

**The Chorus in Contemporary Performance**  
**A podcast with Estelle Baudou and Struan Leslie**  
**introduced by Giovanna Di Martino**

Recorded June 2020



Photo credit: Struan Leslie

**Giovanna Di Martino**

Welcome back everybody to the APGRD podcast, Staging the Archive. I am Giovanna and I'm very excited to be welcoming here today Dr Estelle Baudou and Struan Leslie on the topic of Greek choruses from a contemporary perspective. Estelle is a Marie Curie Fellow here at the APGRD, working on contemporary responses to war and collective trauma in the staging of Greek drama. And I also know that she's currently revising her PhD dissertation for publication, which I understand will be out very soon, which is on the chorus in contemporary performances of Greek tragedy. She has also been working on theatre productions as a dramaturg and stage director in France, and is teaching dramaturgy in a French drama school in Paris.

Struan is a theatre director and maker, and a movement director. He has been creating movement-based theatre and performance for more than 30 years in over 300 productions, as well as teaching and training at the highest level. He was the founding Head of Movement at the Royal Shakespeare Company from 2008 to 2013. He is the Artistic Director of Twenty-First Century Chorus, which you formed in 2014 on leaving the RSC. Twenty-First Century Chorus is a theatre company based on the praxis of the ancient Greek chorus, and drawing on extended theatre practices of the 21st century.

And since at the beginning, we'll be talking about Greek choruses from a contemporary perspective today, as usual, I would like to kick off the conversation with an archive item, which in our case is the photograph, taken at the culmination of a week-long workshop, which took place in September at St Hilda's in Oxford, and it was led by choreographer Marie-Louise Crawley, and was a collaboration between the APGRD and DANSOX - Dance Scholarship Oxford, and C-Dare - Centre for Dance Research at the University of Coventry - with composer Malcom Atkins. So over to you, Estelle and Struan, what is this Chorus that we're looking at?

**Struan Leslie**

So the photograph is taken, as you say, at this workshop in September 2019; a week-long residency at the Jacqueline du Pré building at St Hilda's college. There were dancers and students, at all levels, and Estelle was one of those actor-participants. Estelle do you want to talk about what the chorus was - the specific of the chorus that we were looking at?

**Estelle Baudou**

Yeah, but you didn't say what you did during the week, because you were credited as a dramaturg but you were part of thinking about the movements of our chorus. And the aim of the week was the idea of thinking about how the chorus can choreograph itself, like how invents its own dance as being a chorus.

**Struan Leslie**

And we only have one source for that, which is the text. So we were looking at different strategies to work with the text to reveal the inherent physical text within that; which could then be organized and coordinated, to be “a choreography”, and I’m putting that in inverted commas - and choreography in this context meaning ‘movement organized in space and time’: Merce Cunningham quote. So the idea of choreography working in that context. So we deconstructed the text of this particular chorus [an Ode from *Medea*], using a number of different strategies.

**Estelle Baudou**

It was an Ode from *Medea* and the Corinthian women saying their empathy towards Medea, and how they are sharing, between themselves and with Medea, the experience of exile. I think this is the starting point, is this text. And we started working on how words can move the chorus members, like how first the text in English, we were working with [Oliver] Taplin’s translation, and then the text in Greek, was able to move us - to make us move.

**Struan Leslie**

And part of that structure starting right from the punctuation structures of it, and the way the thought is structured. So that we can use thought as it's related to breath, to create phrase length. And so then in terms of thinking about the musicality of it, we reveal some of the suggested musicality, and Malcolm who was the musician in the room with us this week, was part of some of that conversation, and we were all contributing to it. So I was brought in as Estelle says, I was brought in as movement director and dramaturg to look at it. And really as a dramaturg I'm looking at a kind of, I like to take dramaturg and translate it literally, you know, to make theatre work, how do we make those two things? How does that happen? And in a movement context, the body within that. So how does that work? What is the physical dramaturgy as well as the thematic or linguistic dramaturgy of that structure?

**Estelle Baudou**

Maybe you can say that it wasn't about saying the whole text, it was about finding a way to express it, and to express the dramaturgy of it through bodies but not saying the whole text of the Ode.

**Struan Leslie**

And equally not illustrating it either. I'm really interested in the idea that what we're doing is illuminating; and to take from the French meaning of that word in the sense of revealing, or opening that up. And that's coming from, for me, that's coming from Rimbaud but it's also coming from Blake, in the way that he talked - he talks about his work not being an illustration of the text or the

poem, but rather an illumination of it. So it illuminates the ideas that are contained within it.

**Estelle Baudou**

I think it's also the idea of invention. If you take it in the etymological sense, in the etymological meaning of invention is coming in, so on something that already exists. So inventing is not starting something new from nowhere, it's just finding something existing in a new way, like illuminating in a way something that is already there.

**Struan Leslie**

And that in many ways that draws on the text. So an example of that is that we looked at the references to a river, and to water, within this chorus and exploring what that is physically, and drawing on all sorts of references: for me, Da Vinci's drawings, the use of language in translation, and then also as we would - and we were exploring this initially in English, but we did explore it using the ancient Greek as well - and looking at what that was and how the rhythms and structures of that. And so we did a whole series of physical improvisations, building from the simplicity of physicalising the thought-structure and the breath in relation to that, and then layering on top of that, the imagery and the quality of - without, as I say, without illustrating but rather using the quality of the language, the poetic language that Taplin had chosen to reveal the rhythmic and the sense of physicality that's there within the text. So, the image is, as we say, it's at the culmination of the week and it was taken on the last day; we're still in process, we did invite people to come and participate, I suppose, and we shared some of the work with them. But this photograph was taken actually during the session before anybody came to be part of that. And so what it shows, just very simply, what it shows is one performer being held aloft by the other.

**Estelle Baudou**

But for us, from the inside, it was part of a protest. We were all involved in the protest and the climax of this protest was this moment. And it came from an improvisation, it wasn't planned.

**Struan Leslie**

No, you hadn't even done any work that I would normally do around lifts, in terms of preparation or any of those things. We had been working in contact with each other and doing some work around that previously, during the week, but we hadn't specifically gone: Okay, great, how do we lift, how does the ensemble, how does the chorus come together as a chorus to lift one person up? It just happened.

**Estelle Baudou**

For me this picture is really the memory of how, suddenly, solidarity appears. Because I experienced a lot of loneliness during the week as a participant, because at some point, you know you are part of a chorus but you're feeling in your body that you're just an individual. And at the beginning, the work on the protest was really an individual process and suddenly became a collective process. So there was this coming and going, the in between, like to and fro movements between loneliness and solidarity, and I really experienced it in my body and it's part of the reception of the ancient chorus as a breath-thing, as something coming from the character to the group and from the group to the character, but inside the chorus there is this this same movement, it was really clear in the process, in making process, of this protest.

**Struan Leslie**

And I think that part of the clue to that was this breathing, that the punctuation actually makes the breath shorter, therefore higher, so raises tempo. So that actually what happened was then the group, the chorus, which was a group of individuals at the beginning of the week, coming from really different backgrounds - we had two professional dancers, we had a stand-up comedian, we had, you know, we had recently doctored PhD candidate - all of that coming together was the unifying process really started from that simplicity, in a way, of the text. And that, then we kind of go, this is where the solidarity, as you describe it Estelle, comes from and this idea of a dramaturgical movement. And my idea, then, what I talk about is this idea of the text being physical, so we can read that non-consciously, non-conscious as opposed to unconscious.

**Estelle Baudou**

This photo is part of the archive of this workshop, but we were working in the workshop on memories, memories of the text, and memory of the process itself, like, the open sharing of work at the end was a memory of the whole week. And this is also why there is a lot of solidarity at the end because we share a collective memory. And actually, we talked about it with Marcus and Alison, who were two other participants, in the blog post which is on the APGRD website. But I think it shows us how the process of building a chorus helps being a chorus on stage in the story, that it's embedded the process of being a chorus, as a group, as an ensemble, and being a collective figure on stage.

**Struan Leslie**

I think that is kind of, in a way, that is the rehearsal process, or the forming process, the 'forming into norming' - that you're forming a chorus into the normal, you find the normality of what it is to be in a chorus; but you only discover that through going through that process. And we talked about, not to

be confused with ensemble, that a group can come together to create an ensemble in which everybody plays their part within the ensemble, they're tied together but they're here to do a production, whereas a chorus is a group of people who are coming together to explore a common situation, a place and a condition, they are bound together as a group of individuals by an event or a series of events, and that then is their process through the founding of the chorus process.

### **Estelle Baudou**

Yeah, exactly, the chorus is not a result, it's always a process, to achieve some communality; but this process has to be renewed and renewed. It's not something as a pre-existing group, it's a group which is inventing itself. And it's the same in the dramaturgy of the ancient plays. We always think about the chorus as something which is already existing but it's not. In the dramaturgy of the plays, you can see that the chorus is just becoming a chorus. And I think you experienced that when you worked on *Iphigenia at Aulis* and *Women of Troy* with Katie Mitchell - can you talk about the process?

### **Struan Leslie**

In both of those contexts it highlights the parallel journey between the making of a chorus and the journey of the chorus in the play. So there's a really interesting parallel thing going on, and it's almost not until we get to the end of the first time we've gone through the whole play in the rehearsal room that we go 'All right, OK, that's the journey of the chorus. Now we can go back to the beginning again, and be clear about that'. And that's, you know, that's standard in a play but when you're doing it with a chorus, a group of seven, in these cases seven women finding their way to be the chorus, it's a really significant journey that they make and the place they go through. So for *Women of Troy* we have a group of women who have been, in the context of the production with Katie Mitchell at the National Theatre, a group of women who have been abducted from the party that is celebrating the arrival of the wooden horse that is being taken as a good omen, that the war is over and so we're ready to go. And then this group of women suddenly appear, are suddenly in this warehouse; and another woman, Helen, is upstairs in a separate room, and we can see her the whole time. So this group of women then actually have to bind themselves together. So at the beginning, what have they got together, that keeps them together, that becomes this moment of solidarity? What is their solidarity at the beginning, is different than their solidarity at the end. So the idea of using social dance, and they are in evening-wear, and they represent a world outside this place, and by the end of it they've gone to another place and they have something else that has evolved. And also with the women in *Iphigenia at Aulis*, the same thing, that you kind of go these women who probably knew each other, and they must have known each other because they've rowed across here, you know these

women have been coordinated enough to get the boat and row across so they could have a look at the boys on the beach, that's what's going on, but they then get stuck in this place - so their circumstance changes and so their relationship gets challenged and changed. So we see that within that context.

**Estelle Baudou**

And in both situations, they are linked with an experience of the war. I mean, in *Iphigenia at Aulis* we are just before the war, we are on the threshold of the war, but it's about to begin. And at the end of the play they are bound by the experience of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, and as you said, they are locked into this experience, they can't flee away. And in *Women of Troy*, there was an awful event before because they have been caught.

**Struan Leslie**

[inaudible] you know they are abducted

**Estelle Baudou**

But other awful events that are coming, first one is the death of the infant and then they will just be taken away, raped, enslaved, we don't know. So, both those groups are linked with terrible experiences, maybe trauma.

**Struan Leslie**

Yeah. And as you say, the trauma, just to be clear, the trauma of the *Iphigenia* chorus happens within, and the *Women of Troy* chorus it begins with it, there's a pre-trauma that then courses like a kind of stream through it. So the adjustment is different. And we only discover those things through exploring. And then we use, sorry, the other thing that we were able to use was to look at the processes of communicating the physical language, so as well as the ideas that the chorus talk to us about, what happens to them physically in those places. And with *Iphigenia* and with *Women of Troy* those women go through that trauma every night; and so we made sure that there was something in place for them to release that, through stretches and physical work, after the performance every night. Because otherwise you don't want them driving home and, you know, having that experience in their body. And we know what that's like. And it's also important to notice that, this idea of, you know, that trauma and that sadness and negative emotions sit in our bodies much longer, so we need to exorcise them in some way. Yeah, so finding what that was, and then finding a vocabulary to express that through self-care, so applying make-up or some gestural based work, or in *Women of Troy*, using a dance form using a social dance form, which again, of course, harks back to the idea of them being at a party, you know that they are there and they're partying, and they were dancing, and then suddenly we see these women dancing but with invisible partners, their husbands, their lovers, who

are not with them; Mitchell using some of that and that then grows as an idea through the process of the chorus evolving in front of our eyes.

### **Estelle Baudou**

So I would say that rehearsing a chorus is also learning how to build communality. So I think we agree on that, that it could be a pedagogical thing. I mean, to rehearse a chorus is a very pedagogical thing for actors, I guess for dancers too. I'm much more used to actor-training; and I'm convinced that using ancient chorus to start acting is a great thing, because you learn how to be with other people, to listen to each other, to trust each other, to respond to each movement, each breath, everything. And I guess it's the same for dancing, what would you say?

### **Struan Leslie**

Sure, I would, and I would say that the thing about Twenty-First Century Chorus, my own productions for them and within that world, are very much drawing on that as an idea. We kind of go: if we have all those disciplines, then we can do almost anything. And young actors often go, 'oh, I've been offered a job, should I take it?' it's like you go, 'what is it?' 'Oh, it's a chorus job' and I'm like going yeah, before any other job, you say yes to the chorus job, because it will just allow you - as your first professional job - it's going to allow you to embed all that work in that you've been doing in a way that's really resonant. And, you know, instead of it just being ideas getting thrown at you from lots of different places, here we are with a focus where you can kind of bring all these things together. And I would completely agree - if there's ever an opportunity to run an institution or a training program, you know, even for a short period a six week, an eight week, you kind of go, let's just start with the chorus, you know, let's go, let's look at all these things that you need to do to be able to do it...

### **Estelle Baudou**

It's amazing because it reminds me how directors have been confronted to the difficulty to cast people for the chorus in Comédie Française; and both Michael Cacoyannis in 1977 for his *Bacchae* and later for the *Bacchae* in 2005, they had problem to cast the chorus, because no one in the Comédie Française ensemble wanted to be part of this secondary collective figure, they wanted to be the star. So the chorus is going against the star system. And I guess this is a problem of the chorus in contemporary performances, because it just mess up with what we are used to.

### **Struan Leslie**

Yeah, and the star casting kind of going, 'Oh, right, you're just in the chorus', and you kind of go, 'Hold on, who's actually telling us the story here? who are the people?' Because here's the thing we haven't talked about, from my

perspective, is that the chorus is the bridge between the world of the play and the audience. So this idea that this was a group of people who were from the community, who would have auditioned, would have lived together, and people in the audience would have done that. And if they didn't do it themselves, then they would be friends of their family, and everybody would know somebody who would have done the chorus at some point, you know; it wasn't the largest city in the world in 436 BC, so everybody knew someone. So there's this lovely idea that the bridge, and that you can feel that in the great productions. And then when you don't feel it, it's where it becomes obsessed about, where it becomes about ideas, or it becomes about the language rather than ideas, where the text is so broken up that we actually don't get a sense of the community or the world that these people are then trying to communicate to the audience. And that's really fundamental.

### **Estelle Baudou**

And there is also the problem of the reception of the ancient chorus that has been considered as a secondary feature and not as the core of the performance. And this is...

### **Struan Leslie**

There's the irony - sorry to interrupt - there's the irony. It's so great speaking to you about it, because you just used the word the 'core' but it comes out as 'coeur'. And there's the derivation, you know, this is the beating heart of the play. You know, when I make notes in my notebook I draw a heart; that's when I go Chorus Notes, I draw a heart and then scribble what I'm writing.

### **Estelle Baudou**

I draw a cross, I draw Chi of the Greek alphabet to say chorus. For me it's the link, it's like, in between; I don't draw a heart because of the French, because it's yes, it sounds the same but I know it's not written the same way.

### **Struan Leslie**

It's just the idea for me that it's the beating heart of the production. It's also interesting because one of the other places that I've worked with choruses is in opera. And it's quite a different process, because they already exist as a body of people. You know, if you go to a [opera] house in Germany, or you go to Welsh National Opera or English National Opera, these people are employed full-time by the organization; 40, as many as 60 in some places but not very many these days, who are a community. And they live together, people have had children while they've been there, people have got married, people have got divorced, partners have died - I had an email last week about a chorus member at Welsh National Opera dying, and I haven't worked at Welsh National Opera for 15 years maybe now, but there's a real sense of belonging there in that community. And so, when you put them and work with

them to realize a chorus within an opera, you're working with something that is...

**Estelle Baudou:** already existing...

**Struan Leslie:** yeah, exactly. And it's even closer to this ideal of it being a representation of the audience because they are, you know, they leave the building and they go home to their families. And when you work in Germany, in the Staatstheater system, you work in the morning and in the evening, because the chorus go home in the afternoon to be with their families and that's the life for them. So then when they come back in, they've picked the kids up from school, they've had their supper, so there's just that lovely life that you get

**Estelle Baudou**

That's funny because you say exactly the same thing as Patrice Chéreau. When Patrice Chéreau was rehearsing *Electra* in Aix-en-Provence in 2013, he said 'I'm avoiding Greek tragedy, I'm staging Racine's *Phèdre*, I'm staging *Electra* by Strauss, but I'm not going to direct a Greek tragedy because there is this dark difficulty, which is a chorus'. And he says, 'in opera, it already exists, it's easier'. It's exactly what you said; so what a director has to deal with when he's rehearsing a Greek tragedy, is to build this community able to perform the chorus. And I think it's something that Peter Hall managed to do with his *Oresteia* having a chorus of actors building an ensemble, but then he lost it for the *Oedipus* plays and then for the *Bacchai*, because he came back to having a star as Oedipus and as the character of the Bacchai, so he lost the ensemble and he lost the communality of the chorus.

**Struan Leslie**

There's also something else lost there as well, which is in the kind of replication of what we believe to be practiced i.e. masks, sandals, period costumes, and actually people can be distanced from it. One of the things that Mitchell, Katie Mitchell, was always really clear about was talking about making sure that the audience couldn't go, 'Oh, this is about Gods; this is about masks and sandals'. And, you know, famously, has said this on a number of occasions; but that idea then of it not being about the audience - so then why do you do these plays? And when we did the *Oresteia* in 2000 we were absolutely looking at the Balkan crisis, and bringing in people from the army to talk to us. And that also happened on *Iphigenia* and *Women of Troy*, having those conversations about what it means to be resonant, and to make that connection with the audience in any way, so that they [the chorus] can talk about Gods but we believe them because they're in a 1940s tailored dress cut on the bias, you know, whatever that is. And you set all those things up and they're legible

**Estelle Baudou**

But you would agree with me if I say that it's also a matter of time? I mean, building this invisible net. You said that the other day, the invisible net around the chorus takes time. So maybe if we have so many fragmented choruses, it's also because the production has to be rehearsed very fast.

**Struan Leslie**

Yeah. But I also think it's interesting that Chéreau says that, because - I'll drop him a line - because you can do it. I mean, we made a chorus in a week. If you're there with it, understanding, using techniques. I mean my first Greek, my first chorus experience was in 1989, you know, and all you do is you learn. And anything that's somatic, anything that's of the body, I speaking to colleagues this morning about the generosity that has to happen in that way of working. And also the heritage; I come from a dance background, you said that, I trained at London Contemporary Dance School in the early 80s, where I was taught by first-generation Martha Graham dancers who had been in all those reconstructions of those ancient myths and stories from a woman's perspective. I mean, it's like, how lucky was I? And even in those other stories, where the women were driving it, but the choric sense of that. And then also dancing in work by Ernestine Stodelle, [she reconstructed Doris Humphrey's] *Shakers*, which is a dance about the Shaker community in northeast America, and also a piece called *Water Study*, you know, just kind of where the body sits within that is really important. But that idea of talking about where we and how we realize it. Yes, it's complex, but it's very concrete for me in how we achieve, and I think that that's the thing about this photograph is that it shows, in its own way, when you know that we didn't choreograph that. That was a moment of me sitting on the side of the rehearsal room on the floor with my phone going 'photograph' 'photograph' 'photograph' - I took a lot of photographs and they're now all in the archive. But, you know, you can see it, and if you flick through them, you can almost see that, they're like a flipbook.

**Estelle Baudou**

So how would you say we can give the chorus its primacy back?

**Struan Leslie**

I think it's about the text; I think it's about what's their job; and if they're doing their job clearly, then great. And if they're not doing the job clearly, then it doesn't work. It's very simple. So we talked about the van Hove *Antigone*, you know, you kind of go, Okay, great, so there's this token of them all being a chorus and everybody coming out of the chorus. But you go, Well, hold on, are they ever a chorus, or are they just a collection of individuals who are on the stage at the same time, you know; it's a really different balance. And so then for me the story became fragmented, and it became about those

characters, about the protagonist, and not about the ideas. And that's the most extraordinary journey that chorus makes. I think to *Agamemnon* chorus, that journey of going from telling to that extraordinary statement at the end about mankind - just extraordinary. So I think that that's it, you go back to what it is, what are they there for? And for every play it's slightly different, but that's what rehearsals are about.

### **Estelle Baudou**

Yeah, but I also think that if we have so many fragmented choruses in the 21st century, it's because directors keep imitating great choruses from the 80s, the 1980s, for example, Peter Stein's chorus, in *Oresteia* or even in Antoine Vitez' chorus in the last version he did of *Electra*, where the chorus members were neighbours of *Electra*, and you had all this civic life between them. And I think that contemporary directors trying to imitate that miss the point, that it's not about having something common, having something banal, like quotidian life, it's about having the idea of communality. It's not a group, concretely speaking, but it's giving you the idea of sharing something. And it's the same with Stein's *Oresteia*, if you listen, and if you read the translation, it's obvious that the lines are not a conversation, it's an effect of conversation.

### **Struan Leslie**

But then, as you say, then the net doesn't exist. So in Ivo van Hove there is no net, there's no fascia, there's no interpersonal fascia, there's no sense of what that is, or how you respond, or how you listen. It's interesting about society, that the individual, the I culture, the 'me culture' of Thatcher's Britain in particular, actually, it's a really important aspect of what we're representing on stage. And, in a way, the chorus then almost becomes a critique of the audience, if it's manifest as a whole thing, as opposed to a fragmented thing and what you're doing is portraying, is communicating to a fragmented audience in late 80s, early 90s UK, and Europe and globally with that fracturing happening, then what happens to that point? How do we, there's a really interesting *not* reflecting of the audience but actually the chorus going you need to think like this folks, which is really interesting.

### **Estelle Baudou**

It's like it becomes a counter example. It's not the ideal spectator anymore, it's like the contrary of what the audience looks like. So the chorus is not the mirror of the audience anymore, it's not the ideal spectator anymore, but it becomes a provocation, like a counter example, an anti-model of what we think community is nowadays.

### **Struan Leslie**

But we still need to bear in mind that the ideas need to be communicated. So however that forms or shapes, that needs to be resonant. And, for me of

course as a movement [director], that has to be kinetic, that has to be an embodied somatic experience so that the audience is moved - I mean, literally, physically moved. It's interesting, isn't it, in this time to go, Okay, what are we, what's the chorus now? So here we are, where are we? How many weeks of lockdown have we supposedly had, goodness, I don't really know. I mean, are we three months in? we must be three months in, week 12, week 13, week 14 – sorry just important to contextualize for people who are listening

**Estelle Baudou**

And we are speaking on Zoom. I mean, we would have recorded this podcast in the APGRD room, and we are just doing it on Zoom.

**Struan Leslie**

I would have got a really nice day in Oxford, I could have gone to the Ashmolean; we could've had a nice lunch, all those things. No, none of that. I'm sitting in my hot sweaty flat in southeast London. But you know, that idea is really interesting. And I joke but it's true. You know, that you kind of go what does it look like? You know, we asked that question, you and I, what does our post-crisis look like? We are in a crisis, but at the same time, we're in the Covid crisis but we're also, you know, we're also at this point where post-George Floyd, we have this extraordinary movement and a second rising of the Black Lives Matter movement, and this one kind of hitting in a way that it didn't hit in previous incarnations. And as a result, we're at this really interesting nexus where there's a large group of people arriving in public places to protest, who have been bound together by an event. And how that works is really shifting the perspective of what that can be.

**Estelle Baudou**

And it's really interesting, because we are not supposed to gather more than 10 people. So being a social chorus is now against the law. So maybe post-crisis choruses are going to be provocation. And actually, you and I spoke about how we miss choruses, like social choruses, during lockdown, being part of a group, being in rehearsal, and also being part of a community, a family, but also political community. So I hope that post-crisis choruses are also going to be reinventing communality in a new way, provocative way, political way.

**Struan Leslie**

And I think there's something, just a really practical thing about, you know, having been on our own - some of us are on our own, I'm living on my own, my partner and I don't live together, and we haven't seen each other, I'm seeing him occasionally but we're not making any of those beginnings or endings of meetings, there's no hugs, there's no kisses. So that then what you

do see is now, as the idea of social distancing is loosening, what we're now seeing is choruses of people on the street, you know, families. I saw four mothers and six children the other day together in a group, that's 10 people, that's more people than I've seen together in a long time. So what happens when you go to the theatre and you suddenly see a group of, you know, you go to see an opera and there are 12 people or 20 people together on the stage, or you go and see one of these plays, the impact of that is really resonant. And even here, I live on quite a busy street here in southeast London, and just seeing the people as they walk by, that's really interesting, what's the impact of that? And what does that mean in terms of how do we present or re-present or remember chorus? If choruses are remembering of something, how does that impact us?

**Estelle Baudou**

So it's a way to say that post-crisis choruses are going to be very emotional

**Struan Leslie**

I think so; I hope I get the chance to explore it. Can I have a room please?

**Estelle Baudou**

Yeah, please. Can we have a room?

**Giovanna Di Martino**

Yeah, absolutely. Wow, thank you so much. This seems like a good place to end. Thanks so much to both of you for joining us today, this has been hugely interesting and fascinating, and I particularly liked how you embedded your own experiences in the history of performing choruses. And I'm sure our listeners will agree this has been very, very fascinating. If you're interested in the productions mentioned, you can look them up on the APGRD production database on our website. We have many exciting archive items for most of them, so do come and check them out if you have the chance when things reopen. An aside, there is an accompanying blog post which contains the photograph which our guest speakers have started their discussion from. You can also check out Struan's website, [struanleslie.com](http://struanleslie.com). Do get in touch if you have any questions relating to the podcast, and once again, thanks very much to both of you, Estelle and Struan, for joining us.