

THE SINGERS' CLUB

OF CLEVELAND

MEN'S CHORUS BIDS FAREWELL TO ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

CLEVELAND – The artistic director of a Cleveland men's chorus is on her way to a university choral program in Florida.

Natalie Mallis, leader of the Singers' Club of Cleveland (SCC) since 2016, takes the reins this fall as director of choral studies at the University of South Florida, Tampa. She directed her final SCC concert May 17 at St. Ignatius High School's Breen Center for the Performing Arts. There, and at a festive party on June 23, the chorus offered expressions of gratitude for its artistic growth under her three seasons of leadership.

Mallis' tenure with the 60-member chorus will be remembered for a finely tuned choral sound, a challenging repertoire and her ability to teach both of those things to amateur singers, said Club President Bill Davis. "We've come a long way in the last three years," Davis said. "We look forward to another chapter in our organization's growth."

A search for a new artistic director is underway. Choral conductors interested in the opening, and persons wishing to recommend candidates, should send an email to directorsearch@singersclub.org.

Longtime member and experienced conductor Bob Bellisario has been appointed interim artistic director for at least the remainder of 2019. The SCC's next subscription concert, "Waltzes and Whimsy," will be at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Breen Center on Lorain Avenue at West 30th Street. Tuesday-night rehearsals for the 2019-2020 season begin Sept. 3 at the Breen Center. Singers interested in joining should contact membership chairman Bob Boyd, raboyd@aol.com, about September audition dates.

Operating continuously since 1891, The Singers' Club of Cleveland is the city's longest-established performing arts organization.

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Artistic Director / Conductor

The Singers' Club of Cleveland is seeking letters of interest from experienced choral directors for the position of Artistic Director / Conductor. The Club, just completing its 126th concert season, is a male chorus of over 60 voices that performs a broad and diverse repertoire of music from *a cappella* works to arrangements with orchestral accompaniment.

The Artistic Director / Conductor provides musical leadership and artistic direction for the Club. In addition to directing weekly rehearsals and conducting three major concerts per season, the successful candidate will be expected to assume responsibility for program planning, music selection, artistic collaborations, and leading the chorus to superior levels of performance.

As support, Club operations are governed by a nine-member Board of Directors responsible for finances, budgeting, membership, marketing and development, and assisting the Music Director with concert planning and promotion.

The Club currently rehearses Tuesday evenings at the Breen Center for the Performing Arts at St. Ignatius High School, 2008 West 30th Street and Lorain Avenue. The season runs from September to May.

If interested, please submit a résumé and letter of interest describing your conducting and academic background to:

directorsearch@singersclub.org

or

The Singers' Club of Cleveland
Attn: Director Search Committee
P.O. Box 16611
Cleveland, OH 44116

For additional information, please visit our website: singersclub.org

August, 2019

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A brief overview of The Singers' Club of Cleveland prepared by the Artistic Director Search Committee, May, 2019.

Organizational Structure

Presently, The Singers' Club has 65 performing members. Now completing its 126th year, The Singers' Club is a self-governing organization with a nine-member board of directors, a three-member artistic staff (artistic director / conductor, assistant conductor, accompanist), and a business manager. The annual operating budget of about \$86,000 is funded by membership dues, program advertising sales, ticket sales, annual fund contributions, special awards (notably, project support from Cuyahoga Arts and Culture), and grants from The Albert Rees Davis Endowment Fund, Inc.

Performances

Since 2010, the Club has presented its three subscription concerts (in December, March, and May) at the Breen Center for the Performing Arts on the campus of St. Ignatius High School. Rehearsals are held at Breen on Tuesday evenings from the day after Labor Day through mid-May, with a three-week break at the end of December; typically, an additional rehearsal is scheduled during each concert week. Previous concert venues include the Waetjen Auditorium (Cleveland State University), Gartner Auditorium (Cleveland Museum of Art), Severance Hall, Masonic Auditorium, Grays Armory, and Association Hall. In addition to numerous performances at Cleveland-area churches, the Club has presented concerts in Akron, Elyria, Oberlin, Painesville, Canton, Lakeside, and Chautauqua (NY). The Club traveled twice to Washington, D.C., to sing at the National Cathedral and the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. In addition to its own concerts, The Singers' Club has appeared with other groups, notably The Cleveland Orchestra (five times) and The Youngstown Symphony Orchestra (twice).

Conductors

Over its 126-year history, the Club has had thirteen conductors with tenures of three years or more, and three conductors with one-year appointments. The longest-serving conductor was Thomas Shellhammer (1965–2000) followed by Melvin Unger (2001–2015). Others include: Natalie Mallis (2016–2019); Frank Hruby (1956–1965); Robert Stofer (1946–1956); George Strickling (1942–1946); Boris Goldovsky (1936–1942); and Beryl Rubinstein (1930–1936).

Repertoire

In addition to a traditional male choral repertoire, the group presents a wide range of choral music, from classical works to new compositions, performed *a cappella*, or with piano, instrumental, or orchestral accompaniment. Many concerts have included vocal performances by guest artists; these are often scholarship winners and area choral groups, and occasionally singers with international reputations.

Music Library

The Club has a music library with over 1,300 titles, ranging from male glee club selections to Broadway show music to classical opera. Typically, there are about 50 hard copies of each piece, with orchestral scores for some of the titles. We maintain the library in digital format as well.

Scholarship Program

In the 1930s, The Singers' Club began to award scholarships and fellowships to male vocalists in the Cleveland area. In 1990, we formalized an annual juried competition that was subsequently named the S. Livingston Mather Scholarship Competition, honoring an early member who was an avid and longtime Club supporter. The competition has expanded dramatically in recent years, attracting applicants from outstanding schools and conservatories throughout the country. We receive 25–30 applications each year, from which judges select 16 finalists based on their audition recordings. Each finalist performs three selections in the competition. In 2018, four singers were awarded scholarships totaling \$6,250. Over the years, the Club has provided a total of nearly \$300,000 in scholarships to outstanding singers, many of whom have gone on to outstanding careers as soloists, opera singers, and university faculty.