

## 2009 Singer Survey Result

Throughout the 2009-2010 season, the Master Chorale ("MC") is in a unique position to renew/rejuvenate itself due to the unusual situation of having an interim conductor. The tone of this year's survey was much more anticipatory, conciliatory and hopeful compared to last year's survey. The depressive, negative and angry comments as noted in previous surveys have disappeared. This revelation affords the chorus a new opportunity to focus entirely on maintaining its position as the best chorus in Florida and formulating its goals and path for the next decade. The hiring of a new Conductor will enhance the Chorus' ability to masterfully present to the local community and across borders, the excellence, quality performances and superb rendition of Masters' compositions. In spite of the economic climate that has gripped the entire nation, the 2008-2009 season was a great accomplishment for both the organization and the singers; the 2009-2010 forecasts a season of change, presentations of new compositions with The Florida Orchestra and a re-birth of the MC under the directions of a new director.

Results of this survey are used for grant applications and corporate financial support. Trustees of the Board also review the comments to learn where things may need to change, improve, or are just great the way they are. Exploring the singers' ideas to ensure artistic excellence of the Master Chorale is critical to the success of the organization. We thank the 98 singers who completed the survey, for taking the time to express their ideas and goals in order to ensure that the MC offers excellent quality performances, obtains a renowned reputation in the Tampa Bay area and reaches out beyond our local community.

### The Master Chorale's 2009-2010 Goals

**Goal One:           Ensure that the Master Chorale's programs are of the highest artistic quality and consistent with its vision, mission and values.**

- \* The great majority of the Chorus liked or loved the 2008-2009 season (a phenomenally high percentage, in spite of the precarious situation in the arts community and lack or reduced funding);
- \* Sixty percent of the singers thought the music selection for the concerts as appropriate. In addition, 30% thought the season was challenging, but were able to master the selections;
- \* The grand Masters were suggested as possible concerts such as Brahms, Beethoven, Mozart, Bach but also lesser known works such as Dunufle's *Requiem*, John Rutter's *Requiem*, Derric Johnson, Britten's *Requiem*, Copland, etc. This demonstrates the versatility of the chorus and its desire to bring new renditions of lesser known composers to the community;
- \* Musical challenge, high quality chorus, a passion for singing beautiful music, premiere choral ensemble, stimulate artistic nature, etc., are all descriptions of why singers continue to participate in the Master Chorale;
- \* An overwhelming majority of the singers (70.2%) sing with either other groups or in their church;
- \* The primary reason 57% of the singers sing with the MC is because they love to sing in a high quality chorus. An additional 20 % of the singers identified singing with a professional orchestra as their primary reason to sing in the MC.
- \* A very high percentage of singers (63%) have been singing from 10 to over 21 years some type of choral music.

**Goal Two:           Logistics – Ensure that there is a proper mix of demands on the singers and that they be distributed evenly.**

- \* Approximately 37.3 percent drive between -0-20 miles, 33.6 between 21 and 40 miles and 28.5 between 41 and 71 miles, which is an indication that most singers will go out of their way and drive long distances to pursue their passion of singing;
- \* Over sixty percent are between the age of 41 and 65, suggesting a more mature number of singers;
- \* The majority of the singers are Caucasian;
- \* 80% of the singers have a 4 year college education or higher (4 yr 37.9%, Masters 29.5% and Doctorate 12.6%)
- \* Over sixty percent do not have a degree in music but have a love of classical music that compensates for their lack of formal music education;
- \* 67% of the singers joined prior to 2008 which provides consistency in the number of singers and is an indication that the MC is able to attract singers who remain steady in their dedication to singing;
- \* 82.0% (74.5% last year) would like the overseas trip to be every other year or every 3 years;

- \* Europe, Brazil, Australia, Japan, and China are destinations the singers would like to travel to (even a trip to New York).

**Goal Three: Improve exchange of information and communication with the singers to provide adequate guidance for singing.**

- \* Their pursuit of excellence leads them to require no talking, no texting, and better preparation during rehearsals;
- \* A common complaint is that some singers are still not ready by concert week and don't know their music;
- \* The chorus likes variety; they prefer to be challenged to learn new compositions rather than repeat the same pieces. There are so many other compositions by so many composers that could be brought to the community.
- \* The singers ask that members be committed for the entire season; they request that absent members during rehearsals not be allowed to sing at concerts;
- \* A very high percentage of the singers (85%) thought that the audition process met their expectations;
- \* Some of the more seasoned singers do not believe auditioning every year should be mandatory; however, it was also expressed the audition process needs to be required of all singers, even those who have been singing for years, in order to identify changes in voice and tone.
- \* 40% of the singers (or they identified a friend or family member) would offer volunteer assistance to the MC. They would be willing to assist with office duties, ushering, selling CD's, selling tickets, etc. The desire to help has been consistent from the singers year after year;
- \* The majority of the singers feel that the MC requires about the right amount of time;
- \* A total of 83.4% of the singers expressed a desire for more socializing opportunities. Perhaps forming a social committee to organize events outside of rehearsal time should be explored.
- \* The singers continue to work on their own rehearsing. 48.4% indicated that they spend an average of 1.2 hours per week getting prepared;
- \* 85.4% (down from 91.3% last year) indicated that they found resources useful on the singer's section of the website;
- \* Over seventy percent thought the online marked scores were helpful;
- \* The singers are very serious about the time they devote to singing and want to concentrate during rehearsals; they ask that the level of talk be reduced by everyone;
- \* The singers requested more sectional rehearsals (same request as last year).

**The Master Chorale's Core Values:**

- Artistic Excellence:** Achieving the highest standards for both repertoire and performance.
- Dedication:** Sharing the joy of choral music through a community of dedicated singers, staff and volunteers.
- Collaboration:** Fostering rewarding partnerships with individual artists, artistic and educational organizations, businesses.
- Education:** Pursuing the highest artistic standards through ongoing learning and teaching.
- Community Service:** Enriching the world in which we live through music outreach and service.
- Diversity:** Celebrating the diversity of our music, singers, audiences and community.
- Integrity:** Operating an effective and trustworthy organization as stewards for the resources provided to us.