

ChoirWorks

ChoirWorks is an auditioned classical choir based in Brisbane Australia, a place called Meanjin by the Turrbal and Yuggera First Nation's people whose links with this beautiful Queensland riverside land go back more than 32,000 years.

ChoirWorks has taken the celebration of music from this sub-tropical home of rich and endless Aboriginal culture to a diverse range of venues including St Mark's Basilica in Venice, the Christmas Night Markets in Prague, Basilica de la Sagrada Família in Barcelona, the 600 year old Cathedral Primada in Toledo, Canadian Parliament in Ottawa and Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris.

Founded in 1996 as an outreach project of St Andrew's Uniting Church on the corner of Ann and Creek Streets in Brisbane City where the choir was based, it sang under various iterations of the name *Brisbane Concert Choir*. During the Covid pandemic the choir began rehearsing at The Old Museum in Bowen Hills and in 2023 became *ChoirWorks*.

Dr Debra Shearer-Dirié has led ChoirWorks on its universal journey since becoming Director of Music in 2005. John Woods, with an international career in piano, is accompanist.

The choir's repertoire has classical music at its core but is diverse and ranges from a cappella to full symphonic works, across Renaissance madrigals, choral concertos, African-American spirituals, Australian compositions, popular classical works by modern composers, and some more obscure from centuries past. The choir has a history of commissioning new works, especially for Anzac Day concerts during the lead-up to the 100th anniversaries of the Gallipoli Landing in 2015 and The Armistice in 2018.

The styles of engagement are vast. The choir performed live before an audience of 2000 for National Geographic at its Brisbane screening of Disney's international tour of *Symphony For Our World* in the Convention Centre, sang commissioned music for the opening of Brisbane Writers Festival at the Gallery of Modern Art, and in a collaboration with The University of Queensland Music School at the Brisbane Concert Hall performed the Verdi *Requiem* under international conductor Dane Lam. The choir also staged a concert in a winery at Stanthorpe, performs for private weddings and other small commercial engagements, and does Christmas carolling in prominent Brisbane corporate venues.

The choir is owned by its 60-70 singers via an annual subscription and it hires the professional services of a Director of Music and accompanist. All singers are volunteers who elect a management committee which includes the Director of Music. The choir is a registered Not-For-Profit Incorporation, has an ABN, is a registered charity, and has DGR Status so donors can claim tax deductibility.

In September 2024 ChoirWorks is planning a 14-day concert tour through Portugal and Spain, beginning in Lisbon and ending in Barcelona. This will be the choir's first international tour since the Covid pandemic, although it has a tradition of touring overseas every third year.

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