest of all Italian Renaissance composers. From 1613 until his death he was Maestro di capella (Director of Music) at St. Mark’s in Venice, devoting his time to directing the choir and composing a series of wonderful sacred pieces, which spread his fame throughout Europe. He revolutionised the music of the theatre and the church with his dramatic and imaginative use of instruments and voices, and with his daring harmonies.

In 1641 Monteverdi published his Selva morale e spirituale, a compilation of sacred works that he had composed over the previous 30 years. This reveals the full range of his innovative contribution to the baroque era. The motet “Beatus Vir” probably dates from about 1630. It is an opulently harmonised setting of Psalm 112 in the so-called stile concertato, in which full chorus contrasts with reduced vocal forces.

The piece consists of a single movement in four distinct sections. There is a vibrant opening over a jaunty “walking bass”, adorned by a sparkling ritornello for two violins. At the words “Jucundus homo qui miseretur”, the music suddenly breaks step and enters the relative minor for a solemn section in triple time; this section culminates in a fanfare-like passage at the words “Cornu ejus exaltabitur”. The opening motif then returns, graphically portraying the fate of the sinner. The work ends with an exuberant setting of the doxology “Gloria Patri et Filio” and a glorious “Amen”.

Beatus vir qui timet Dominum  
Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord

In mandatis eius volet nimis  
That delight greatly in his commandments

Potens in terra erit semen eius  
He shall be mighty upon the earth

Benedicetur, generation rectorum  
The generation of the upright shall be blessed.

Gloria et divitiae in domo eius  
Wealth and riches shall be in his house

Et justitia eius in saeculum saeculi  
And his righteousness endureth forever

Exortum est in tenebris lumen recti  
Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness

misericors et miserator  
He is gracious and full of compassion

Jucundus homo  
A good man sheweth favour and leadeth

Disponet sermones suos  
he will guide his affairs with discretion

Quia in aeternum non commovebitur  
surely he shall not be moved forever

In memoria aeterna erit justus  
The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance

ab auditione mala non timebit  
he shall not be afraid of evil tidings

Panatum cor eius, quas in Domino  
His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord

Confirmatum cor eius in Domino  
His heart is established, he shall not be afraid

donec despiciat inimicos suos  
until he sees his desire upon his enemies

Dispersit, dedit pauperibus  
he hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor

Justitia eius in saeculum saeculi  
His righteousness endureth for ever

Cornu ejus exaltabitur in gloria  
His horn will be exalted in glory.
APPENDIX 6

akKOORd EXAMINATION REPORTS
### song of praise: knut nystedt

** Gewyde Lied: Song of praise: Knut Nystedt 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maksimum punt (Stap)</th>
<th>Punt toegelaan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 (15)</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### alle die berge: peter louis v. dijk

** Volkslied: Alle die berge: Peter Louis v. Dijk 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maksimum punt (Stap)</th>
<th>Punt toegelaan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 (15)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### carrousel: p. kaelin

** Sekulêre Komposisie: Carrousel: P. Kaelin 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maksimum punt (Stap)</th>
<th>Punt toegelaan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 (15)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### algemene instruksies

** Algemene Instruksies 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totaal</th>
<th>Stel</th>
<th>Korrelle Verwending</th>
<th>Lof</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Totaal: 90 **

Handtekening van Ekserminator / Kode: Ganie Smit 503
**VERSLAG VAN PUNTE VIR PRAKtiese EKSAMENS**

_Cantique de Jean Racine - G. Faure_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gewyse Lied</th>
<th>Maximaal puntuasie (Shaaf)</th>
<th>Punt toegeken</th>
<th>Toetserswaardering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buisre i masswerk van wyfje verskeiden - heer van klampteleur is die lumosiale istenne gevoel oor gedaan. In P.ssa PP. toonluidre is vitaliteit dergraame inderwêreld bekend. Nobiesteue behoeft dergraam steun. Ewering tussen hoors en klasies zinnvol lank.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Volkshed_ Herre Jesus gi meg nange - verw B. Siggedal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semiforte Komposie</th>
<th>Maximaal puntuasie (Shaaf)</th>
<th>Punt toegeken</th>
<th>Toetserswaardering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Die musikale inhoud is in gewyse brui kep en moet gepaste gesiguitvoering betekenis vol gekommunikeer. Ditse is dergraams voortreflike kantte. Aanvanklik blour klank van musikale met onmiddellike met uitstekende gestrekheid. Die tans is met die res van die uitvoering sonnwaal van finale mededelings ontskopping.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gelyne Indruk</th>
<th>Maximaal puntuasie (Shaaf)</th>
<th>Punt toegeken</th>
<th>Toetserswaardering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Самoensj tussen al die stemgrup tot een unifomme vertoëner het die professionaliteit van die leerder ondersteun. &quot;Hiphavig saal umgepant, wat die alle klasies net sa van!&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totale</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shaaf</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eerling</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lof</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Handtekening van Eksaminator: Kode_
Kaap-RAPPORT Korekompetisie
3 Februari 2008
Kunstekaap, Operahuis en Teater

Naam van Koor: AKkoord

Liedere:
1. Al le die berge
2. Carrousel

Kategorie:
SANGGROEP  DAMESKOOR  MANNEKOOR  GEMENGDE KOOR

Beoordeelaars:
Ronnie Samaai; Hennie Loock; Annemarie vd Walt; Nolufefe Mtshabe;
Danie Theron; Milton Pietersen; Ronnie Lewis; Michele Pietersen

Terugvoer:
1. Oppas dat die spontaneiteit nie nagebou word
   door toegestapte konsentrasie nie

2. Intensiteitsverhoudings
   Persoonlike dagteken

Algemeen:
Hoor die heersende genres vanaf die
muisstroom sol leiers met welkom wees. Dit
sal die balans baie verbeter

Die koor het baie potensiaal.

Punt toegeken:
Brons 60 – 70%  Silwer 70 – 80%  Goud 80% en meer

Getekend deur: Ronnie Samaai  (beoordeelaar)

(98)
ADDENDIX 7
APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL AID, 2008
akKOORd needs support

Although akKOORd has managed to cope with it’s basic needs the past 2 years, the choir is facing so many new challenges and opportunities that we have to seek support elsewhere.

We herewith take the opportunity to make the following proposals and requests to you:

A The choir has the need to represent our community and district. akKOORd is proud to see itself as a product and part of the Overberg community and always support local businesses for all our choral needs.

We therefore request that you investigate the possibility of your institution’s patronage.

B As a non-profitable organisation we normally finance our concert expenses (for example lighting, accompanists and transport) and basic costs (copying sheet music) through ticket sales. Bearing in mind that these performances has all been local, the new challenge of touring to another town or city will imply enormous expenses for transport, meals and accommodation.

akKOORd's invitation to perform the Windy City Songs (see full description of this project further in this document) in Port Elizabeth in October will be an enormous educational experience for every choir member. Unfortunately, without any financing we will simply not be able to live up to this wonderful privilege. As an attempt to try and finance our trip, we’re organising a Spring Concert in Bredasdorp on the 8th of October, but our budget will extend a lot further than what we can possibly raise with such a concert.

You are more than welcome to have a look at our budget for the Windy City Project to Port Elizabeth and consider financial or technical support. Any contribution or donation will be appreciated.

C Should you consider any of the above mentioned, we would like to discuss new possibilities for us to be of service to the community and your organisation.

D akKOORd has many projects for 2009. If your company would like to contribute to our upcoming concerts and activities, you are more than welcome to do so. We would also like to mention that akKOORd already has it’s own bank account at Capitec Bank and is managed by our ad hoc financial manager.

CAPITEC: akKOORd: Branch Code 470010 | Account Number (Electronic Transfers): 1142670927 | Cash Deposit Number: 5054 0920 1410 2116