

Los Angeles Children's Chorus's *mission* is to provide choral music education of the highest quality to young people who represent richly diverse racial, economic, and cultural backgrounds. The program ignites a love of singing and nurtures the full expression of each individual's potential for artistic and personal excellence through the collaborative experience of choral music performance. Through the beauty of inspired and joyful singing, Los Angeles Children's Chorus brings the transformative power of music to communities throughout Southern California, the nation, and the world.

# HISTORY

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LACC's comprehensive program serves choristers of varied levels of experience and learning styles through the graduated levels of its core ensemble program and a sequential Music Literacy curriculum. Choristers master a challenging, multi-lingual repertoire of choral music in the *bel canto* style in weekly rehearsals; learn to read musical notation and understand key musical concepts in musicianship classes; receive exposure to foreign languages through repertoire study; explore text and music interpretation; acquire a solid education in music theory; receive one-on-one vocal coaching; and gain access to some of the country's most renowned performing artists and companies. Through a program that conforms to national standards for the performing arts, LACC transforms children into highly capable musicians while also teaching such critical life skills as discipline, collaboration, cultural understanding, and striving for personal excellence.

In addition to its core choral music training program, LACC presents an annual self produced season of free and low-cost community concerts; engages in artistic collaborations with world-class artists and companies in prestigious venues; performs in national and international choral exchanges with visiting choirs; commissions new works for children's voices; engages in regional, national and international tours; and offers a vibrant program of community engagement, professional development opportunities for music educators, and in-school programs for elementary school children.

In 2007, LACC produced a commissioned world-premiere opera, *Keepers of the Night*, by composer Peter Ash and librettist Donald Sturrock, which featured 65 children and three renowned adult opera singers. The chorus is heard on *Amore Infinito* ("Infinite Love"), a Deutsche Grammophon release of songs based on poems by the late Pope John Paul II and performed by Plácido Domingo, released worldwide in March 2009; and *A Good Understanding*, the Los Angeles Master Chorale's 2010 recording of Nico Muhly's music on Decca. LACC is featured in the 2002 Academy Award-nominated documentary, *Sing!*, and sequel documentaries, *Sing Opera!* (2008) and *Sing China!* (2009), by award-winning filmmakers Freida Mock and Jessica Sanders. *Sing!* chronicles a year in the life of the chorus and is shown periodically on PBS stations nationwide. The chorus has also appeared on television and feature film soundtracks.

Since 1986, LACC has provided choral music training to more than 2,200 children ages 6-18 and grown from one ensemble of 55 children to six progressively experienced choirs and a program of First Experiences in Singing classes and First Experiences in Choral Singing ensemble. During its 2016|2017 season, LACC will serve more than *400 young singers* from 50+ communities throughout greater Los Angeles, thus reflecting in its membership the cultural and economic diversity of the region.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## MEMBERSHIP

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Los Angeles Children's Chorus comprises more than 400 members ranging in age from 6-18. The chorus's diverse membership hails from approximately 50 communities throughout the greater Los Angeles area. LACC has six choral ensembles in its core program: Concert Choir, Intermediate Choir, Apprentice Choir, Preparatory Choir, Chamber Singers, and Young Men's Ensemble. LACC-based and school-based First Experiences in Singing classes are offered for children ages 6-7. The First Experiences in Choral Singing Ensemble is a transitional experience from FES classes to the ensemble format.

LACC's regular season runs from September through May. New choristers are selected at annual spring and summer auditions and are generally placed in Preparatory Choir or Apprentice Choir, and Young Men's Ensemble. When there are openings in Intermediate Choir, Concert Choir, or Chamber Singers, continuing choristers are evaluated and considered for advancement based on

- tone and vocal color,
- intonation and tuning,
- ability to read music and hold a part,
- attendance and working effectively at rehearsals,
- dedication, attitude and artistic contributions to the chorus, and
- successful completion of current level of musicianship class.

**Choristers may expect to stay in each ensemble for two years or more.** Older high school-aged girls in Concert Choir may be invited by the artistic director to audition for Chamber Singers. To be eligible, they must have completed two successful seasons in Concert Choir and passed the Level 7 musicianship class.

Repertoire appropriate to each choir's skill level is selected annually for each ensemble of the chorus. Although emphasis is placed on music education, core choirs also have opportunities to perform and travel.

## CONTACT US

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Our office is located at:

585 East Colorado Boulevard  
Pasadena, CA 91101-2036

Phone: 626.793.4231

Fax: 626.793.0173

Email: [info@lachildrenschorus.org](mailto:info@lachildrenschorus.org)

Administrative Office Hours:

Monday - Friday

9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Extended Office Assistance during Regular LACC Rehearsals:

Sunday from 4:00-8:00 p.m.

Monday and Tuesday from 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Connect with us online:

Web: [www.lachildrenschorus.org](http://www.lachildrenschorus.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/losangeleschildrenschorus](http://www.facebook.com/losangeleschildrenschorus)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/LACCsings](http://www.twitter.com/LACCsings)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/lachildrenschorus](http://www.instagram.com/lachildrenschorus)

Snapchat: [@LACCsings](https://www.snapchat.com/add/LACCsings)

Youtube: [www.youtube.com/lachildrenschorus](http://www.youtube.com/lachildrenschorus)

# PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

## REHEARSALS AND MUSICIANSHIP CLASSES

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Los Angeles Children's Chorus operates its program out of the Pasadena Presbyterian Church (PPC). Regular rehearsals are held in PPC's Music Department.

Most choristers attend one musicianship class per week. Exams are given at mid-term and at the end of the year to evaluate each chorister's mastery of the material and skills taught.

Because a great deal of music is learned in a short period of rehearsal time, it is essential that every minute of the rehearsal be used wisely. Choristers are expected to arrive in plenty of time to

- sign in, locate music folders, and put on nametags, if provided;
- have a sharpened pencil;
- arrange music in the order listed on the board;
- use restrooms before rehearsal, if needed; and
- take their seats and be ready to sing at the start of rehearsal.

Each chorister is required to bring his/her LACC music bag, musicianship materials, music, a pencil, and provide his/her own reusable water bottle, clearly labeled with the chorister's name, to each rehearsal.

If snacks are served, food and drinks are to be consumed in the hall during break time and trash should be placed in the trash containers provided. Food, beverages, and chewing gum are not allowed in the rehearsal room.

## SCHEDULES

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<b>Choir/Ensemble</b>	<b>Sunday</b>		<b>Monday</b>		<b>Tuesday</b>
	Musicianship	Rehearsal	Musicianship	Rehearsal	Rehearsal
Young Men's Ensemble	4:45-5:15 p.m.	5:30-7:30 p.m.			
Chamber Singers		4:30-6:00 p.m.			
Concert Choir	5:30-6:00 p.m.	6:15-7:45 p.m.			6:15-7:45 p.m.
Apprentice Choir			5:55-6:35 p.m.	4:30-5:45 p.m.	
Intermediate Choir			5:15-5:45 p.m.	6:00-7:30 p.m.	
Preparatory Choir					4:30-5:45 p.m.

### **First Experiences in Singing Program**

	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>
	Rehearsal	Class
First Experiences in Choral Singing (FECS) Ensemble	4:30-5:30 p.m.	
First Experiences in Singing (FES) - Level I		4:15-5:00 p.m.
First Experiences in Singing (FES) - Level II		5:15-6:00 p.m.
First Experiences in Singing (FES) - Level III		5:15-6:00 p.m.

# PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

## RETREATS

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The chorus holds choir retreats every fall. Retreats are an important way to develop understanding of the season's repertoire, form friendships, and have fun! The retreat schedules include individual choir rehearsals, combined rehearsals, workshops with special guest artists, recreation time, and meals. The retreats are held in the Los Angeles area at a facility chosen for both rehearsal and recreational needs. For Apprentice Choir, Intermediate Choir, and Chamber Singers, the retreat is a day-long event. For Concert Choir and Young Men's Ensemble, the retreat takes place over a full weekend, including a sleepover at the retreat site. Cost of the retreat is included in the annual tuition fee and **attendance is required**. Preparatory Choir usually holds a mini-retreat during the year.

## PERFORMANCES

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Los Angeles Children's Chorus hosts two self-produced concerts each season - one in the winter and one in the spring. For this year's concert schedule, please see [Appendix A](#).

Preparatory Choir will present a spring concert for family and friends. Other self-produced concerts may involve one or more ensembles, including the annual gala and a variety of salons.

Additional performances throughout the year may involve one or more ensembles singing independently or in collaboration with other musical organizations in various locations throughout Los Angeles. LACC is often invited to provide singers for community events, at schools and retirement homes, or at meetings of civic and music organizations.

## PROGRESS REPORTS

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At mid-year, Apprentice, Intermediate, and new Concert Choir choristers are evaluated on the basis of their vocal development and mastery of the musical repertoire; for Apprentice and Intermediate choristers, a progress report is sent home to parents. At year-end, an evaluation of vocal mastery, musicianship skills, and attendance record will determine each chorister's placement for the next season. Parents are encouraged to call their child's director at the chorus office if they have any questions about their child's progress at LACC.



# PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

## OPPORTUNITIES

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The opportunities for LACC choristers to participate in professional performances with major performing arts organizations in our city are unparalleled.

LACC has a long and distinguished history of performing with the Los Angeles Opera (LAO), Los Angeles Philharmonic (LA Phil), Los Angeles Master Chorale (LAMC), and many other renowned performing arts organizations. These institutions seek to work with LACC because of its musical excellence, professionalism, and the technical ability of its choristers.

Additionally, choristers work closely with internationally regarded music and stage professionals — conductors, directors, singers, and instrumentalists. Choristers learn to deport themselves in a professional environment where musical performance and behavior of the highest order is expected at every moment. Through this experience, children grow as musicians and as individuals, and gain poise and self-confidence.

Los Angeles Children’s Chorus enjoys an international reputation for excellence in professional performance. The organization’s reputation is greatly enhanced through these high profile collaborations.

# SELECTIVE PARTICIPATION

## MAJOR ARTS PRESENTERS

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Each request for collaboration with major arts presenters is reviewed carefully by LACC's artistic staff to ensure that the chorus can meet the presenter's performance expectations. Presenters determine the number of singers needed to ensure musical success. The artistic staff carefully studies the music and determines which singers best match the musical demands of the work. Discussions are also held to determine the level of personal deportment needed for each environment. Conductors review the musical and behavioral readiness of singers as demonstrated through chorister participation in LACC's core program.

When a full ensemble is invited to perform, LACC expects that all members will participate and will clear their calendars of any conflicts. Discussions regarding participation and attendance where there is an unavoidable conflict must be held as soon as possible between the parent/chorister and the conductor. LACC parents/choristers are to initiate this conversation. If a smaller number of singers is needed, invitations that include clear rehearsal and performance expectations are extended to choristers.

All rehearsals and performances called by major arts presenters are mandatory. At times, additional LACC preparatory rehearsals will be called. Choristers are expected to participate in these additional rehearsals.

Choristers performing with professional performing arts organizations such as LA Opera and Los Angeles Philharmonic are subject to California Child Labor Laws as laid out by the State Division of Labor Standards Enforcement. This means that they will be asked to obtain work permits (facilitated by LACC) and attend Studio School when required. The Studio School schedule is determined by the rehearsal and performance schedule for a particular production and will be presented to choristers and families at the time an invitation is issued.

## OPERAS

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Choristers are selected for participation based on a variety of factors. LA Opera (LAO) dictates the exact number of LACC singers that are required for each production. They also give specifics regarding vocal abilities, gender, height, age, physical measurements (as many costumes are owned by the company and used repeatedly), as well as vision requirements and sometimes hair color and length. For example, choristers who are more than five feet tall may only be called when there is a need for backstage singing, as they do not provide enough height contrast with adult singers on stage to be visually and dramatically effective.

LACC's conducting staff reviews LAO requests and mutually determines which choristers are invited to audition. LACC considers a chorister's commitment to the core program, reliability, vocal and physical health, physical agility, and eagerness to learn as demonstrated in regular LACC rehearsals. Casts may contain both experienced and new choristers. Families should consider their child's academic standing, physical stamina, and level of involvement in other activities when weighing their child's ability to participate.

All rehearsals and performances are mandatory. At times, additional LACC preparatory rehearsals will be called. Choristers are expected to participate in these additional rehearsals. Additionally, choristers are expected to attend his or her core ensemble rehearsal.



# EXPECTATIONS

## PARTICIPATION

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Upon joining LACC, choristers are asked to commit to a full season (September through May) of active membership. Mastery and refinement of music comes only through regular practice by all choristers. Furthermore, the chorus's sound depends on a solid group with enough voices to cover all choral parts. In Concert Choir, for example, most pieces are sung in three or four treble parts. If choristers drop out during the year, the quality of the whole choir is negatively impacted.

Intermediate Choir, Concert Choir and Young Men's Ensemble attend musicianship class prior to rehearsal; Apprentice Choir attends musicianship class after rehearsal; musicianship class is not required for Preparatory Choir or Chamber Singers. In all cases, choristers are expected to be in their classroom seats and ready to work at the beginning of their scheduled class time. Choristers are also expected to maintain proper classroom behavior, participate in all class activities, and complete a weekly homework assignment to bring with them to class the following week.

Choristers who choose not to continue the following year are requested to schedule an exit interview with their director to discuss their experience with the chorus and to receive input on their choral development.

# EXPECTATIONS

## ATTENDANCE

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Due to the dedicated work of LACC's choristers over the years, the chorus has earned a reputation in the musical community for the superior quality of its sound. To sustain and expand LACC's reputation takes the dedicated commitment of every chorister. Choristers must make a commitment to attend all rehearsals, musicianship classes, and LACC performances, as well as participate in additional performance opportunities as necessary.

Each rehearsal and class is important. Choristers are challenged at a high level each week and the ensembles require each chorister to be present and learn together to create LACC's hallmark sound. **Attendance is required at all of your choir's rehearsals, performances, and musicianship classes.** Consistent attendance ensures that choristers are comfortable with their music, prepared to perform, and fulfilling their commitment to their ensemble.

Each LACC ensemble is given a season calendar in the early fall. This calendar includes rehearsals, classes, and performances for the upcoming season. Additions or changes to the season calendar will be communicated as soon as possible via handouts, emails, or phone calls.

Choristers are expected to participate in each performance listed on their ensemble's calendar. Full participation ensures the continuance of LACC's reputation for choral excellence. If there is an unavoidable conflict, the chorister and/or parent must speak with his/her ensemble's director as soon as possible. Should a chorister miss a performance, the consequence will be that, depending on the reason for the absence, they may be asked not to participate in a future performance.

Excessive absenteeism is defined as follows:

### **PREPARATORY CHOIR**

- More than 1 absence in the Fall Term (Sept.–Dec.)
- More than 2 absences in the Spring Term (Jan.–May)

### **APPRENTICE CHOIR & YOUNG MEN’S ENSEMBLE**

- More than 2 absences in the Fall Term (Sept.–Dec.)
- More than 3 absences in the Spring Term (Jan.–May)

### **INTERMEDIATE CHOIR**

- More than 3 absences in the Fall Term (Sept.–Dec.)
- More than 4 absences in the Spring Term (Jan.–May)

### **CONCERT CHOIR**

- More than 5 absences in the Fall Term (Sept.–Dec.)
- More than 6 absences in the Spring Term (Jan.–May)

### **CHAMBER SINGERS**

- More than 1 absences in the Fall Term (Sept.–Dec.)
- More than 1 absences in the Spring Term (Jan.–May)

Choristers are not considered absent when missing a rehearsal due to the observance of a religious holiday celebrated as a part of their family’s faith practice.

Being absent from the retreat counts as one absence for Apprentice Choir, Intermediate Choir, Chamber Singers, Young Men’s Ensemble, and two absences for Concert Choir.

# EXPECTATIONS

## ATTENDANCE

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There are certain rehearsals which are critical to the success of the chorus. These rehearsals, usually the last few before a performance, are **mandatory**. **Mandatory rehearsal means no excuses can be accepted**. If a chorister is unable to attend a mandatory rehearsal, the chorister and his/her parents must speak to the director of the child's ensemble to discuss the reason for the conflict. This conversation should happen as soon as the conflict arises and no later than two weeks before the rehearsal unless there is a last-minute emergency. The director will notify the family of the consequence of missing the mandatory rehearsal. Choristers missing these rehearsals may not be allowed to sing in the performance. Mandatory rehearsals are most often in conjunction with LA Opera, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Master Chorale, and other major arts presenters' performances.

For other rehearsals and classes, the chorister or parent should contact a chorus manager with a full explanation of the reason for the absence as far in advance as possible. You may contact a chorus manager by calling the LACC office or sending an email. Although chorus managers appreciate verbal notifications of upcoming absences, a phone message, an email message, or a written note is required in order to officially notify a chorus manager of an absence.

**The only reasons for absence are serious illness, a major conflict with a school academic event or trip, or family emergency.** Any extra-curricular activity which would conflict with LACC performances, rehearsals, or musicianship classes must be discussed with the chorister's director prior to the rehearsal.

Choristers who exceed the limitations will be placed on attendance probation and may be asked to not sing in a performance. Additionally, they may be asked to attend make-up rehearsals. A chorister's attendance record is also one of the factors considered for participation in special performances, tours, and promotions to higher level ensembles.

By accepting this responsibility, you will have the opportunity to learn and realize your greatest musical potential through all the programs offered by the chorus. Failure to meet these obligations may result in loss of performance opportunities and/or chorus membership as determined by the artistic director. Frequent absences from musicianship classes may result in repetition of that level the following season and may affect the chorister's ability to progress through LACC's program.

The sign-in sheets at rehearsals, musicianship classes, and performances are the basis for LACC's attendance records, so **it is essential that each chorister personally sign in at every rehearsal and performance. A chorister may not receive credit for attendance at a rehearsal for which they did not sign in.** Choristers must not ask or allow other choristers to sign in for them.

## **PUNCTUALITY**

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**If a chorister will be late to a rehearsal or must leave a rehearsal prior to its scheduled dismissal time, the chorister or a parent must notify a chorus manager as far in advance as possible. Permission for late arrivals and early departures is at the discretion of the choir director.**

Choristers and parents, please bear in mind that late arrivals and early departures are noted on sign-in sheets and documented in attendance records. Leaving a rehearsal early or arriving late may count as 1/2 of an absence.

**It is important that choristers are picked up promptly at the end of rehearsals, classes, performances, bus trips, and tours.** To ensure choristers' safety, a member of LACC's staff will always be present until the last chorister is picked up after an activity.

# EXPECTATIONS

## BEHAVIOR AGREEMENT

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LACC is an artistic community built on trust and mutual respect. The chorus believes that self-discipline is more valuable than imposed discipline. It is the responsibility of each chorister to follow established rules, not only to enable the chorus to achieve its goals, but also so individual needs can be met and respected. The chorus expects good conduct and behavior from every chorister.

Upon enrollment, each chorister assumes responsibility for following the prescribed rules. Additionally, the chorus expects that parents will support their child in this effort and will also support the chorus by respecting the rules. LACC choristers must take responsibility for their actions at all LACC functions, singing opportunities, and tours made available through the chorus. The behavior of each chorister impacts the effectiveness and reputation of the chorus as a whole. Any chorister whose actions demonstrate a failure to meet his/her responsibilities may be asked to leave LACC.

If a chorister inadequately handles his/her own responsibilities in regard to his/her proper conduct, the chorister will be referred to his/her director or the artistic director and the executive director, who will consider and decide upon the chorister's continued eligibility for membership in LACC. In this way, the chorus may make its own determination of what is considered to be its own best interest, as well as in the best interest of the chorister.

Possession or use of drugs or other illegal substances, alcohol, or tobacco at LACC events or LACC-related functions will likely result in dismissal from the chorus.

Infractions that may lead to suspension and potential dismissal from the chorus include, but are not limited to

- dishonesty,
- theft,
- physically or verbally abusive behavior,
- destruction or abuse of property or rehearsal/performance facility,
- possession of an object deemed dangerous to self or others,
- lack of a cooperative, positive attitude toward the standards of the chorus,
- disrespect for directors, musicianship teachers, accompanists, administrators, other choristers, chaperones, parent assistants, or any other individuals involved with a chorus activity, or
- excessive unexcused absences from rehearsals and/or performances.

# EXPECTATIONS

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

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LACC recognizes the importance of children carrying phones, yet it must ensure a rehearsal environment which is not interrupted by electronic devices. Choristers who bring phones or other electronic devices to rehearsals and musicianship classes must turn them off during rehearsals and classes. **Choristers may not bring any electronic device to stage at any performance.** Should a chorister use a device during a rehearsal or musicianship class, the device will be held by the rehearsal assistant until the close of rehearsal or class. Should a chorister bring or use a device on the stage of any performance, the chorister, parents, and the chorister's conductor will meet to discuss the appropriate consequence.

## REHEARSAL DRESS CODE

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Dress and appearance play a role in creating a respectful, positive, and productive learning environment. Choristers are asked not to wear items on the following list:

- clothing with inappropriate logos or writing such as profanity, violence, or sexual content;
- clothing worn so that undergarments show;
- halter tops, bare midriff tops, or backless tops; or
- slippers or pajamas.

## CONCERT PREPARATION AND DEPARTMENT

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The image that LACC presents at rehearsals, performances, and on tours is very important. Below are tips for how choristers can best represent the chorus:

- Choristers should come to all major rehearsals and performances well-rested. Performing is physically demanding in much the same way that athletic events are demanding. To sing one's best, one must be rested, have eaten a light, nutritious meal, and have consumed 16 ounces of water 2-3 hours before the warm-up rehearsal. Dairy products and spicy foods should be kept to a minimum prior to singing.
- Families should avoid over-scheduling a child on major rehearsal or performance days.
- When traveling by bus with the group, choristers may be required to ride in silence or talk at a low whisper to ensure healthy voices for performing.
- Uniforms must be clean and neat. Choristers should be mindful of personal hygiene in regard to deodorant when necessary. No perfume or cologne please!
- A natural, healthy appearance is strongly encouraged. Heavy make-up and excessive jewelry are not to be worn (small, non-light-catching earrings are permitted). Hair should be pulled back from the face in a ponytail or braids. Clips, headbands, or other hair accessories should not catch light and should match the hair color.
- Clear or neutral color nail polish is acceptable.
- Remember that each child's conduct, appearance and contributions to the performance reflect on the entire chorus.
- Choristers are responsible for providing their own uniforms. There are two uniforms: a dress uniform and a casual uniform. These must be purchased from the specified suppliers. Uniform costs are approximately \$100.