



Singapore Symphony Chorus

2023 Member's Handbook

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About the SSC



Celebrating Choral Excellence

The Singapore Symphony Chorus (SSC) represents the pinnacle of choral excellence, bringing passionate choristers together in symphonic choral singing at the highest level.

Since its first performance on 13 June 1980, the SSC has established itself as one of the finest symphony choruses in the region. The chorus has performed with renowned conductors including Okko Kamu, Lan Shui, Lim Yau, Masaaki Suzuki and Sofi Jeannin – amassing a wide repertoire such as Rachmaninov’s *The Bells*, Arvo Pärt’s *Te Deum*, Britten’s *War Requiem*, and Bach’s *St John Passion*, amongst others.

In August 2019, the Singapore Symphony Chorus lent their vocals to *Truly, SSO*, a digital album of National Day Classics jointly released by Warner Music Singapore and the Singapore Symphony Orchestra.

Meet the Choral Director



Eudenice Palaruan studied at U.P. College of Music, majoring in composition and choral conducting. After finishing his Bachelor's Degree, he took another four-year study in Conducting at the Berliner Kirchenmusikschule, Germany. He was the resident composer/arranger and assistant choirmaster of the Philippine Madrigal Singers. He performed with the World Youth Choir and the Berlin Monteverdichor. In addition, he was the principal conductor of the San Miguel Master Chorale. For the past years, he has been the resident conductor of the International Bamboo Organ Festival. With his active involvement in the *choralization* of Philippine and other Asian indigenous music, he premiered a significant volume of new Asian choral works. In addition, he was often invited to give lectures on non-Western vocal aesthetics.

He taught composition and choral conducting at the University of the

Philippines College of Music and the Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music. Currently, he teaches at the Singapore Bible College School of Church Music.

Structure

The SSC is an audition-based ensemble that centres on developing a holistic choral experience. Under the guidance of the choral director, each rehearsal session incorporates sectionals and, occasionally, ensemble presentations which offer members the opportunity to hone their vocal techniques and delivery.

Sectionals and Chamber Presentations

To promote self-curation and a conducive environment in which choristers can further hone their vocal skills, ensemble presentations have been instituted.

Internal Reviews and Auditions

To ensure a continuing high level of excellence and to uphold musical standards, internal reviews will be conducted. For occasional outreach projects where soloists are needed, auditions will be opened to the choristers.

Commitment

Membership to the Singapore Symphony Chorus is a commitment to faithful and punctual attendance. Each member has a personal duty to promote the prosperity of the choir; consistency is essential to one's own success and that of the organisation.



I. Rehearsal Schedule

Date: Mondays

Time: 7:30PM – 10:15PM

Location: Victoria Concert Hall or SNYO Orchestral Studio @ NAFA

We rehearse weekly on Monday evenings, with additional sessions on Thursdays or consecutive weeknights, closer to concert week. Do check the latest administrative announcements for possible changes of venue or performance-related protocols.

Rehearsal schedules are subject to change; information disseminated via email (or occasionally WhatsApp) should be taken as the most accurate.

II. Important Rehearsals

Compulsory rehearsals are highlighted on schedule, and are typically piano and orchestra rehearsals preceding a performance.

Concert day warm-ups, run-throughs and production briefings are generally scheduled 2-3 hours before a performance. It is important that all members be present for these pre-performance protocols.

III. Project Participation

Do complete and return the project commitment form to the choral management at the soonest possible. This will help us program and coordinate the logistics of rehearsals and concerts more efficiently.

For reasons of conflicting schedules or personal exigencies, do communicate changes in commitment promptly to the choral management by email.

- We expect members to be present for the full duration of the concert programmes planned. Absences or unavailability, for any one performance of a particular concert, may lead to exclusion from the said project.
- New members, who have been accepted into the Chorus after performance numbers have been finalized, will be able to perform from the next project on. This ensures a smooth transition (for the new member) to the learning pace of the Chorus.

The Choral Director maintains discretion in making artistic decisions on members' suitability for concerts and performances.

IV. Attendance Requirements

(A) Expected

We greatly appreciate full attendance for rehearsals and performances, but understand that we all have our circumstances. A minimum attendance rate of 75% is required for rehearsals and performances scheduled.

(B) Absences

We strongly discourage falling below the minimum attendance rate as this may disqualify members' participation in a scheduled performance. The Choral Director's approval will be required for all exceptions.

- **Excused absences:** Absence with apologies including late arrivals or leaving early, can be acquired by submitting a notice to the Choral Team via email. These will still count against the attendance requirement.
- **Unaccounted absences:** Four consecutive weeks of absences unaccounted for, will be considered a voluntary withdrawal from a project.

Our choristers' commitment to rehearsals and scheduled concerts/performances is important to ensure continued artistic excellence. Unaccounted absenteeism from a quarter of rehearsals over the course of a season, may result in the review of membership.

Similarly, members who miss two concerts in a row, without adequate justification, may have their SSC membership renounced.

**Season: A season refers to the performing calendar that runs between July to June each cycle*

V. Leave of Absence (LOA)

We recognise that unforeseen work or personal exigencies, e.g., illnesses, family tragedy or work-related activities, may necessitate absences from a rehearsal.

In such circumstances, please inform the choral management at the earliest opportunity via email to choral@ssso.org.sg or SMS/Whatsapp to the choral mobile number.

(A) Short Term LOA

Regular leaves of absence may be granted for up to 4 sessions for a project, and a total of 16 sessions in the whole season, subject to the nature of the request.

(B) Extended LOA

Extended absence must be discussed in advance with the Choral Director and choral management. Members returning from extended leave (9 months or more) will be subject to a re-evaluation.

VI. Withdrawal/Termination

(A) Withdrawal

Members who wish to withdraw from the choir must submit a written withdrawal notice to the choral management. The announcement of withdrawal should include a reason for departure and the date from which the resignation is to be effective.

(B) Termination

We reserve the right to terminate membership at the choral director and choral management's discretion. Any of the following reasons shall be deemed as grounds for termination of membership: regular absenteeism without good reason, poor discipline, unsatisfactory performance and if member is found to have acted in a manner that is prejudicial to the interests or the reputation of the SSC.

A member who is the subject of termination shall be informed in writing, by email.

Termination is effective immediately. Upon the cessation of membership, all music must be turned in and any outstanding dues paid in full. Members withdrawn or terminated who wish to re-join the SSC will be subject to a stringent review and re-audition.

Decisions made by the Choral Director and choral management are final.

Decorum



The SSO Family at Esplanade's 20th Anniversary Concert, Illuminations, Esplanade Concert Hall, 5 Nov '22

As an ambassador of the Singapore Symphony Chorus and an affiliate of the Singapore Symphony Group (SSG), one's conduct is a direct reflection on the establishment. We expect all members to demonstrate professionalism at all times.

I. In Rehearsal

- **Punctuality:** Endeavour to arrive 10 minutes before the start of all rehearsals and activities, to ensure sufficient mental preparation for the rehearsal. Tardiness will be accounted for in attendance considerations
- **Attendance Registration:** Attendance is to be signed for before entering into a rehearsal or chorus event; unsigned or blank records will be treated as absences.
- **Attention:** All electronic devices should be silenced and kept away. If members must take a call, do excuse oneself from the rehearsal.
- **Courtesy:** Be cognizant of the needs of others; patience and helpfulness will be much appreciated.
- **Respect:** Be respectful of the positions of the directors, musicians, managers and administrators of the choir.

II. In Performance

(A) Stage Positioning

The Choral Director will have stage arrangements planned. These settings are fixed unless modified by the Choral Director or choral management. We coordinate all performers' entries and exits, do ensure to listen to all staff for arrangements.

(B) Performance Etiquette

- **Folders:** While seated, black folders should be closed and placed on the lap with the binder edge facing the audience
- **Movement:** Unnecessary movements are to be avoided; be mindful to keep fretting hands away
- **Attire:** The appropriate performance outfit is to be donned. Concert attire must be worn until the end of the performance.
- **Medical Time-out:** If feeling unwell at any point of time, do quietly take a seat and exit at an appropriate part of the program.

III. Conduct

We are committed to a policy of equal opportunity. The SSC aims to provide an environment free from prejudice that will afford members the opportunity to fulfil their personal potential.

(A) General Conduct

- Bullying, harassment, discrimination or inappropriate conduct against another member or choral staff will not be tolerated
- Consumption of alcohol and use of drugs (unless medically prescribed) are strictly prohibited
- Refer disputes between members to the choral management for mediation, members external to the disagreement are discouraged from being partisan

We take a serious view on the above offenses. Members found exhibiting such conduct will be subject to disciplinary procedures and may even face expulsion.

(B) Social Media Conduct

We encourage members to upkeep proper and respectful engagement between peers and the general community through social media. Conversely, we trust that these tools will be used for good purpose and in good faith.

- Observe principles of integrity, professionalism, and privacy
- Online posts are personal and your own
- Make positive association with the SSC and SSO
- Avoid disrespectful content such as racial, ethnic, sexual, religious, and physical disability slurs

Concert Wardrobe



Members are responsible for the acquisition and costs of their wardrobe. The designated concert attire must be worn for dress rehearsals and performances.

I. Ladies

- All black, ankle to floor length, long-sleeved gown, or;
- Ankle to floor-length black skirt/ slacks with at least $\frac{3}{4}$ (covering elbow) to full sleeves black blouse
- An appropriate undergarment is compulsory
- No tights, leggings or short skirts
- Black shoes
- Discreet accessories e.g. small ball or hoop earrings and small chain necklace, but not watches.

II. Gentlemen

- Black dinner-jacket
- Black trousers
- White long-sleeve collared, front-buttoned shirt
- Black bow-tie
- Black, polished leather shoes with black socks

Fragrance-Free Policy

Some members have environmental sensitivities to scented products which could trigger severe allergic reactions. Personal fragrance products that are perceptible to others should be avoided – especially on dress rehearsal and performance days.

Music

I. Responsibility

Choristers are expected to learn the music assigned for each rehearsal on his or her own. We expect each member to make reasonable effort to develop his or her vocal skills, and effort to contribute positively to the work of the group.

II. Distribution & Return

The SSC management owns music scores entrusted to members. They are copyrighted, and cannot be copied or duplicated – except as directed by the Music Librarian.

(A) Distribution

- Scores distributed are marked with a red SSO logo
- Use only 2B pencils to mark music
- Do not fold, bend or dog-ear the scores
- Do carry scores in the SSC black folder given
- Do afford proper care to the scores received

(B) Returns

- Be responsible and turn in the music on time (as required)
- Once past return deadline, members will be liable for shipping costs of returning the scores to the publisher.
- Scores should be returned free of tarnish with all pages intact
- Scores returned in mediocre condition may be rejected, and members required to purchase replacement scores.

The choral management will withhold new music if scores have not been returned.

Well-being

I. Personal Health

We ask all choristers to make honest assessments of their health and physical condition in meeting the demands of choir rehearsals and performances. Singing with the SSC is invigorating and stimulating –at the same time, it is rigorous and physically demanding.

You may be required to do the following things:

- Stand for extended periods (up to 60 mins)
- Climb and descend steep stairs

Individuals with pre-existing illness(es) that could potentially affect their attendance and performance must inform the choral management of their conditions.

II. Medical Fitness for Concert Tours

A contracted travel agency makes all travel arrangements. The choir or its travel partners make no promise of handicapped accessibility to facilities, venues, and tour attractions.

- Ensure physical fitness and good condition of health for participation in tours, for safety and the comfort and enjoyment of others.
- Medical facilities and healthcare personnel can be expensive in tour countries
- Consider a pre-travel doctor's evaluation
- Ensure to purchase adequate medical insurance coverage. Supplemental insurance packages may be available for purchase through the tour contractor or by one's preferred provider.



SSO Christmas Concert 2019, Esplanade Concert Hall, 19 December 2019

Finances

I. Membership Fees

Members will be required to contribute a one-time non-refundable membership fee of **S\$50.00**. This fee is to be used for administrative matters including the making of an SSC ID and scores.

II. Miscellaneous Expenses

(A) Penalties

The payment mentioned above cannot be used to offset any miscellaneous penalties incurred, including but not limited to: missing/defaced scores, loss of SSC ID card and damage of stage/dressing room equipment.

An administrative fee of an adequate amount will be determined by the choral management and the member made liable to bear the cost. Music will not be distributed to any member with delinquent dues of 1 month (30 days) or more.

(B) Travel Expenses



Songs of Destiny, Dewan Filharmonik Petronas Kuala Lumpur, 19 November 2017

Overseas concert tours with the choir will come with some expense. While the organization strives to bear the full costs of such travels, members may at times be required to share a portion of that sum.

The choral management will make arrangements to best suit members' preferences and schedules, though we make no guarantee on the exact fulfilment of individual predilections. Members will have to uphold personal responsibility for additional costs incurred by deviation e.g. change of flight times, expenditure on hotel provisions and facilities, private purchases.

Membership Benefits

I. SSO Friends Season Pass

An honorary SSO Friends Season Pass membership is awarded to every current and joining member. This Friends Season Pass access is awarded for **one year**, and allows members to enjoy merchant privileges at our partner establishments [linked here](#).

To activate merchant discounts, flash your complimentary SSO Friends Season Pass at the merchant counter before purchase.

II. Ticket Discounts

Members are eligible for two types of ticket discounts as below.

Type	Performers' Discount	SSG Family Discount
What is it	Only applicable for concerts that the choir member is performing in	All members of ensembles under the Singapore Symphony Group are entitled to this discount
Pre-requisites	Must be an SSC member	
Details	Exclusive discount codes of up to 40% off concert tickets	Exclusive discount codes of up to 20% off SSG concerts & shows
Ticketing Help	For any concerns or queries relating to ticketing, kindly drop SSO Customer Experience a note: ticketing@sso.org.sg	

Choral Management

The choral management operates Mondays to Friday between 10:00am to 6:30pm. We are contactable via the Choral Mobile on rehearsal days, and via the respective office lines on non-rehearsal days.

Please allow us 3 to 5 working days to respond to queries via email or WhatsApp.

Manager, Choral Programmes
Direct office line
Email

Regina Lee
+65 6602 4215
regina@sso.org.sg

Executive
Direct office line

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Social Media

Facebook

[@sqsymphonychorus](https://www.facebook.com/sqsymphonychorus)

Instagram

[@sqsymphonychorus](https://www.instagram.com/sqsymphonychorus)

Website

www.sso.org.sg/ssc

