



12th December 2019

What a wonderful year of glorious music making 2019 has been. For me it couldn't have been any better – both of my favourite Requiems were on the programme, Mozart and Brahms – both wonderful works which were enjoyed by the audience and the choir alike. We had many positive reactions from the audience after the two concerts. 2020 will be a very special year for the Symphony Choir of Johannesburg – **WE ARE TURNING 40!!** – they say that life begins at forty, so bring it on! We're planning a fantastic birthday concert to celebrate the event and hope to see you there.

Our Christmas concerts also went very well although we didn't have the usual full house for the Saturday concert. That is of course of concern to us, so it would be interesting to hear your comments and ideas – is 16:30 on a Saturday the wrong time? Should we have Sunday concerts two Sundays running? Should the Saturday concert be an evening concert? Do we have the right choice/mix of music? We would be grateful for your input.

As always we collected money for charity at the Christmas concerts, and I'm thrilled to tell you, that thanks to the generosity of the audience we collected R22 548 for Autism SA. Both members of the audience and choir members brought Christmas presents for the children at schools run by Autism SA. Wonderful. Thank you!

This will be the last Newsletter you'll receive from me. After a wonderful 10 years I have decided to hand over the reins to someone else. It has been a real joy and privilege to look after our very important and much loved 'family' of Patrons, Sponsors and Friends, and I know that I shall miss it. Jenny Gill will take over from January 2020 and I know you'll be in very good hands. Both Jenny and I (+ Debbie) will be at the Patrons, Sponsors and Friends table on February 2nd for the Beethoven 9th so I can introduce her to you.

As we are now at the end of 2019 it is time for me to thank you for your support throughout the year and to invite you to renew your financial commitment to the Symphony Choir of Johannesburg.

As you're well aware staging quality choral concerts is an expensive undertaking these days, and though the choir members do not receive any remuneration, the cost of the orchestra, venue, soloists, advertising, etc.etc. are all expenses which must be met – and which don't get less as the years go by – and we seldom manage to break even, even when we fill the house, so **our supporters are extremely important to us and we are most grateful to anyone who is supporting the choir financially.** Our financial supporters make it possible for us not only to present top quality performances of well known and well loved choral works, with professional soloists and orchestra, but also to indulge ourselves – and hopefully you too – by presenting equally exciting performances of works not so often heard. The Beethoven 9th is an example – we last performed it in 1997, way back in the City Hall days. It is a work which needs a very large orchestra and exceptionally good soloists + a choir which can cope with Beethoven's demanding writing. We can do it! We're looking forward to presenting it to you on 2nd February.

We always strive to keep the Patron, Sponsor and Friend contributions at a reasonable level, but inflation is out of our control and the Committee has found it necessary to increase the contributions for 2020.

The contributions are calculated on a pro-rata basis and all are therefore renewable in January each year.

For 2020 the contributions for the three categories of financial supporter are as follows:

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- 1) FRIEND: R 1 600+ per annum (i.e. for the year ending 31 December 2020) – check change of benefits
 - 2) SPONSOR: R 3 760+ per annum (i.e. for the year ending 31 December 2020)
 - 3) PATRON: R 18 630+ per annum (i.e. for the year ending 31 December 2020)

Payment options are:

- i) a cheque made out to 'The Symphony Choir of Johannesburg'
- ii) a direct deposit into the choir's bank account,
- iii) a monthly stop order

The choir's banking details are as follows:

Symphony Choir of Johannesburg
Nedbank
Branch Code: 146 905 (Business Northrand)
Current a/c: 146 909 5130

If you choose a direct deposit, please state your **name** and **PATRON/ SPONSOR/ FRIEND** – (whichever is applicable) in the deposit reference section. Please forward your POP by fax or e-mail to 011 447 5819 / news@symphonychoirofjohannesburg.co.za.

If you choose to give your support through a monthly stop order running for 10 months (Patron R 1 863 per month, Sponsor R 376 per month, Friend R 160 per month) please inform us accordingly also stating your status as PATRON, SPONSOR or FRIEND.

The benefits that come with financial support of the choir are, as you know, substantial:

Patrons receive ten (10) tickets for each choir produced concert (maximum 50 tickets per year),

Sponsors receive two (2) tickets for each choir produced concert (maximum 10 tickets per year), and

Friends receive four (4) tickets per year for any choir produced concert - use the four together or separately as you wish.

As you will notice you now get 4 tickets per year as a FRIEND but you don't pay double of this year's price!

The tickets are all in the top price range (R345 in 2020), so you will always get the best seats. As always you'll receive a *free programme, and refreshments during the intervals at our concerts* You will also receive regular Newsletters to keep you informed of what's happening, and be able to *book your seats in advance and collect your tickets in the foyer before each concert*, thus saving you time and effort. Finally, the names of our financial supporters are published in our concert programmes and on our website. For our Patrons with company logos displayed on the website there's the extra bonus of a hyperlink to their website!

These are still very good deals indeed, e.g. sponsorship is R 3 760 – but your benefits amount to 10 tickets @ 345 + 5 programmes @ 20 + 10 refreshments @ 55 which adds up to R 4 410

As you know these benefits apply only to the concerts that the choir itself stages, not concerts which we perform for other organizations (e.g. Last Night of the Proms which is a charity concert for Lifeline).

And now to the very exciting concerts to look forward to from your favourite choir in 2020. NOTE THAT LIKE THIS YEAR THE FIRST CONCERT IS IN FEBRUARY!!

Sunday, 02 February @ 15:00 – L van Beethoven – 9th Symphony (the Choral Symphony)

Good Friday, 10 April @ 18:00 – G A Rossini – Stabat Mater

Saturday, 30 May @ 19:30 – Last Night of the Proms - *charity concert – not part of the ticketing schedule*

Sunday, 31 May @ 15:00 – Last Night of the Proms - *charity concert – not part of the ticketing schedule*

Sunday, 02 August @ 15:00 – Symphony Choir of Johannesburg 40th Birthday Concert

Sunday, 04 October @ 15:00 – L van Beethoven – Missa Solemnis

Saturday, 05 December @ 16:30 Christmas with Richard C

Sunday, 06 December @ 15:00 Christmas with Richard C

The choir will also sing the Beethoven Missa Solemnis in Cape Town on Saturday 31 October @ 20:00 in the Cape Town City Hall. The two performances of the Missa Solemnis are a joint venture between the Philharmonia Choir of Cape Town and the Symphony Choir of Johannesburg.

- yet again a wonderful programme of well known and well loved choral works which have stood the test of time. It's perhaps not a bad idea to remember the old masters – they are always popular.

All in all a very exciting year to look forward to. SO – book the dates in your diary straight away so you don't miss out.

Booking for these concerts is through Debbie (082 853 9709 or scj@worldonline.co.za) or Jenny Gill on 082 451 6050, Ron Gill on 083 308 5429 or news@symphonychoirofjohannesburg.co.za.

Please remember that booking is essential – it makes the collection of your tickets so much easier, all neatly organized and quick. And remember if you already now know which concerts you'll attend – hopefully all of them – you can book for them right now in one go. Should something come up which means you cannot attend an already booked concert just let us know, it's that easy.

We thank you once again for your generous support of the Choir. It is greatly appreciated!

Yours sincerely, on behalf of the Symphony Choir of Johannesburg,

Kate Pape

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