

Magnolia Chorale commits to inclusion and action to combat racism and inequity

For more than 30 years, Magnolia Chorale has shared the joy of choral singing with our neighbors and community. In the wake of the terrible murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and so many others, we have examined our history. Our geographic location, in a region of Seattle once subject to racial restrictive housing covenants and outside the redline; the demographics of our membership, strongly white; and the nature of the Western European choral tradition, the product of historically white cultures, have kept us from seeing the realities of systemic racism that affect us and our community.

We state with humility that we have much to learn. We acknowledge the importance of dialogue with singers and musical professionals in the Black, Indigenous, People of Color*, and other marginalized communities. We will endeavor to reach out and welcome musicians from those communities with respect and enthusiasm. We affirm the importance of concrete actions to undo racism and inequity as an organization and as part of the broader choral community.

We commit to the following:

- Strive for representation across the concert season of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color choral music while being sensitive to issues of cultural appropriation. Bring in experts to help us understand and respectfully learn about nonwhite musical traditions, historical context and theory. Start to build relationships with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color composers, conductors, instrumentalists and soloists through mutually beneficial collaborations, prioritizing racial diversity in all hiring and contracting, and potentially developing a member exchange program.
- Work to diversify membership through affirming outreach, advertising, and scholarship opportunities.
- Question choral norms, understanding that self-reflection leads to growth.
- Research local issues of segregation, inequity, and income inequality that adversely affect Black, Indigenous and People of Color musical communities, and seek ways of offering concrete support and solidarity to those communities.
- Continue to make regular space in our programming and board activities to question, reflect on, and challenge our complicity in systems of racism and oppression.

Magnolia Chorale, Seattle, Washington, December 2020

*We are intentionally using the term “Black, Indigenous, and People of Color” (often abbreviated as BIPOC). The term acknowledges that systemic racism affects all people of color, but that Black and Indigenous people bear the greatest impacts.