

Colorado Symphony Chorus Volunteer Information Guide

Thank you for your interest in singing with the Colorado Symphony Chorus! We hope that this document – Frequently Asked Questions – will answer most of your questions about the Chorus and its work with the Colorado Symphony.

How is the Chorus structured?

- The Colorado Symphony Chorus is a large symphonic chorus of approximately 180 volunteer singers who perform the great masterworks of the choral/orchestral repertoire with the Colorado Symphony. The Chorus also appears regularly with the Bravo!Vail Music Festival (singing with the New York Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra) and with the Aspen Music Festival. The Chorus directors assign singers to sections that are appropriate to their vocal range.

What is the repertoire of the Chorus?

- The Chorus sings principally the music of great masters, including oratorios, masses, requiems, operas, and symphonies in Latin, German, Russian, Italian, French, Hebrew, and English. The Chorus also performs world premieres, special commissions, and commercial recordings.

When and where are rehearsals?

- Regular weekly rehearsals: Tuesday evenings at Trinity Methodist Church, downtown Denver at 18th and Broadway. Free parking for the Chorus in adjacent lots after 6:00 pm.
- Concert week rehearsals: Generally, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday rehearsals with orchestra; Friday, Saturday, and sometimes Sunday concerts. These are at Boettcher Concert Hall at the Denver Performing Arts Center, 13th and Curtis Streets. Free parking passes are provided for most rehearsals and concerts at Boettcher Concert Hall.
- Occasional summer rehearsals are scheduled as needed for festival projects (mentioned above) and are generally on Monday or Tuesday evening.

What are the attendance expectations?

- In order to maintain high artistic standards, singers are expected to be at all services (service = rehearsal or performance). Illness and family emergencies or obligations affect everyone from time-to-time, so some exceptions can be made with appropriate communication with the Chorus Manager. Commitment to the musical standards of the Chorus necessitates a strong commitment to the rehearsals and performances in spite of scheduling challenges. Experience has shown us that those singers with evening work schedules or college classes, out-of-town business travel, heavy family responsibilities or non-understanding spouses, have great difficulty fulfilling their chorus commitment. This is a significant commitment and we encourage all members to work carefully to fulfill their commitment

Are there age restrictions?

- A chorus member must be at least 21 years of age. We are concerned that the young voice is matured, trained and experienced to the extent that singing our demanding symphonic repertoire will not cause vocal injury. We are equally concerned with the mature voice regarding a loss of control of vocal vibrato (wobble), and a diminishing level of vocal coloratura (flexibility), range, volume and physical stamina. All members are expected to maintain good vocal health for their tenure in the Chorus, some of whom have been singing with the chorus for over 30 years.

Are there opportunities to sing solos with the orchestra/chorus?

- Like all orchestral associations, concert soloists are contracted by the artistic administration of the Symphony through artist agents. Chorus members occasionally sing small solos but not main stage solos.

Are there costs involved with Chorus membership?

- There are no fees, dues, or tuition for Colorado Symphony Chorus members. Women purchase their uniform attire: \$70 for the dress; \$10 for the pearls. Men provide their own tuxedo. All members purchase their own black music folders. The Association, with options for members to purchase their scores, provides all music. For summer festival performances, housing is provided by the festival administrations.

Who are the Chorus conductors and managers?

- Music Director and Conductor: Duain Wolfe, founder of this 36-year old Chorus (as well as founder of the Colorado Children's Chorale which he directed for 25 years). He also directs the Chicago Symphony Chorus and commutes weekly between the two cities for rehearsals and performances. He has exacting standards and conducts a fast-paced, professional rehearsal.
- Associate Director and Conductor: Mary Louise Burke. She is also Associate Director of the Colorado Children's Chorale.
- Assistant Conductors: Travis Branam and Taylor Martin
- Chorus Managers: Eric Israelson and Barbara Porter
- Pianists: Brian Dukeshier, Hsiao-Ling Lin, Danni Snyder
 - *For a continued abbreviated history of the Colorado Symphony Chorus and the Colorado Symphony, please see the end of this document.*

Member Profile

Successful and committed Colorado Symphony Chorus members have:

- a profound love for the wealth of choral/orchestral masterpieces
- the ability to concentrate and work effectively in professional rehearsals
- the scheduling flexibility to accommodate our schedule
- the physical stamina to attend all rehearsals and performances on a regular basis
- recent classical choral music experience
- a reliably high level of vocal technique, range, volume, and vibrato control

Additional questions? Please feel free to ask Eric Israelson or Barb Porter any other questions you may have regarding your commitment to the Colorado Symphony Chorus. Thanks for your interest in the Colorado Symphony Chorus

The audition:

Regularly scheduled auditions are in early September and January. For official dates please visit coloradosymphony.org/About/The-Chorus for official audition dates and more information. An outline for the audition follows:

1. A prepared number — a song, art song, or aria (oratorio, opera) sung in any language (no pop songs, show tunes, hymns, or choral parts)
 - Memorization is not required A pianist is provided.
 - Bring a second copy of the music for the pianist
2. A short sight singing exercise
3. A brief exercise to demonstrate ability to follow a conductor
4. Vocalizing to demonstrate vocal color and range

Auditions are located at Trinity United Methodist Church (18th & Broadway).

To schedule an audition between 7:00 and 9:30pm, please REPLY to eisraelson@coloradosymphony.org with a message containing your name, voice part, phone number, and the name and composer of your audition selection. We welcome all questions concerning the chorus, its schedule, or your audition.

Additional information about the Colorado Symphony and Chorus can be found on the at <https://coloradosymphony.org/About/The-Chorus>.

HISTORY AND ANNIVERSARY SEASONS:

ANNIVERSARY SEASONS

- The collective ensemble, currently known as the Colorado Symphony has had many forms and names. We recognize the spirit of the ensembles beginnings in 1922 under the baton of Horace Tureman.
 - 1922 – Denver Civic Orchestra/ Denver Civic Symphony’s first performance in Denver’s City Auditorium (now the Ellie Caulkins Opera House/Buell Theater).
 - 1934- Denver Symphony Orchestra established as first full-time professional ensemble. Founded by three women, Helen Marie Black, Jeanne Cramner, and Lucille Wilkin with Horace Tureman as inaugural Music Director.
- 2022–2023 100th anniversary (ensemble)
 - November 6, 2022 - First performance anniversary Note: The current iteration of the ensemble is known as the Colorado Symphony Association.
- 2027-2028 105th anniversary (ensemble)
- 2032-2033 110th anniversary (ensemble)
- 2037-2038 115th anniversary (ensemble)
- 2042-2043 120th anniversary (ensemble)
- 2047-2048 125th anniversary (ensemble)
- 2052-2053 130th anniversary (ensemble)

The anniversary seasons for the latest iteration follow. Note, these are not formally recognized at this time.

- Colorado Symphony Association reformed organization – *Not formally recognized in communications*
 - 2019–2020 30th anniversary (CSA)
 - 2024–2025 35th anniversary (CSA)
 - 2029–2030 40th anniversary (CSA)
 - 2034–2035 45th anniversary (CSA)
 - 2039–2040 50th anniversary (CSA)

Colorado Symphony Chorus – *formally recognized in communications*

- 2023–2024: Chorus 40th anniversary season
- 2033–2034: Chorus 50th anniversary season

PERFORMANCE HISTORY

- A document exists within the marketing and sales departments that details all repertoire, locations, guest artists, and additional information such as date, time, and number of performances dating back to 1922. Please inquire within marketing to review this document.

ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP HISTORY

MUSIC DIRECTORS

Horace E. Tureman 1922–1944
Saul Caston 1944–1964
Vladimir Golschmann 1964–1969
Brian Priestman. 1970–1979
Gaetano Delogu 1979–1986
Philippe Entremont 1986–1989
Guest Conductors 1989–1993
Marin Alsop 1993–2005 – 1st MD for reformed organization
Jeffrey Kahane 2005–2008
Guest Conductors 2009–2015
Andrew Litton 2015–2017
Brett Mitchell 2017–Present

CONDUCTORS & ASSISTANT CONDUCTORS

Caston Fred Hoepfner
Golschmann Fred Hoepfner, Daniel Lipton
Priestman Allan Miller, Bruce Hangen, Carl Tipilow
Ehrling Michael Palmer James Rives-Jones
Delogu James Setapen, David Lockington
Entremont Thomas Cockerell
Markand Thakar Guest Conductor period '89-'93
Alsop Lawrence Loh, Adam Flatt
Kahane Scott O'Neil
Guest conductor period '08-'14 Scott O'Neil
Litton Scott O'Neil, Christopher Dragon, Andrès Lopera
Mitchell Christopher Dragon, Andrès Lopera, Bertie Baigent

COLORADO SYMPHONY CHORUS DIRECTORS

Duain Wolfe 1984-present

COLORADO SYMPHONY CHORUS ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Mary Louise Burke 1993-present