

THE DALTON CHORALE

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Music Director/Conductor
David Shuler

Pianist/Assistant Conductor
Bernadette Hoke

MEMBERS HANDBOOK

2011 - 2012

The Dalton Chorale (DC), now in its 21st year, provides its members the opportunity to sing beautiful sacred and secular, larger choral works dating from the 18th to the 20th centuries. Originally drawn from alumni of the Dalton School, our members are now a richly-diverse ensemble of serious amateur singers - including alumni, parents, faculty and staff from Dalton, as well as friends and colleagues from the wider musical community who enjoy the intensive commitment and communal effort required to perform great music for chorus and orchestra. The Chorale's performances draw on the strengths of exceptional soloists and an ensemble of some of New York's most talented professional musicians.

Under the direction of David Shuler, the 50-60 member Chorale presents two concerts each year, one in December and one in May.

Eligibility

We welcome and encourage musically talented individuals to sing with us. The DC opens its first few rehearsals each September and January to individuals interested in joining. Those who wish to become members may then audition privately with the Director. Sight reading skill together with essential vocal musicality (rather than formal voice training) and some prior experience with choral singing form the core requirements for membership. We work to build a group of many musical, individual voices into a blended, unified sound, and to reach an audience beyond friends and family of the singers, who come to hear choral music as an art form.

Rehearsals & Attendance

Tuesday Evening Rehearsals

Regular rehearsals each Tuesday evening at The Dalton School (108 East 89th Street) start promptly at 7:15 P.M. and generally run until 9:15 P.M. Please come each time prepared with score and pencil.

Members are expected to attend every rehearsal, and advance notice of any absence should be given to the Section Leader. Missing two or more rehearsals automatically means you cannot sing in that semester's concert unless you are given express permission by the Music Director.

Rehearsals are suspended during the summer months.

Sectionals

Members are expected to attend one or two sectional rehearsals each semester.

Church Rehearsal/Dress Rehearsal

Typically, two rehearsals each semester are held at the church where the concert will be presented: one on the Tuesday of the week preceding the concert and one, with orchestra, on the Tuesday of the concert week. Members missing either rehearsal will be ineligible to sing in the concert without special permission from the Music Director.

Financial Information

Expenses of the DC include the salaries of the Conductor and Pianist, performance space rental fees, musician costs, program and ticket printing, insurance, and other miscellaneous expenses. To pay for the operation of the DC, we collect revenues in the following ways:

Dues

DC membership dues are \$185/semester, or \$100/semester for anyone under the age of 30. Dues will be collected at the first rehearsals in September and January. Members who may be unable to pay in full or on time are asked to discuss with DC Treasurer, Dianna Mounsey, the possibility of working out payment plans and/or alternative forms of contribution.

Music Costs

Members are charged \$25 per concert to cover the cost of scores.

Concert Tickets

Every member is expected to purchase a minimum of six \$20 tickets for each concert for a total cost of \$120/semester.

Operating Expenses and Member Participation

Combined revenues generated by dues and ticket sales have always fallen short of covering operating costs of approximately \$24,000 for each concert.

To make up the shortfall, members are asked to purchase additional concert tickets and to encourage friends and relatives to do the same; to assist in the sale of advertising space in concert programs; to purchase tickets for special DC fund-raising events; to volunteer at fund-raising and social events of the DC; to give generously of their time and energy on committees and special projects; and, in the case of those who can afford to do so, to make additional, voluntary cash contributions.

Concert Dress

Women are expected to wear black, ankle-length dresses or skirts, or black dress pants, with black, long-sleeved tops. Jewelry should be small and inconspicuous.

Men are expected to wear tuxedos.

A black folder for each singer's score is an essential component of concert attire.

Perfume, cologne, or other scent should not be worn at the concert due to other members' allergies or sensitivities.

Governance

"The Dalton Chorale" is the operating name for The Aks Chorale, Inc., a not-for-profit organization. Responsibility for management of the DC resides in a seven-person Board of Directors, with each Director elected to a three-year term. Terms of service are staggered to preserve continuity within the Board. The Music Director/ Conductor is an *ex officio* Director.

Although some business and administration matters, of necessity, must be addressed at nearly every rehearsal, we want Tuesdays to be dedicated, mostly, to music. Members wishing to focus the attention of the Board on a particular issue are encouraged to contact the DC Ombudsperson, Andrea Webber.

Section Leaders handle administration of each of the four voice sections.