

Brisbane Chorale Members Handbook 2016





Welcome to Brisbane Chorale!

Congratulations! You've made it through the audition process. This handbook is here as a guide to make your experience in the choir as enjoyable as possible.

Brisbane Chorale is a symphonic choir of over 100 voices based in Queensland, Australia, with a reputation for excellence in choral performance. Since its beginnings in 1983 as a new force in choral music, emerging from the amalgamation and expansion of existing choirs at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Brisbane Chorale has made its mark in the cultural landscape of Brisbane, Queensland, and Australia. The journey has been a story of many explorations of repertoire, events, and collaborations.

Brisbane Chorale regularly performs with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra and other major orchestras, choirs, performance organisations, and festivals. Over many years Brisbane Chorale has participated in the Queensland Pops Orchestra's Best of British concerts, the 4MBS Festival of Classics, and the Queensland Performing Arts Centre's Spirit of Christmas concerts. Brisbane Chorale has performed Australian premieres, commissioned works from Australian composers, and recorded works for Move Records and ABC Classics. Its repertoire is broad and extensive, and includes the great choral works of classical music and more contemporary works. In recent years, highlights have included the world premiere of Elena Kats-Chernin's *Symphonia Eluvium*, a reflection on the Queensland floods, for the 2011 Brisbane Festival, *Lord of the Rings – The Fellowship of the Ring* in 2012, and the *Dr Who Symphonic Spectacular* presented by the Queensland Symphony Orchestra and the BBC in 2014.

Our mission is to provide music lovers with the opportunity to experience high quality choral music at an exceptional level for the benefit of the wider community. We hope that your musical journey with us will be rewarding, inspiring and fun, and that you'll continue to sing with us into the future.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions at any time of your journey, please don't hesitate to ask any Committee member for clarification.

- Brisbane Chorale Management Committee

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HOW TO FIND INFORMATION

Our main method of communication is via email, supported by our Chorale website.

Email: A weekly email of important dates, information sharing and rehearsal arrangements. Should you not have email facilities available, please notify the Membership Registrar who will endeavour to make other arrangements.

Website: www.brisbanechorale.org.au

For more information about the Chorale, see our website where you will find detailed information regarding the history of our choir, a record of performances, specific information relating to members including the latest rehearsal schedule, photo galleries, contact details and more.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/brisbanechorale

If you have an account on Facebook, please head across and give the page a like! It's a great marketing tool, and the more people we have on the page the more people will see it. Please feel free to invite your friends and family to like the page so they can keep up with the Chorale.

Calendar:

<https://www.google.com/calendar/ical/contact@brisbanechorale.org.au/public/basic.ics>

The Brisbane Chorale has a Google Calendar set up with important dates from the year. Using the link about, this calendar can be added to your personal Google calendar, Outlook, and many other email programs. Full details are emailed out at the beginning of each year.

WHO ARE WE

Brisbane Chorale consists of singing members, the Management Committee, voluntary support staff and professional music staff.

Management Committee

Brisbane Chorale is an incorporated body under the *Queensland Associations Incorporation Act 1981*, operating under its own registered constitution. Under that constitution, an elected Management Committee is responsible for the operations of the Chorale and the appointment of the professional music staff. The election is held at the annual general meeting of members (before 31 March each year).

The elected members are: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Concert Manager, Marketing Manager and two General Members. The Committee can appoint an additional number of members, as required, to fulfil other duties such as Concert Dress Coordinator, Music Librarian, Newsletter Editor, Website Manager and special project managers.

Please refer to your insert for up to date information regarding the current members of the Management Committee.

Professional Music Staff – Music Director Emily Cox



Known for sensitive and authoritative musical interpretations and inspirational conduction, Emily Cox is one of Australia's leading choral musicians, exploring diverse and challenging repertoire in her roles as conductor and Chorusmaster. Specialising in the performance of the choral/symphonic repertoire and virtuosic chamber choral repertoire, she has been Music Director of Brisbane Chorale since 2003, and is the founding Music Director of Canticum Chamber Choir.

American born and educated, Emily has also trained in Australia and Europe with eminent mentors (including Eric Ericson and Frieder Bernius). She has performed in festivals such as Brisbane Baroque, Brisbane Festival and the Schleswig Holstein Music Festival. Most recently, she was a member of the professional Panel of the Rundfunkchor Berlin (Berlin Radio Choir) International Masterclass. In 2012 she was Chorusmaster for the Helpmann Award-nominated Mahler *Symphony No. 2* with the Hamburg Philharmonic and Simone Young, and her work can be heard frequently on radio broadcasts around Australia. She has recently directed and conducted Handel's *Messiah* for the Queensland Symphony Orchestra.

Emily's innovative programming and skill in instilling high performance standards contribute to her reputation as a dynamic interpreter of music from the Renaissance to the present day.

Professional Music Staff – Accompanist Justine Favell



Justine is a graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium of Music with a Bachelor of Music and a Graduate Diploma in Piano Performance.

Since 1995, Justine has pursued her interest in the specialized area of accompanying choral music. She is principal accompanist for Brisbane Birralees Voices and Brisbane Chorale, and freelances with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra. She has accompanied Brisbane Chorale continuously since 1995.

Justine also enjoys conducting various school choirs and is regularly asked to conduct massed school events for the Department of Education. She is on staff at the Qld Conservatorium as an accompanist for the Vocal Department and teaches the piano in her home studio and Hillbrook Anglican School. Justine is also a Kindermusik early childhood educator.

AUDITIONS

Membership is open to singers of post-secondary age (usually 17 years and above) who can sing with good intonation, well produced, pleasant tone quality, and who display good musicianship.

To join Brisbane Chorale, each singer has a private audition with the Music Director. The audition is relaxed and friendly, lasting approximately 10-15 minutes. It consists of vocal exercises to determine voice type and range, aural and rhythm tests and a short piece of sight-singing. Although no prepared piece of music is required for the audition, the Music Director may ask you to sing a passage of a well known song of your choice.

The Music Director generally reassesses every Chorale member every two to three years, or as the need arises. Chorale members rejoining the choir after a prolonged absence may be re-assessed by the Music Director to ensure correct placement in the choir.



MEMBERSHIP

Commitment

Brisbane Chorale is an auditioned choir and membership is regarded as valuable and a privilege. The standards set by the Music Director are high to enable us to maintain our reputation as a leading symphonic choir.

The Chorale's concert programming depends on the commitment and availability of each and every member at all major concerts. Contracts for engagements with symphony orchestras are generally signed around one year ahead and have to commit a balance and quantified number of singers.

Expectations of Membership

In joining Brisbane Chorale, it is understood that you have made a contractual commitment to the organisation that includes:

1. Singing in every scheduled concert for the year, not just singing selected works as they appeal
2. Payment of annual membership fees
3. Regular attendance at rehearsals
4. Doing other practice or homework outside scheduled rehearsal times
5. Purchasing or hiring the required concert performance attire
6. Participation in ticket sales and fundraising events
7. Willingness to assist with production or administration as the Committee may request

In return, Brisbane Chorale provides you with a high standard of concert performance, the opportunity to cultivate and expand your choral singing skills and to strive for a high level of musical excellence in a supportive and welcoming atmosphere.

Attendance

Regular attendance at all rehearsals, including dress rehearsals, is essential. The Chorale depends on every member for vocal mix, balance and consolidation of learning.

Due to these high performance standards, if three rehearsals are missed before any concert, the Music Director may, at their discretion, assess the preparedness of the chorister to sing in the concert. Repeated absenteeism may result in membership being re-evaluated.

If you are not able to sing a concert performance, or if you will be away for a prolonged period, it is courteous to discuss this with the Music Director at the earliest possible time. In any case, you must communicate this in advance to the Membership Registrar.

Apologies and Leave of Absence

Should you have to miss a rehearsal because of illness, emergency or unavoidable other commitments, please submit an apology with the Membership Registrar via email or phone.

If you are taking a leave of more than one rehearsal, you will need to discuss this with the Music Director and Membership Registrar as early as possible. Absences impact the vocal mix and seating plans, and ultimately our performances. For this reason, it is important that the Music Director and Management Committee are informed.



MEMBERSHIP FEES

Brisbane Chorale is not supported by funding from the Government or other external sources. It relies on finances derived from annual membership subscription fees and revenue that may come from performance engagements. We are registered with the Australian Register of Cultural Organisations and hence are eligible to receive tax deductible donations.

The membership fees, being our primary source of income, have to cover our basic operating costs. The level of fees is kept under review and increased as needed to keep abreast of the costs of running the choir. The annual membership fee is on Brisbane Chorale website. Payment of membership fees is due at the first rehearsal attended.

In the instance of fees not being able to be paid in full at this rehearsal, members are encouraged to contact the Treasurer who is happy to discuss arrangements for payment plans. For members joining partway through a year, a pro rata fee is calculated.

REHEARSALS

Rehearsals are held each Wednesday evening from 7.15 to 9.50pm, usually in the Basil Jones Orchestra Hall at the Queensland Conservatorium at South Bank. Parking is available nearby. The Conservatorium is close by to the South Brisbane train station and the Cultural Centre bus station. Choir members are asked to be at rehearsal at 7.00pm to enable everyone to be seated ready to begin rehearsal promptly at 7.15pm.

In addition to regular scheduled Wednesday evening rehearsals, further rehearsals will be required in the lead-up to a concert. There may also be special rehearsals and workshops. You will be given as much advance notice as possible about these so you can make appropriate arrangements to ensure you can attend. A rehearsal schedule is issued at the start of each year and updated as needed. The up-to-date schedule can always be found on the Chorale's website.

All members are requested to bring soft black pencils (eg. 2B) and erasers to every rehearsal so that music annotations can be made.

Please as a consideration to your fellow choristers, do not use strong perfumes or after-shave. Many choristers are sensitive to such odours and can become distressed.



REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE

We embrace the highest levels of artistic expression and professionalism.

We demonstrate our professionalism at rehearsals by having the courtesy to learn the music. It is disrespectful to your colleagues and to the process to come in ill-prepared. It gives the impression you don't care.

We are committed to supporting and inspiring choral singers.

We understand that how we behave provides a role model for those students singing with us or observing our rehearsals.

We provide educational enrichment for the people we touch.

Not only does the experience of singing with Brisbane Chorale provide students with an exceptional experience, but what we do and how we behave at rehearsal influences their perception of the music industry and helps define what they see as professional behaviour. We each have a role to ensure that our behaviour at rehearsal demonstrates the best on which students can model.

We share commitment to Brisbane Chorale.

We demonstrate this at rehearsals by being on time, ready in our seats for the first down beat of the rehearsals, including the warm-ups. If you arrive late to rehearsal, wait to enter if the choir is in the middle of rehearsing a piece. Walking in during a piece will cause disruption and take the focus away from the rehearsal. We listen carefully at all times to whoever is directing rehearsal.

We enjoy the regular contact with people who share our passion for choral singing.

We express this enjoyment through song during the rehearsal period, but we share the fun before and after rehearsal, as well as during breaks, when we can catch up with each other and socialise more freely.

We value the joy, teamwork, support and friendships it brings.

We demonstrate this in rehearsal by not talking or using phones and mobile devices while other singers are working. This is disrespectful and rude. Leave your electronic devices on silent and in your pocket, purse, or backpack. We treat each other with respect, courtesy, friendship, and kindness.

We believe our experience with Brisbane Chorale should be joyful. We have fun while maintaining the quality of our music.

Nothing you do in rehearsal is in isolation but is always in relationship to others, and should be treated that way. If singing is important to you, then the process of rehearsal must be respected and delivered with authenticity and commitment. You either commit and do the work, or do something else.



MUSIC ISSUE AND CARE OF MUSIC

Music is distributed by the Music Librarian at the beginning of each new concert rehearsal period, and each copy is numbered to facilitate ownership and tracking. You are responsible for the music signed out to you and you are expected to maintain it in good condition. This applies to photocopied material as well, unless the Librarian instructs differently. This valuable music is most often the property of other choirs and music organisations and we are responsible for its careful maintenance and its timely return.

Use only soft pencil to mark your music. Do not punch holes in photocopied music unless instructed that you may. The use of coloured highlighter pens and biro is not allowed. To keep your music in good condition, please keep your scores in a folder or file away from water bottles, drinks, and food.

Erase all your markings before returning your score unless otherwise advised. Usually music must be returned at the first rehearsal after a concert. In case of illness or any unforeseen event, please contact the Librarian to arrange an alternative method of return. In the event of lost or damaged music, please contact the Librarian as soon as possible. If scores are lost, damaged or not returned, you will be charged the cost of repair or replacement and/or any extra rental charges incurred. The issue of new music is contingent upon paying for lost and/or damaged music.

CONCERT DRESS UNIFORM

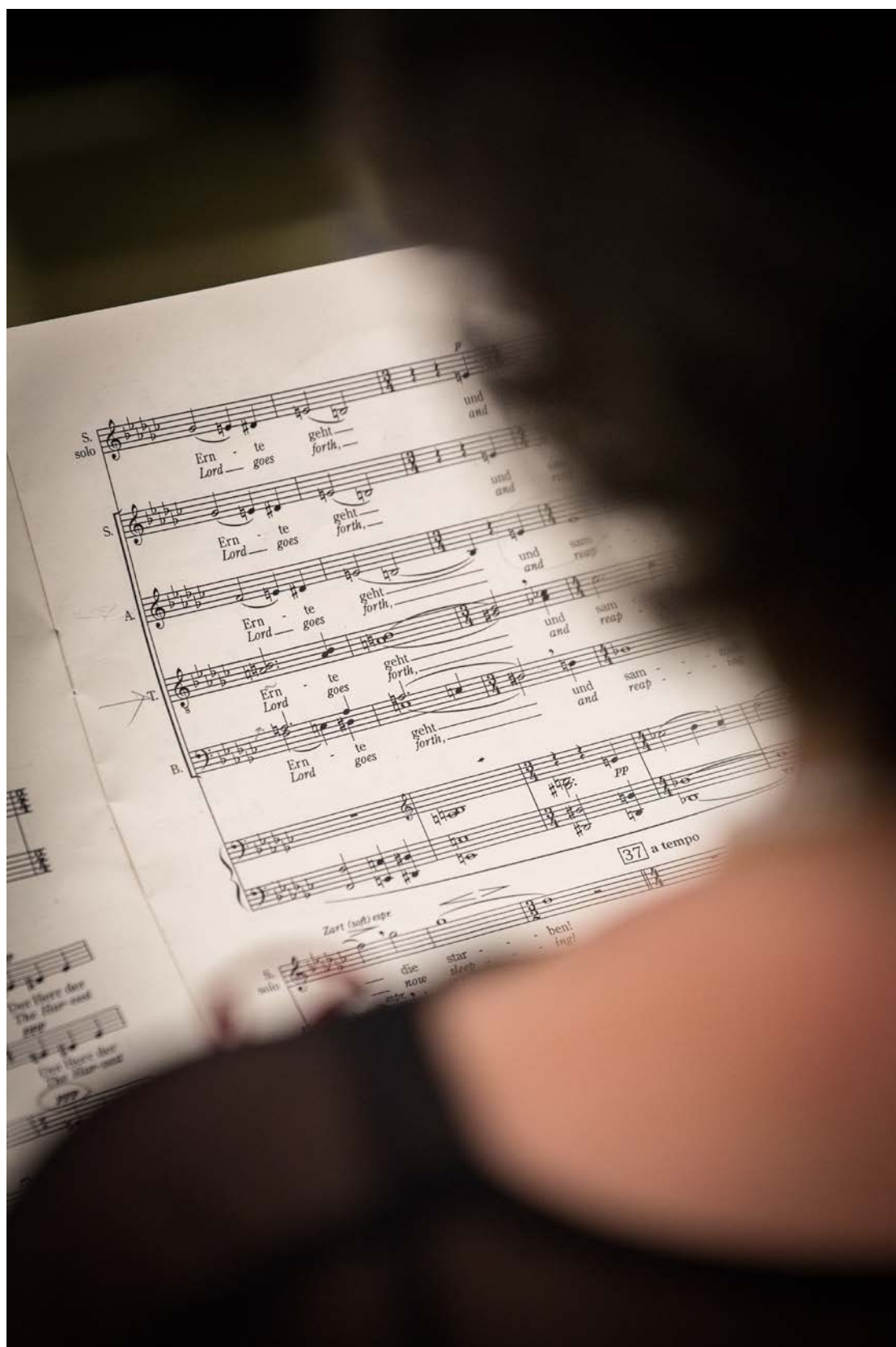
The Chorale has a standard concert dress, which is detailed on a separate information sheet to be handed out at the conclusion of a successful audition. Any questions about the concert dress uniform should be directed to our Concert Dress Coordinator.

Ladies: The ladies concert dress is produced by the Chorale and is to be purchased at a cost of \$150. It is worn with black stockings and black closed shoes.

Men: Black dinner suit, white shirt, black bow tie, black socks and dress shoes.

CONCERT ETIQUETTE

The Chorale prides itself on its professional approach to concert demeanour. Chorale members are required to obtain a suitable black folder for performance use. As performers, we always strive to act in a professional manner. During orchestral rehearsals any complaints, queries or suggestions are to be raised in the breaks with the Committee Members or the Chorale Music Staff, who will discuss these as necessary with the conductor and/or concert producer.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



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Brisbane Chorale is a member of the Australian National Choral Association.



Brisbane Chorale wishes to acknowledge the use of photography from Images by Anderson and the Queensland Show Choir throughout this handbook.