

Edinburgh
Bach
Choir

Audition Booklet

2018



Thank you for showing an interest in joining Edinburgh Bach Choir. Membership of the choir is by audition. This booklet contains an explanation of what you will be expected to do for your audition.

The event itself will take 10 - 12 minutes and will be conducted in a positive and friendly atmosphere. There will be two people in the room with you – the pianist and the conductor of the choir. Please read this booklet, and use the information here to ensure you have prepared adequately for the audition.

Introduction

Edinburgh Bach Choir has been central to our capital city's musical life since its founding in 1910. The three concerts the Choir normally sings each year have covered a large variety of music from Renaissance to new commissions, and the music of Bach is a regular feature of its performances.

The Choir aspires to perform to as professional a level as possible and indeed many of its concerts are accompanied by professional instrumentalists. To this end, new members must pass an audition, and existing members must be re-auditioned on a regular basis to ensure that standards are maintained. This is standard practice in choral societies across the country.

Current Members

The members of the Choir come from a variety of walks of life, and with a wide variety of musical backgrounds and abilities. The mix of professions is extremely varied along with students and retired individuals; all are connected by a love of singing and a wish to perform to the highest level they can. You can be part of this group if you enjoy singing, and are prepared to develop your singing to the right level if your experience is limited. Commitment is important, and in order to maintain the required standard members are asked to attend **at least 75% of regular rehearsals**; rehearsals in a concert week are regarded as compulsory.

What are we looking for?

Ideally singers with some experience of singing in a choir, and a voice that is healthy and in good working order. For those people who have not sung in a choir before, we are looking for the potential to develop into good and capable choir members.

Preparation

Like any interview, candidates should undertake to prepare themselves as best they can. When you are prepared you can be more confident, and present yourself in the best light.

The Audition

The audition this term falls into three short sections, designed to show what you are capable of doing.

- 1) You will sing a song that you have previously learnt;
- 2) You will be asked to sing a short extract of music at sight;
- 3) You will be asked to sing vocal exercises, primarily to ascertain your range.

After the audition, the conductor can offer one of three possibilities:

- Full membership of the choir
- Probationary membership (a try-out, perhaps with some conditions attached)
- Unable to offer membership (with some reasons given, and perhaps some pointers as to how to develop your singing so that you might be able to join at some later stage)

Your Chosen Song

This is intended to show us what your voice sounds like. You may have had singing lessons in the past and have some songs you have learnt and can sing. Edinburgh Bach Choir is in essence a classical choir, one which learns classical repertoire to sing, often with an orchestra. It is best to bring a classical song, or simple folk song to sing, and avoiding songs from the shows that are sung in a music theatre style.

When you come to your audition, there will be an accompanist there to play the accompaniment for you. **You must bring three copies of your music** (one for yourself, one for the conductor and one for the pianist). Photocopying is allowed in this situation providing one of your copies is an original.

Sight-singing

This shows us if you read music easily, or if you have to work at it. Whilst the ability to sight-sing is desirable, the bigger question is how easily you learn the music and retain it for the concert. So if you don't read music very well, you may need a little more application in order to learn the music that is being sung week by week.

Vocal exercises

Simple scales and arpeggios are used to see what your working range is and where best within the choir to place you. The choir is divided into top (1sts) and bottom (2nds) parts within Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass. It's to do with range: second sopranos are not less capable singers than firsts!

Good luck with your audition!