Yale Alumni Chorus Foundation

Singers’ Membership Covenant

Becoming a singing member of the Yale Alumni Chorus Foundation entitles you to share with other dedicated singers unparalleled musical and concert opportunities, most often through summertime Yale Alumni Chorus concert tours—China, South America, Russia, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Central America, Turkey, Georgia, and Armenia have been among our destinations.

You will perform under the direction of the director of the Yale Glee Club, currently Jeffrey Douma, a leading member of the Yale School of Music faculty, or under the direction of other widely-known conductors. You also will have opportunities to perform with some of the world’s major symphony orchestras, in some of the world’s most compelling concert venues, and under the batons of major orchestra and chorus conductors.

Most important, you will share in the pure joy of singing and the rewards of YAC’s intensive musical and social outreach. We bring the history of Yale’s choral preeminence to as many singers and audiences as we can.

**Basic requirements**

The primary requirement for singing with the Alumni Chorus is musical: YAC members—“Yale singing alumni, their families, and their singing friends”—should be reasonably adept at reading or aurally absorbing music (their voice parts). They should present evidence of reasonably demanding recent choral performance experience. Most Yale alumni members sang as students with the Yale Glee Club, one or more of the a cappella groups, or with other choral groups such as the Russian Chorus. Singing family members and singing friends should have had similar campus and post-campus choral experiences.

**Repertoire**

Most tours focus on a single major core work; the 2011 tour featured Ralph Vaughan Williams’ *Dona Nobis Pacem*. Added to the repertoire are appropriate works for the countries and cultures we are visiting, as well as a series of traditional American works—spirituals, folk songs, *Yale Songbook* and Yale Glee Club arrangements, and more.

**Learning and Memorizing the Music**

A full packet of music is sent to each participant two or three months prior to departure. Music markings are posted on the YAC Website before the first rehearsal. Because we perform most of our repertoire without music (the exception is usually the tour’s major work), each singer is responsible for memorizing the concert repertoire before the tour begins. For the past several years, voice part tracks and performance recordings of each work have been posted on the YAC Members website to aid singers’ memorization of the repertoire.
Rehearsal Expectations
Generally, Jeff Douma or his designee conducts three or four pre-trip Saturday rehearsals (9:30-4:30) in New York City; on occasion a rehearsal is held on the west coast for the convenience of those living far from New York. Attendance at these rehearsals is extremely valuable both for the singers, who are expected to have learned much of the music before the tour begins, and for the conductor, who can begin to learn the vocal resources with which he or she will be working. Significant time during the first days of the tour will be devoted largely to rehearsing the whole chorus, accompanying orchestras, and other musical elements of the tour.

Participation in pre-tour rehearsals is an implicit part of each YAC singer’s commitment to the Tour’s musical success.

Although most YAC singers are by definition amateurs, the chorus is expected to adhere to professional rehearsal and performance standards. Rehearsals begin on time and are considered working occasions, not social events.

Stamina
Singing with YAC can be physically as well as musically demanding. Pre-tour rehearsals require six or more hours of singing; on-site rehearsals and performances can require standing extensively, negotiating risers, and other feats of extra-musical agility. YAC singers must therefore be in “singing shape.”