



ROYAL  
OPERA  
HOUSE

# **ROYAL OPERA EXTRA CHORUS**

## **Open auditions**

## **Information Pack**



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## 1. Who are we?

The Royal Opera, under the direction of Antonio Pappano and Director of Opera Oliver Mears, is one of the world's leading opera companies. Based in the iconic Covent Garden theatre, it is renowned both for its outstanding performances of traditional opera and for commissioning new works by today's leading opera composers, from Judith Weir and Mark-Anthony Turnage to George Benjamin and Kaija Saariaho.

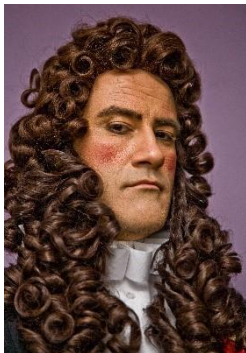
Some of the world's most famous singers have performed with the Company, including Joyce DiDonato, Renée Fleming, Pretty Yende, Juan Diego Flórez, Angel Blue, Angela Gheorghiu, Jonas Kaufmann, Anna Netrebko and Bryn Terfel.

The Royal Opera Chorus was created in 1946 for the re-opening of the Royal Opera House after World War II. Known then as the Covent Garden Opera Chorus, it first appeared during December the same year in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, staged together with Sadler's Wells Ballet (now The Royal Ballet). Its first full-scale opera production was *Carmen* in January 1947.

The Chorus is the backbone of The Royal Opera and, under the leadership of Chorus Director William Spaulding and his deputy Genevieve Ellis, performs in an average of 20 productions each season in a wide repertoire ranging from Baroque through to newly commissioned works. The chorus is frequently augmented by as many as 80 freelance singers when larger productions are mounted.

As most operas are performed in the original language (Italian, French, German, Russian, Czech) the chorus works closely with language coaches during the rehearsal period.

The chorus will often be performing in two or three productions in the evenings while rehearsing the staging or learning the music of several other operas during the day.



*'As a long-time member of the permanent chorus, I know the value of a reliable team of extras. The demands of the larger operas mean that we have to rely on our friends and colleagues in the extra chorus. They support everything we do and the Royal Opera Chorus just wouldn't have the reputation it does without them.'*

*John Mulroy – Chorus representative*





## **2. How do I apply for an Extra Chorus role?**

Following the re-opening of the ROH after the lockdowns, we will be offering engagements as Extra Chorus members to join our regular chorus in productions.

To that end we are seeking to hear and meet with suitably experienced singers who would be interested in being included on our list of Extra Choristers.

We are looking for individuals with some experience as professional classical singers, although exceptionally talented amateurs will also be considered.

Experience with opera repertoire is certainly an advantage, as is the willingness to learn to sing in the main opera languages.

The responsibility of the chorus is not just to sing but to play a leading role in the drama of every opera, so some acting experience is advantageous.

To apply please fill out the online application form on the vacancies section of our website. You can save the application form online and come back to it before you submit it. We will then review applications received and invite successful applicants to attend an audition.



## **3. ROH commitment to diversity**

The ROH's aim is for many more people to enjoy and engage with exceptional ballet and opera. We believe that greater diversity of outlook, practice and people will help create better, richer, more relevant and more dynamic artforms that appeal to a wider range of people.

The Royal Opera House is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment in which everyone can thrive. We ensure we operate a fair recruitment and selection process. We particularly welcome applications from those who are currently under-represented in our workforce, particularly those who are ethnically diverse, and/or are disabled.

As a disability confident employer, we guarantee to interview or audition all disabled applicants who meet the essential minimum criteria for our vacancies.

#### **4. What does the audition process involve?**

Auditions will be held from 1<sup>st</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> June and will require applicants to prepare:

- Two opera arias, contrasting in style and language (not English)
- Two chorus passages from a list of six such passages provided in advance.

To ensure that we operate a scrupulously fair process the first round of auditions will be conducted 'unsighted', with the panel screened from auditionees. There may be further rounds which will include some acting elements.



#### **5. What happens if I am accepted onto the Extra Chorus list?**

When planning the coming season (rehearsals run from August – July) our chorus director and chorus manager will determine what opportunities for Extra Chorus work there are for each voice type. They will then decide from among those on the Extra Chorus list who to offer work to, based on their suitability for each specific engagement.

We understand that many of our Extra Chorus are combining work with us with their own freelance singing career, studying or work elsewhere. You are totally at liberty to decline any offers of work which are made. However, having accepted work with us, we need a commitment for the whole of the planned production.

The pattern of Extra Chorus work opportunities however is unpredictable. Some Seasons there is a requirement for lots of Extra Chorus members; at other times demand is low.

## 6. Health & Safety

The health and safety of all Royal Opera House employees, visitors, contractors, artists and members of the public is paramount, and we aim to foster a culture of continuous improvement and a positive approach to safety. We want to communicate clearly to staff and enable them to do their best work, knowing they are supported in creating a safe working environment for all.



## 7. What are the ROH values and behaviours?

Everyone who works at the ROH in any role is expected to commit to upholding the following values through their behaviour:

Treat everyone with <b>Respect</b>	Embrace and celebrate the different contributions that we all bring to the ROH
Be <b>Open</b>	Take a fresh look – be open minded, share, engage, learn and question – and empower others to do the same
Value the <b>Highest standards</b>	We all play an important part to deliver extraordinary experiences



## 8. Terms and conditions

Detailed terms and conditions will be confirmed when a contract is issued. Some of the key points of the contract include:

- Each engagement is conditional on attendance at all rehearsal and performance sessions.
- Extra Choristers are paid one week in arrears, paid each Friday.

### **Other benefits**

- Extra Chorus fees include entitlement to paid annual leave in accordance with Equity rules.
- Eligible Extra Chorus will be enrolled into the Royal Opera House NEST Pension Scheme.



## FAQ

### **I was on the Extra Chorus list prior to the COVID pandemic, do I need to reapply?**

No. If you are already on the ROH Extra Chorus list you don't need to apply again as we already have your details.

### **Will I get a contract?**

If you are offered Extra Chorus work you will receive a contract for each specific Extra Chorus engagement (production), confirming the dates and times of rehearsals and performances.

### **Will I have to complete a probationary period?**

There is no formal probationary period for members of the Extra Chorus.

### **How can I get a permanent Chorus job?**

Full-time chorister positions are advertised on our website and are subject to a rigorous recruitment process open to all. We strongly support and encourage anyone who is working for the ROH as an Extra Chorister to apply when these vacancies occur.

### **Will I get free tickets to performances?**

Occasionally Extra Choristers may be offered tickets for general (dress) rehearsals. However, this is subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed.

### **Where do I go if I have any questions?**

If you have any questions about how to apply, please email: [hr.recruitment@roh.org.uk](mailto:hr.recruitment@roh.org.uk)

**We look forward to receiving your application**

