

## NEW CHOIR MEMBERS INFORMATION 2019/20

### About us

Founded in 1935 by Leslie Regan (then Principal of the Watford School of Music) with support from his friend, the great Sir Henry Wood, Watford Philharmonic Society comprises an amateur choir and orchestra and is one of the largest musical societies of its kind in the country. The choir currently consists of around 170 members.

The Society usually holds three or four main concerts a year, generally in the Watford Colosseum, when it is joined by distinguished professional soloists and orchestral players. We are most fortunate to be able to perform in this wonderful concert hall, described by many as having one of the best acoustics in the country. There are other opportunities to perform in smaller groups at functions such as weddings or special events, and to attend "Come and Sing" days.

Our conductor is Michael Cayton – a very experienced and enthusiastic conductor, who also conducts the Chiltern Choir in Chorleywood. Membership of the choir is open to all. Michael will listen to new members in small groups to ensure that he has a balanced choir, and will offer advice, support and encouragement to any member who is experiencing difficulties.

### What we sing

We perform a wide variety of music. In the past few seasons we have performed *Carmina Burana* (Orff), *Mass in B Minor* (Johan Sebastian Bach), *The Armed Man* (Karl Jenkins) and *The Creation* (Haydn). The Autumn and Spring programmes tend to feature more "serious" works, whilst the Christmas and June concerts have a lighter programme.

### PROGRAMME FOR 2019/20 SEASON

Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	Puccini Messe Di Gloria Faure Cantique de Jean Racine
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2019	Christmas concert
Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Handel Messiah
Saturday 27 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	Opera choruses

### Rehearsals

The choir rehearses on Monday evenings between 7.30 and 9.30pm in the main hall at Watford Girls' Grammar School, Lady's Close, Watford WD18 0AE. There is on-site parking. In the run up to a concert, we practise with the orchestra and rehearsals may be extended by half an hour. There are also rehearsals at the concert venue on the afternoon of a performance. The first rehearsal of the Autumn Term for existing choir members will be Monday 2nd September.

### Music

Music is lent free of charge. Members are permitted to mark their scores; however, we request that only small pencil markings are made to avoid damaging them. Choir members are required to do some basic preparatory work between rehearsals, essentially learning their parts (practice CDs are usually available for purchase, and there are also free internet tracks to help with the note learning). This enables the conductor to spend more time on musical interpretation. In order to take part in a concert, choir members are expected to attend at least 60% of rehearsals.

### **Concert dress**

Female choir members wear long black skirts, or trousers, black shoes and stockings, plain black three-quarter or long-sleeved tops, plus a choir favour (available to purchase for £3.00).

Men wear black, open-neck long-sleeved shirts and trousers, black shoes, but no jacket.

### **How much will it cost?**

Currently the annual subscription is £195 for the 2019/20 season.

Members aged 30 years or under pay only £99 per annum.

Subscriptions may be paid in three equal instalments on 1<sup>st</sup> September, 30<sup>th</sup> November and 28<sup>th</sup> February.

If you only wish to sing for **one** concert during the whole year the fee is £53.

### **WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER?**

At any time throughout the season you may come and try us out for a few weeks, after which you will be asked to take a simple voice test prior to joining and paying a subscription. Our Conductor will give you advice about the level of musical ability expected and may recommend that you take singing lessons or change to another voice part. For more details on joining the choir, please contact our Membership Secretary, Nikki Hind [\*\*members@watfordphilharmonic.co.uk\*\*](mailto:members@watfordphilharmonic.co.uk) or come along to a rehearsal. We are a friendly society, and we arrange for all new choir members to meet and sit with a "buddy" during their first rehearsals.

### **Selling concert tickets**

We rely heavily on our members to sell as many tickets as possible to their families and friends for all our concerts. To encourage this, WPS operates a Ticket Incentive Scheme giving members who sell more than a basic quota of tickets a discount on their subscription the following year.

### **Finally, can you take part if you do not sing or play an instrument?**

You can support us by coming to our concerts. Or you could become a Friend of the Watford Philharmonic Society for an annual fee of £25, contact **Tim Venner** on **01923 284320**, email [\*\*timvenner@watfordphilharmonic.co.uk\*\*](mailto:timvenner@watfordphilharmonic.co.uk). Your email address will remain confidential and will only be used by us to tell you about Watford Philharmonic Society events.

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