choir member handbook
2018-2019

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CONTENTS

p. 2  Mission, Vision, & Core Values Statements
    Statement on Cultural Equity
    Staff and Committee Contacts

p. 3  About Seattle Pro Musica
    Board of Directors

p. 4  Education & Engagement
    Member Responsibilities

p. 5  Rehearsals
    Rehearsal Etiquette

p. 6  Attendance

p. 7  Internal Chorus Publications
    Concert Schedule Information

p. 8  Uniform Guidelines

p. 9  Publicity

p. 10 Committees
MISSION STATEMENT
To enrich and inspire our audiences, singers, and community through the experience of choral artistry, and to increase access to and appreciation of choral music.

VISION STATEMENT
To be among the world’s finest choral organizations, known as innovative, inspiring and essential to our growing community.

CORE VALUES
Seattle Pro Musica is committed to:
- Artistry
- Excellence
- Community
- Integrity

SEATTLE PRO MUSICA’S STATEMENT ON CULTURAL EQUITY
Everyone deserves equal access to a full and vibrant creative life, and this access is essential to a free and healthy society. To support the creative life of our community, Seattle Pro Musica commits to policies and practices of cultural equity that foster equal access, inclusion, and justice.

We recognize cultural equity as a framework of values, policies, and practices that ensures that arts institutions serve the needs of all people, especially those who have historically been underserved based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion.

As we pursue our artistic mission, we will hold ourselves accountable to cultural equity. By acknowledging and challenging inequities, both as an individual arts organization and in partnership with others, we can and will make change happen.

This handbook is designed to give you some basic information about Seattle Pro Musica. If you have questions, concerns or suggestions, feel free to speak with the Artistic Director, Executive Director, Membership Chair or any member of the Membership Committee.

Artistic Director: Karen P. Thomas – karen@seattlepromusica.org
Executive Director: Katie Skovholt – katie@seattlepromusica.org
Administrative Assistant: Caroline Little – caroline@seattlepromusica.org
Membership Chair: Hannah Won - wonbanana@gmail.com

Membership Committee: Laura Ballard - ballardlaura796@gmail.com; Sarah Ruuska - sareruu@gmail.com; Beth Alley - bethalley83@hotmail.com, Elly Hale - us_chickens@earthlink.net, Rose Morrison - roseschw@comcast.net, Peter Hemmen - peter.j.hemmen@boeing.com
ABOUT SEATTLE PRO MUSICA

Seattle Pro Musica is a critically-acclaimed choral ensemble of talented singers with strong musical skills. Individual choir members are often given the opportunity to perform solo works as well as sing in small ensembles. Seattle Pro Musica organization has four ensembles; the full choir (apx. 70 members); the small mixed chamber ensemble (Vox - 24-32 members); the SSAA small ensemble (Chroma - 9-16 members); and the TTBB small ensemble (Orpheon - 9-16 members). Seattle Pro Musica prides itself on being a chorus committed to excellence and to giving individuals in the chorus the opportunity to flourish. Above all, Seattle Pro Musica is a community of people with a passion for choral music. Members experience joy in the quality of music they achieve together, striving for excellence in performance and overflowing with enthusiasm to share the art.

Seattle Pro Musica is a resident ensemble of Seattle's St. James Cathedral. This honor is given to only a few ensembles, whose artistic excellence is of the highest order. Being a resident ensemble enables us to rehearse and perform in a beautiful space with fabulous acoustics, without charge. In exchange, we perform by request for a St. James mass or other event each year.

The choir receives support from audiences, volunteers, foundations, corporations, government arts agencies, individual donors, and, most importantly, its members. The biggest single fundraiser is the spring auction, which generates over one third of Seattle Pro Musica's annual income. Ticket revenues and CD sales provide another third of Seattle Pro Musica's operating budget. This income helps pay direct costs: rehearsal and performance venue rental, music purchase, orchestra fees, marketing costs, concert expenses, recordings, and staff salaries. Grants, individual donations, and corporate matching also provide support. Seattle Pro Musica is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. As such, it is governed by a Board of Directors elected by the membership. The Board has fiscal and legal responsibility for the organization. They engage in long-range strategic planning, set policy, and oversee financial operations. The Seattle Pro Musica staff is headed by Artistic Director Karen P. Thomas and Executive Director Katie Skovholt. There is also an enthusiastic group of more than 80 volunteers who provide support for office staffing, concert staffing, the auction, concert and event promotion, fundraising, and more. New volunteers are always welcome. Seattle Pro Musica has eleven commercial CD recordings. CDs can be purchased by contacting the office at (206) 781-2766 or through our website at seattlepromusica.org. CDs and individual tracks are also available as downloads through cdbaby.com and many other retailers such as iTunes and Amazon. Choir members receive a substantial discount on commercially released physical copies of CDs.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Seattle Pro Musica's Board of Directors has fiscal and legal responsibility for the organization. The Board of Directors engages in long-range strategic planning, sets policy, and oversees financial operations. Any Seattle Pro Musica member is eligible to be considered for the Board of Directors, as are non-singers interested in supporting the group. There is a copy of the choir's by-laws posted on the members' only page of the website which provides comprehensive information on board elections. Ask any of the members about Board activities. Board member names and contact information can be found on the SPM website. The Board of Directors meets once per month. Meeting dates and locations are published in the Announcements. Chorus members are welcome to attend these meetings. Minutes from the meetings are posted on the members' only page of the Seattle Pro Musica Website.

SECTION LEADERS SPM employs between two and four section leaders annually, hired and supervised by the Artistic Director. Section leaders provide supportive leadership in their section at rehearsals and performances of Seattle Pro Musica, as well as teaching classes and leading sectional rehearsals at the direction of the Artistic Director. See the choir roster for section leader names and contact information.
EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

Choral education is an important aspect of Seattle Pro Musica's mission. Seattle Pro Musica visits area schools to provide choral workshops and performances, and also collaborates with children and youth choirs. In previous seasons, Seattle Pro Musica created permanent choral programs at Chief Kanim Middle School in Fall City and Lafayette Elementary in Seattle. The Family Holiday Concert is an annual concert for children and families.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

The members are the foundation and heart of the organization. It is they who accomplish Seattle Pro Musica's mission by being first-rate musicians, promoters, and contributors. There are numerous ways for members to contribute time and talent. At a minimum, each member is expected to contribute the following:

- $65 annual dues (including members on sabbatical and auxiliary members). The dues payment entitles each member to one professionally produced and mastered CD of each of the three main concerts, to be available for members within a year following the presentation of the concert.
- 15 ticket sales per season*
- For the auction, each member is required to: solicit donations or donate goods and services (valued at $350 or more); or make a direct financial contribution (of $250 or more); or provide volunteer support (12 hours or more); or some combination thereof.
- Each member is required to sell/purchase one auction ticket ($85 minimum).
- Light snacks are generally provided during rehearsal breaks by choir members, on a rotating basis throughout the season. Members may choose not to participate.

* when sales to any Dec, Mar, May concert will count (even if a member is not singing a particular concert), and volunteer recruitment and volunteer hours still count as one sale each. If a member isn’t singing the full season, the ticket sales requirement will be pro-rated – i.e. if Sam takes December sabbatical but sings March and May, they are responsible for selling 10 tickets; sales to December concerts will count towards their overall goal, even though they are not performing in that concert.

Members who have financial obligation concerns are invited to talk with the Membership Chair, the Executive Director, or the Artistic Director; volunteer hours are accepted in lieu of all financial obligations/ticket sales with the exception of dues. Dues may be paid in installments.

Please note that the ticket sales requirement relates only to regular season performances (concerts which are part of our annual subscription series). Members are not required to sell tickets to other guest appearances, nor will members be credited with sales at these additional events.

Members are encouraged to contribute in other ways, such as: contributing time and expertise to assist with fundraising activities; singing in ensembles for education and engagement programs and special events; distributing postcards and brochures; assisting with publicity on social media outlets; and publicizing our concerts through word of mouth.

Everyone in Seattle Pro Musica has something to contribute! We are fortunate to have a strong base of individuals providing in-kind services to us, including professional graphic artists, legal counsel, and marketing experts. All of these contacts have been cultivated through strong relationships with and between choir and staff members and their friends and professional contacts. We encourage our members to be creative in their endeavors to keep Seattle Pro Musica artistically and fiscally sound.
REHEARSALS
Unless otherwise noted, rehearsals will take place at Epiphany Parish in Madrona. Free parking is available on the street or church parking lot.
Please see the 2018-2019 calendar for a comprehensive season schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choir Name</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full choir</td>
<td>Tuesdays, 7:00-9:30 pm, with a break at around 8:15 for announcements, food and conversation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vox - Small mixed ensemble</td>
<td>Tuesdays, 6:15-7:15 pm, as well as some Mondays, 7:00 - 9:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chroma - Small SSAA ensemble</td>
<td>Mondays, 6:30-8:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orpheon - Small TTBB ensemble</td>
<td>Tuesdays, 9:30-10:00 pm</td>
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Bring to Every Rehearsal:
- A sharpened pencil with eraser
- Your water bottle
- Your music, in concert order (once announced) in your own black folder

Music Preparation
In order to achieve excellence as a choir, it is important that every choir member comes to rehearsal fully prepared with music learned. Rehearsals will focus on building ensemble, blend, tuning, and phrasing - not on learning notes.

REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE
Karen P. Thomas, Artistic Director, knows how she wants to spend rehearsal time. Therefore, please observe the following general guidelines for rehearsal etiquette.

- Questions about phrasing, breath, diction, or notes should be directed to your section leader or to a trusted neighbor during break or after rehearsal. Your section leader will be responsible for asking questions of the conductor at an appropriate time and reporting back - either in rehearsal, at break, or after rehearsal.
- If Karen opens the floor to questions, please feel free to ask, remembering to root your inquiry in kindness to others.
- Please avoid using your phone during rehearsal - this includes texting, emailing, etc. All ringers and noise-making devices should be turned off prior to rehearsal. Please remember that one distracted singer lowers the level of rehearsal progress for everyone.

Seattle Pro Musica rehearsals are fragrance-free. We have multiple singers who are severely allergic to scents. Please avoid all scents on rehearsal and concert days - this includes any perfumes or colognes, scented lotions or sprays, and scented hair products.

*Seattle Pro Musica is more than a community; we are a family. As with many families, not all members share the same views. Please remember to be considerate if you choose to discuss current events. In the spirit of friendship and respect for diversity of opinion, we would encourage you to avoid overt displays of political partisanship in election years and beyond.*
ATTENDANCE

Two absences are allowed per quarter (between concerts). If you must miss more than two rehearsals per concert period, please talk to the conductor about whether or not it is appropriate for you to sing in the concert. If you are unable to attend a rehearsal, please contact your section attendance coordinator and the conductor beforehand. You may also contact the Executive Director if your schedule changes at the last minute and you are unable to contact your section attendance coordinator or the conductor. See the current Directory for your section attendance coordinator's name and contact information. It is the responsibility of the individual singer to get all markings given at the rehearsal you missed - please be certain to connect with your choir buddy or section leader prior to the next rehearsal.

Dress rehearsals: To sing a concert, you must attend all scheduled dress rehearsals and arrive by the scheduled call time for rehearsals and performances.

Sabbaticals: If you know that you will be absent for more than two rehearsals in one quarter, you may wish to schedule a sabbatical. Please discuss this with the conductor as far in advance of the quarter as possible so that she can make appropriate arrangements.

Venues: Information about rehearsal space and venues will be available on our website on an annual basis.

Music: Scores are provided for SPM members. Some belong to Seattle Pro Musica, others are borrowed. Choir members may mark scores with pencil. Choir member also should print their name and voice part on the cover of each piece. After performance, markings may be left on Seattle Pro Musica scores, but should be erased from borrowed scores. Return scores after concerts as directed. In the case of some large works, members may have the opportunity to purchase scores through Seattle Pro Musica.

Folders: Each choir member must have a black choral folder or a non-shiny 3 ring binder of appropriate size. A black choral folder may be purchased at music stores or ordered from www.musicfolder.com. If you are unable to

Practice recordings: Seattle Pro Musica provides practice downloads on our website or via DropBox, and in many cases part-specific MIDI files are available upon request.

Performance CDs: Seattle Pro Musica also records each concert and makes copies available to all choir members. Each member in good standing (i.e. if you have paid dues!) is entitled to one physical copy of the season’s concert recordings, at their request. Additional copies as well as recordings of past performances are available for $10 each.
INTERNAL CHORUS PUBLICATIONS

Concert order and program notes are made available to choir members prior to each event. The Chorus Member's Handbook is updated and published at the beginning of each season. These are provided via email and are on the members' only page of the website (login is on the bottom of the home page; the password and login name are to change annually and will be distributed by email prior to the start of each season.). A choir directory is updated quarterly. Choir Announcements are distributed to all members via email and posted on the member's only page of the website each Monday. Members should read them thoroughly, prior to rehearsal. Contents will include the rehearsal schedule information, member announcements, calls for solo auditions, and other operational news. A complete rehearsal calendar is printed at the beginning of each season and is also available on the members' only page of the website.

EMAILS: Seattle Pro Musica has a number of electronic mailing lists. The singers@seattlepromusica.org address is to be used only by staff and board members for official Seattle Pro Musica business, including weekly choir announcements, artistic feedback, and organization-wide business. Singers may opt out of the news@seattlepromusica.org mailing list, to which all members may post notices.
Seattle Pro Musica has a public email newsletter, which includes information on upcoming performances, educational activities, and donor events. Members will automatically be opted into this newsletter.

WEBSITE: Seattle Pro Musica maintains a website, www.seattlepromusica.org, with information on the choir, the current concert season, auditions, ticket sales, CD sales, the auction, donations, and much more. There is a members’ only page accessed through a log-in at the bottom of the home page. The members' only page has all of the season's choir announcements, board minutes, this handbook, rehearsal audio downloads, and additional important information. Members are requested to look on the website first!

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS: In the rare event that there is a change in rehearsal due to severe weather or other unforeseeable events, members will be notified via email as soon as a change is confirmed. The main office will also post information on the members' only page of the website. However, given the size of the choir and the logistics involved in major scheduling changes, it is ultimately each choir member’s individual responsibility to check with the main office regarding possible scheduling changes in the event of severe weather or other natural disasters.

GENERAL CONCERT SCHEDULE INFORMATION

For complete current schedule information please refer to the published schedule for each season. Seattle Pro Musica normally has three major concert programs during the season, plus the annual auction, all of which require the participation of the membership except by prior arrangement with the Artistic Director.

In addition to our regular concert schedule, opportunities may arise throughout the year for performances of the full choir or one of the smaller groups. Decisions to accept or refuse such opportunities will be made by the Artistic Director in consultation with the members and the Board of Directors. In recognition of members' schedules, some of the additional engagements may be voluntary. Additional performances may be scheduled throughout the year and participation requirements vary from expected to optional depending upon personal commitments and how many singers are needed. These include run-outs to communities around the region or educational events at local schools, as well as hired performances. We are also obligated to annual participation in at least one mass or other event at St. James Cathedral. (The Cathedral provides SPM with free use of the facility for some of our concerts and recording sessions; our participation in at least one annual event is required to fulfill our obligation as a Resident Ensemble.) It is not uncommon to be given little notice for our expected appearance at these events.
UNIFORM GUIDELINES

A critical part of our commitment to “community” is striving to make all of our activities inclusive and accessible to all singers and audience members regardless of age, ancestry, color, class, creed, disability, gender identity or presentation, marital status, national origin, political ideology, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, use of a service animal, etc. We seek to create an environment where all feel welcome and safe. We believe that voices joining in song have a unique power to transcend differences and connect us – singers and audiences alike – to our shared humanity. Making that experience available to all is at the heart of what we do, and who we aspire to be.

Concert Dress Policy: In 2016, as we reflected on how we could better put these ideals into action, we realized that our traditional concert dress code may have been unintentionally making some people feel unwelcome and made revisions accordingly. The following dress code is adopted as of September 2018:

At our rehearsals and other informal choir functions, members are encouraged to wear casual attire that makes them feel most comfortable, and which reflects their preferred gender presentation. In concert settings we observe a more formal dress code, intended to present a purposeful and uniform look that is in keeping with our values of excellence and artistry. However, in an effort to “increase access to” a comfortable and affirming performance experience for all members of our community, our dress guidelines are no longer based on gender. Members may choose the option that is most comfortable for their preferred presentation.

Singers should wear a uniform that is black and formal, and should generally reserve this uniform specifically for Seattle Pro Musica performances. This uniform will be either a full-length black dress or a full-length skirt/pants with a black long-sleeved top or jacket. Please observe the following guidelines:

- Clothing should fit well and be neat, clean, scent-free, and pressed/ironed
- Shirt should include ¾ length or full length sleeves; shirts with shorter sleeves may be worn under a jacket or blazer
- Black “dress shirts” (shirts with full front button closures and a collar) should be worn with a black straight tie and jacket, and without a cummerbund
- Black full-length dress/skirt (hemmed to floor length) or formal slacks
- Black formal closed-toe dress shoes
- Black nylons, socks, or tights
- Embellishments (i.e. contrasting fabrics, cutouts, straps, insets, sheer or lace panels, embroidery or applique) should be minimal or nonexistent
- Solid fabrics are preferred, and any textures should be minimal
- Wool or polyester/poly-blends are preferred; please, no shiny or plush fabrics (i.e. satin, velvet)
- Jewelry, if worn, should be understated and not highly reflective or sparkly

Singers are required to present their uniform for approval prior to the first performance of the season to ensure these guidelines are met. **Once your uniform is approved, please do not substitute elements.**

Visual examples of some appropriate interpretations of these guidelines are available, and some resources (including donated uniforms) may be available; please check with the staff for more information.

If the guidelines outlined above do not comfortably accommodate your gender presentation, please speak privately with Karen. We intend to provide enough flexibility so that all people can feel comfortable performing with SPM, while at the same time preserving the uniform “look” of a skilled musical ensemble.
PUBLICITY
Seattle Pro Musica makes a committed effort to reach new audiences and to build our subscriber base. The marketing program includes the following items, all of which are available to members for distribution:
Season Brochure: A full color brochure advertising the season's concert series and Seattle Pro Musica's discography is published annually and mailed to everyone on our 6,000+ mailing list. Copies are available throughout the year for distribution by members and at concerts.
Wallet Cards: Convenient wallet cards with the entire regular season schedule are printed and distributed with all Seattle Pro Musica mailings, in bookstores, and by members.
Postcards: A minimum of 7,000 postcards are printed for each concert. About 5,000 of these are mailed; the remainder are posted and distributed by members and at numerous community outlets.
Press Releases: Seattle Pro Musica has a regular cycle of press releases for each event, sent to national publications and local media.
Radio: Listen to Seattle's Classical KING 98.1 FM during the week prior to each concert for concert announcements, and interviews, and during the weeks after the concert for excerpts of the concerts themselves. KING FM regularly features SPM on its evening program Northwest Focus, during the week prior to our concerts.
Word of Mouth: Surveys show that the most effective publicity we have is friends and members. Tell your friends, family, and co-workers – it works!

COMMITTEES AND CHAIRS
All are welcome to join or audit a committee meeting. Contact the chair to join or ask questions.

Auction – Katie Skovholt, chair
katie@seattlepromusica.org

Development – David Horton, chair
davidchorton86@gmail.com

Education and Engagement – Meaghan Leferink, chair
meaghan.leferink@gmail.com

Membership – Hannah Won, Chair
wonbanana@gmail.com

Marketing - Wes Kim, Chair
wes@weskim.com

Inclusivity Advisory Group – Katie Skovholt, coordinator
katie@seattlepromusica.org