



SINGAPORE  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA



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SYMPHONY  
YOUTH CHOIR

# **Singapore Symphony Youth Choir**

## **2023 Member's Handbook**

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## ABOUT THE SSYC



### Inspiring Choral Passion

Comprising Singapore's finest young choristers aged 17 to 28, the Singapore Symphony Youth Choir (SSYC) provides a fun and supportive environment that motivates and inspires singers to pursue their passion in choral singing.

Through a holistic choral training programme, passionate young singers form a community where they get to hone their vocal abilities and discover unique performing opportunities.

Making its debut in 2016 and under the guidance of a celebrated choirmaster, the SSYC has performed Scriabin's *Prometheus*, Puccini's *La Bohème*, as well as recorded Borodin's *Polovtsian Dances* and Mahler's *Symphony No. 2*, among others. Besides performing independently, the SSYC has also performed and toured with the SSC and SSO.

## CHOIRMASTER

Armed with a passion to inspire choral excellence in children and youth, Wong Lai Foon has been a driving force behind the development and growth of the Singapore Symphony Children's and Youth Choirs. A founding conductor of the Children's Choir (SSCC) at its inception in 2006, Wong was appointed Choirmaster in 2015, and led in the formation of the Youth Choir (SSYC) in 2016.

She has prepared both ensembles in a wide range of performances that have drawn praise for the choirs' beautiful tone and polished delivery. Highlights of past collaborations with the SSO include Britten's *War Requiem*, Bizet's *Carmen*, Puccini's *La Boheme* and Mahler's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> symphonies. In addition, the SSCC has shared the stage with the celebrated ensemble, The King's Singers, the *Maîtrise de Radio France* at the *Philharmonie de Paris*, and has performed for local and world heads of states at state functions. The SSYC is featured on the SSO's latest CD, *Russian Spectacular*.

Wong has commissioned and premiered works by local composers in an effort to grow the body of local compositions for treble choirs. Her efforts to educate and inspire extend into the community through workshops, talks, as well as adjudicator, chorus-master and guest-conductor roles. Some ensembles that she has worked with include The Philharmonic Chamber Choir, Singapore Symphony Chorus, Singapore Lyric Opera, Hallelujah Singers, and Methodist Festival Choir. She holds a master's degree in choral conducting from Westminster Choir College, USA.



# COMMITMENT

Membership in the Singapore Symphony Youth Choir is a commitment to faithful, consistent and punctual attendance. Every member is obligated a personal duty to promote the prosperity of the choir; consistency is essential to the success of both the individual member and the organisation.



## I. Rehearsal Schedule

Day: Mondays

Time: 7:30PM – 10:00PM

Location: Dance Studio, Victoria Concert Hall or Victoria Concert Hall

The Youth Choir meets weekly on Monday evenings, with additional sessions on Thursdays and consecutive weeknights during concert week. Members are to check the latest announcement from the management for possible sudden changes of venue or theatre-related protocols.

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

## II. Important Rehearsals

Compulsory rehearsals are highlighted on schedule, and are typically piano and tutti-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

Members should 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.

- Members are expected 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 Youth Choir after performance numbers have been finalized, can expect to perform from the next project on. This ensures a smooth transition (for the new member) to the learning pace of the Youth Choir.

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

### IV. Attendance Requirements

#### (A) Expected Attendance

Full attendance for rehearsals and performances is greatly appreciated but understand that circumstances may forbid. A minimum attendance rate of 75% is required for rehearsals and performances scheduled (excluding compulsory sessions).

#### (B) Attendance below 75%

Members are strongly discouraged from falling below the minimum attendance rate as this may disqualify members' eventual participation in a scheduled performance. The Choirmaster's approval must be sought for all exceptions.

- **Excused absences:** Absence with apologies including later arrivals or leaving early, can be acquired by submitting a notice to the choral management via email. These will still count against the 75% attendance requirement.
- **Unexcused absences:** Four consecutive weeks of absences unaccounted for, will be considered a voluntary withdrawal from a project.

Members' 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 SSYC membership renounced.

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



## **V. Leave of Absence (LOA)**

The SSYC recognises that unforeseen work or personal exigencies, e.g., illnesses, family tragedy or work-related activities, may necessitate absence from a rehearsal.

In such circumstances, members should inform the choral management at the earliest opportunity via email to [choral@sso.org.sg](mailto:choral@sso.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, up to 16 sessions in the whole season, subject to the nature of the request.

### **(B) Extended LOA**

The extended absence must be discussed in advance with the Choirmaster 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**

The SSYC reserves the right to terminate a membership at its 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 SSYC.

Any 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. Withdrawn/terminated members who wish to re-join the SSYC will be subject to a stringent review and re-audition.

Decisions made by the Choirmaster and choral management are final.

# DECORUM



*SSYC with SSO, VCH, 16 Sep '22*

As an ambassador of the Singapore Symphony Youth Choir and an affiliate of the Singapore Symphony Group (SSG), one's conduct is a direct reflection on the establishment. Members are expected 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
- **Attendance Registration:** Attendance is to be signed for before entering into a rehearsal or chorus event
- **Attention:** All electronic devices should be silenced and kept away. If a member must take a call, he/she should excuse himself/herself 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

The Choirmaster will have stage arrangements planned. These settings are fixed unless modified by the Choirmaster or choral management. Performers' entry and



exit will be coordinated. Members are expected to give their full attention to all staff for such arrangements.

### **III. Conduct**

The SSYC is committed to a policy of equal opportunity. The choir 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.
- Disputes between members should be referred to the choral management for mediation.
- Members (external to the disagreement) are discouraged from being partisan and getting involved.

#### **(B) Social Media Conduct**

The SSYC encourage members to upkeep proper engagement between peers and the general community through social media. Conversely, individuals are trusted to use such tools for good purpose and in good faith.

- Observe principles of integrity, professionalism, and privacy
- Social posts are personal and your own
- Make positive association with the SSYC and SSO
- Share responsibly, withhold confidential information
- Avoid disrespectful content



# 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

- Black long sleeve or  $\frac{3}{4}$  sleeve blouses
- Black ankle length skirts, OR,
- Black dressy, flowy pants
- No tights/ figure hugging pants, short skirts
- Appropriate undergarment is compulsory
- Visibly bright red accessory (think SSO / National Day red)
- Black court shoes or ballet pumps

## II. Gentlemen

- Black dress shirt
- Black dinner jacket
- Black trousers
- Red neck or bow tie (think SSO/ National Day red)
- Black, polished leather shoes with black socks

## Fragrance-Free Policy

Some members have environmental sensitivities to scented products that could trigger severe allergic reactions. Personal fragrance products 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. It is expected that each member will make a reasonable effort to develop his or her vocal skills, and make effort to contribute positively to the work of the group.

## II. Distribution & Return

The SSYC 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 SSYC 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 and 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

Members have the onus in making honest assessments of their health and physical condition in meeting the demands of choir rehearsals and performances. Singing with the SSYC 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/ 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. Travelers must be physically fit and healthy for participation in tours, for their safety and the comfort and enjoyment of others. A doctor's evaluation should be considered.

## **FINANCES**

### **I. Membership Fees**

Programme fees for the SSYC are listed in a separate 'Fees' document. Payments (either in full or half yearly) can be made by bank transfer, PayNow or PayPal and should typically be completed before the start of the season.

Student fees are available with a valid student pass. Programme fees are non-refundable. If a member withdraws from the SSYC programme at any time during the season, fees will not be refunded.

### **II. Miscellaneous Expenses**

#### **(A) Penalties**

An administrative fee of s\$50.00 will be imposed for late payments as other administration duties may have to be carried out. SSYC reserves the right to terminate a member's enrolment should fees remain outstanding for more than 6 weeks after the due date

Programme fees mentioned above cannot be used to offset any miscellaneous penalties incurred, including but not limited to: score replacement, loss of SSYC 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**

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

# 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

Type	Performers' Discount	SSG Family Discount
What is it	Only applicable for concerts that the choir member is performing	All members of ensembles under the Singapore Symphony Group are entitled to this discount
Pre-requisites	Must be an SSYC 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: <a href="mailto:ticketing@sso.org.sg">ticketing@sso.org.sg</a>	

# 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**  
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## Connect with Us on Social Media

### Facebook & IG

@sgsymphonyyouthchoir

### YouTube

@singaporesymphony

### Website

[www.sso.org.sg/ssyc](http://www.sso.org.sg/ssyc)

