



Members Handbook  
*2008-2009*

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## **A Message from the Music Director - L. Thomas Vining**

The year has started, the board has been hard at work, and we are now in the process of preparing for our December Christmas Concert which at this time looks as if it will be another successful concert again, this year with two performances. With all that is going on around us, I think it is a good time to stop, take a deep breath, and once again revisit some of the ideals and expectations that have formed the foundation of our choir and brought us to the level of achievement and community recognition that we now enjoy.

For me, one word sums up all that we are, community; the community at large and the community that we have created within our group of singers.

As a singer in the Oratorio Society, it is important to realize that we are about more than great music. We are about the difference we make in and on our community because of the sacrifices we make to bring a different voice to the cultural landscape and fabric of all our lives. Charlottesville is a better place because of the Oratorio Society. We, as well, are better off because we have each other and because we believe in our mission and the way we have chosen to implement our dream of a better life because music, and its intrinsic value, is a part of the very core of existence.

These are lofty thoughts but you must know that these feelings flow deep within me. It is from this place that I form the core values that guide my life. One of these core values is "personal responsibility."

What is your responsibility to the Oratorio Society? First and foremost, you need to care about more than yourself. It is not enough to join our choir because you want to sing. That probably got you here in the very beginning but it is not enough to keep you interested and active over the long haul. We have got to care about each other and our community.

Care about each other. Be on time for rehearsal. Come to rehearsal mentally ready to work. Listen attentively. Meet someone new each week. Know your music and be willing to spend a little time each week working on your music at home. These ideas are just the beginning. Once you're in the flow of things, other avenues of opportunity will make themselves visible and available to you.

One last thought. Our outreach to the community depends on us. No one will know anything about us if we don't tell them. Be a positive promoter for the Oratorio Society. Tell your friends and family about your involvement with our/your choir and don't be afraid to sell tickets. We offer one of the best opportunities for personal growth and entertainment in our area. The price is reasonable compared to an evening at the movies and without question, the content is more intellectually engaging.

Who we are, what we are, and the lives we touch all depend on you....

As we move forward in this new season, grab hold of every opportunity to be counted in the game of life and make the sacrifices and commitments necessary to be supportive member of the Oratorio Society of Virginia.

Lance

## **A Message from the President – Fred Simon**

Dear fellow singers,

A new season is upon us and with it come many changes. The most visible change is that of our name. Gone are the days of “TOSCA”, as we are now “The Oratorio Society of Virginia”. Why the change, you may ask? One of the primary reasons for the change is the fact that we are growing and want our name to be truly reflective of who we are. We have singers who commute to our rehearsals from at least six counties and two cities. Our orchestra is made up of musicians from not just the Charlottesville area, but also from as far away as Roanoke to the south and Baltimore to the north. In addition, our audience has also grown; we have sold tickets to concert goers from the Richmond area to southwest and northern Virginia!

We also have a new mission statement and we have already begun to intensify our efforts to live up to its standards. As we strive for musical excellence, we will all be challenged to ‘raise the bar’ collectively as a group and from a personal perspective. This is evidenced in the refinement in our attendance policy and in the weekend rehearsals. Our very active board of directors is committed to lead us to be the premier choral group in Virginia.

Another of the characteristics that makes us strong as a chorus is the involvement of our singers and our board. In addition to singing and selling tickets, our members do a lot of work behind the scenes to make our season and our future possible. It is this commitment that has enabled us to grow as a chorus. There is a multitude of jobs that need to be done in order for us to complete a successful season. I can personally attest that I really have enjoyed my responsibilities with the chorus and on the board. I’ve made new friends and have had the satisfaction of seeing our collective efforts result in our success. If you are interested in helping us please let any of our board members know.

Sincerely,

Fred Simon

## Board of Directors

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## Staff

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## **Singers' Guidelines**

*Dedicated to musical excellence, the Oratorio Society of Virginia enriches, inspires and educates the community through regular performance of choral masterworks that express the best of the human spirit.*

### **Oratorio Society Overview**

The Oratorio Society is a volunteer organization. Membership means you have joined a musical society and have taken on your share of the responsibility for bringing first-rate musical performances to the community.

The Singers, the Board of Directors and special friends of the Society invest many hours in the rehearsing, planning, publicizing, staging, and presentation of our concerts. Our concerts happen because we all master the music, sell tickets, tote chairs and risers, participate in fund-raising, tack up posters and surrender a few weekends to rehearsing and performing.

The rewards of this labor are substantial. The exceptional quality of our concerts, year after year, reflects the commitment and hard work of every Society member. In addition, each member benefits personally from two semesters of superb teaching and vocal training under the tutelage of our music director.

### **Getting involved**

Every member of the Society is encouraged to help with something to produce our concerts. Please support our efforts in these ways:

- Selling tickets to fill the house
- Helping to recruit new singers to increase our ranks
- Making gifts and financial contributions over and above payment of dues
- Providing food and beverages for rehearsal breaks periodically and for events associated with concert weekends
- Suggesting ideas to your Section Leader or members of the Board to improve the Society
- Providing housing for out-of-town soloists and orchestra members
- Serving on the Board of Directors or any of its committees

### **Member Dues and Other Expenses**

- **Annual Dues**  
The amount is determined annually by the Board of Directors. For the current season the annual dues are \$100. More than half of your dues are used to purchase the music – which is yours to mark however you like and to keep or to donate back to the Society. Dues will not be prorated and must be paid within the first month of the season unless special arrangements are made with the treasurer.

- **Concert Attire**  
Women are required to purchase concert dresses that are ordered by the Society. Men are required to purchase or rent tuxedos.
- **Rehearsal CDs and Concert CDs**  
You may be encouraged to purchase rehearsal CDs that will facilitate your mastery of the music. Concerts are recorded and CDs of the concerts can be purchased.

**Rehearsals**

- Regular weekly rehearsals take place during the academic year at the Municipal Arts Center on 5<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Charlottesville.
- Rehearsals begin promptly at 7:15 p.m. Singers are expected to be in their seats and ready to sing at that time.
- Rehearsals usually last until 9:30 p.m. but may last longer in some cases.
- Additional rehearsals for the season have been scheduled as follows:
  - Saturday, September 27, from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church
  - Sunday, January 18, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the MAC
  - Sunday, March 29, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the MAC.
- Refreshments are sometimes furnished by the Society members during the break.
- Members are personally responsible for learning their individual parts. You are encouraged to practice between rehearsals. The rehearsal CDs and on-line midi learning files are very helpful in learning the music.

**Pre-concert Rehearsals**

- Please hold the entire concert weekend open for rehearsals and the performance.
- Usually, we rehearse with the orchestra in the concert hall on the Friday evening and all of the Saturday morning of the concert weekend.
- Attendance at these rehearsals is required as we are interested in balancing sound, seeing how we look on stage, and practicing our entrances and exits as a group.
- Warm-up for the performance begins one hour before the concert. Please be on time.

**Rehearsal Etiquette**

- Please remain quiet and attentive while other sections are being rehearsed.
- Follow along with the music so that you are ready to sing again when the conductor indicates.

**Attendance**

- Members are expected to attend each and every rehearsal, including special and sectional rehearsals.
- Members are expected to sing in all concerts scheduled for the season.
- If you must be absent from any rehearsal you need to notify your section leader in advance.
- If you do miss a rehearsal, you are responsible for knowing the music that was rehearsed and for entering in your score any markings added during that session.

- We ask that members not miss more than two rehearsals. If you will need to miss more than two rehearsals for any given concert please see your section leader. Any exceptions to the two absence policy will be made at the discretion of the section leader and will involve demonstrating your knowledge of the music to your section (or designated members of your section) as arranged by the section leader. If a member has missed more than two rehearsals and is unable to appropriately demonstrate their knowledge of the music, they will be asked not to sing in the concert. If a member has a problem with a decision made, they may appeal to the board.
- If you are feeling unwell and unable to sing but are not contagious, please feel free to sit in a corner and listen in order to get the markings and notes from the week.
- Dress rehearsals are not included in the absence policy. 100% attendance is mandatory at all dress rehearsals, no exceptions.
- If you know that you will not be able to sing a concert, please do not attend any of the rehearsals prior to that concert as it is difficult for your section to rebalance itself the weekend of the concert.

### **Section Leaders**

- Section leaders are designated for each season and take attendance at all rehearsals. If you must miss a rehearsal, please notify your section leader in advance.
- Your section leader will notify you of cancellations, changes in rehearsal time or site and scheduling of special rehearsals.
- If you have any questions about our rehearsals, policies or other Oratorio Society matters, please contact your section leader before or after rehearsal.

### **Concert Dress**

Our concert dress is formal and conservative. We aim for a high degree of uniformity so that the audience sees one choral body, not a collection of individual fashion statements. If you have questions about the suitability of items you plan to wear, ask your section leader; he or she will arrange to have someone help you. Standards of dress for ladies and gentlemen follow.

#### **Ladies**

- Black concert dresses purchased through the Oratorio Society
- Black stockings and comfortable black closed-toed shoes
- 16-18 inch pearl-like necklace
- No reflective jewelry and only pearl stud-style earrings
- No perfume or hair spray as many people are sensitive or have allergies

#### **Gentlemen**

- White (paper white) tuxedo shirt, plain studs and no ruffles
- Black tuxedo, black tie and black cummerbund
- Black socks and black shoes

- No jewelry
- No cologne or aftershave as many people are sensitive or have allergies

**Singer Contracts**

To perform in any concert, every singer (as well as the director, soloists and orchestra members) must sign an agreement whose main purpose is to assign rights to the Society for the future use of any recordings made during the performance. A copy of the agreement is appended, and applies to the whole season. You should complete your personal details and sign it before it is countersigned by the Society's president. If you would like a copy for your own records, two completed copies should be submitted and one will be returned after countersignature.

**Address and Phone Number**

Call the Society phone number for "emergency" information such as cancellations due to inclement weather and so forth. Your section leader or other Oratorio Society member will notify you of cancellations whenever possible.

The Oratorio Society of Virginia  
PO Box 5073  
Charlottesville, VA 22905  
434-295-4385

Please see **The Oratorio Society of Virginia** website for the concert schedule, a roster of singers and other important information.

Website address: [www.oratoriosociety.org](http://www.oratoriosociety.org)

## Oratorio Society Member Agreement

This Oratorio Society Performer Agreement (this "Agreement") is made as of the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009, by and between THE ORATORIO SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA, INC., a Virginia corporation, located at P.O. Box 5073, Charlottesville, Virginia 22905-5073 ("TOSCA") and \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_ ("You"):

### **Recitals**

You have been selected to be a singing member of TOSCA and have been given the privilege to perform publicly as part of TOSCA. As a condition for you to be selected as a singing member of TOSCA, you agree to assign to TOSCA all rights necessary to use any and all of your performances on behalf of TOSCA and/or at any TOSCA sponsored event (collectively hereinafter referred to as the "Performances"). The term "Performances" shall include live performances and rehearsals. You understand that TOSCA may use recordings of Performances for merchandise, exhibition and marketing purposes in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

**1. Grant of Rights.** You acknowledge and agree that: (i) TOSCA shall have the right to make audio and audiovisual recordings of your Performances during the Term, including at any recording, performance and promotional dates and any sound checks and/or rehearsals hereunder; (ii) all the results and proceeds of the services heretofore rendered and hereafter to be rendered by you for TOSCA and any and all audio-visual recordings embodying your likeness and/or performances of any kind or nature (the "Audio-Visual Works") are and shall be deemed works "made-for-hire" for TOSCA within the meaning of U.S. copyright law; and (iii) in the event any of the results and proceeds (or any portion thereof) of the services described in sub-clause (ii), above, shall not be deemed a work "made-for-hire," and/or to the extent that TOSCA is not deemed to be the author or any thereof in any territory of the Universe, you hereby irrevocably transfer, assign and grant to TOSCA the entirety of copyright in and to such results and proceeds and all other rights in and all other results and proceeds throughout the Universe, in perpetuity. In no event shall the period of rights granted to TOSCA hereunder be less than the period of copyright and any renewals and extensions thereof. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, you further acknowledge, certify and agree that TOSCA shall have the right to exploit any and all of the foregoing in any and all media, now known or hereinafter devised, throughout the Universe, in perpetuity, in all configurations, or to refrain therefrom, as TOSCA in its sole discretion shall determine. Upon request, you agree to execute, acknowledge and deliver to TOSCA's assignees or designees (as appropriate) such additional documents as TOSCA may deem necessary to evidence and effectuate TOSCA's rights hereunder. You grant to TOSCA the worldwide, perpetual right to use and publish your name, likeness, voice, sound effects or other identification and approved biographical information, in connection with your performances and services rendered hereunder. You shall have a right of reasonable consultation for all biographical information concerning you and likenesses featuring you (not including photographs of the entire Chorus or photographs in which you are not identified), which materials shall be deemed approved unless you advise TOSCA to the contrary within five (5) business days after TOSCA's written request therefor. TOSCA's inadvertent failure to obtain your approval hereunder shall not constitute a material breach of this Agreement; provided that TOSCA shall use reasonable efforts to cure any such failure on subsequent pressings of the applicable materials.

2. **Warranties.** You hereby warrant, represent and agree that: (a) you have the right to enter into this Agreement, to grant all of the rights granted by you hereunder and to perform each and every obligation required hereunder; and (b) no materials, ideas or other properties furnished by you and utilized by you and/or TOSCA hereunder or otherwise will violate or infringe upon any common law or statutory right of any person, firm or corporation including, without limitation, contractual rights, copyrights and rights of privacy.

3. **Duration of Agreement.** This Agreement shall remain in effect for as long as you are a member of TOSCA. All intellectual property rights granted herein shall be in perpetuity regardless of whether you remain a member of TOSCA.

4. **Credit.** You shall receive credit for any Performances in a manner that is solely determined by TOSCA, if such credit is given to members of TOSCA.

5. **Personality and Publicity Rights.** In addition to the grant of rights contained in paragraph 1, above, you agree that you will not issue any publicity concerning TOSCA or the Audio-Visual Works without TOSCA's prior written consent; provided, however, that incidental, nonderogatory references to TOSCA or the Audio-Visual Works shall be permitted. You may use a copy of any sound recordings containing the Audio-Visual Works (and copies of any other productions using the Audio-Visual Works) solely for personal and non-commercial purposes to use in your personal portfolio as an example of your expertise for your self-promotion.

6. **No Obligation to Proceed.** TOSCA shall not be required to produce, release, distribute, advertise, exploit or utilize the Audio-Visual Works. TOSCA shall have the right to assign this Agreement and any of the rights granted herein, in whole or in part, to any person, firm, corporation or entity, and nothing contained herein shall imply anything to the contrary.

7. **Indemnity.** You release and agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless TOSCA, its members, managers and employees, from and against any liabilities, losses, claims, demands, costs (including, without limitation, reasonable attorneys' fees) and expenses arising in connection with any material breach of any warranty, representation or agreement made by you under this Agreement. You agree to perform any acts and sign all documents and certificates which TOSCA may request in order to establish TOSCA's unrestricted ownership in the Audio-Visual Works or to carry out the intent of this Agreement.

8. **Limitation of Liability.** Nothing in this Agreement shall confer upon you an enforceable right to sing with TOSCA, to receive credit for singing with TOSCA, or to insist that TOSCA make any recording of any Performance. Damages payable by TOSCA to you for any violation of this Agreement shall be limited to the amount of any dues that you paid to sing with TOSCA during the twelve months preceding the violation.

9. **Miscellaneous.** This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia without regard to its conflict of laws principles. Virginia courts shall have personal jurisdiction over both parties, and venue for any proceeding shall be in the General District or Circuit Courts for the City of Charlottesville. Performer agrees to such venue and waives any objections thereto. This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties hereto and supersedes all prior agreements, representations and warranties, if any, made with respect to the subject matter hereof. This Agreement shall be the binding contract between you and TOSCA, and may not be amended other than by a writing

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signed by both parties. If any provision of this Agreement shall be held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such holding shall not invalidate any other provision hereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this Agreement as of the day and year first written above.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

THE ORATORIO SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA, INC.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Its: \_\_\_\_\_