NEW VOICES BAY AREA: TIGQ CHORUS

Frequently Asked Questions

**When and where does the chorus meet?**
The chorus rehearses weekly on Sunday evenings, 7:00-8:30 pm (following the Community Music Center’s semester calendar.) Our launch event and first rehearsal is September 16, 2018!

Rehearsals take place at the San Francisco Community Music Center, Mission Branch: 544 Capp Street, San Francisco, between 20th and 21st. CMC is easily accessible by BART and various Muni bus lines.

**Is the location wheelchair accessible?**
Yes. NVBA rehearses in the Concert Hall, which is wheelchair accessible and has an adjacent accessible restroom. There are some other areas of the facility that are unfortunately not accessible. We don’t anticipate that NVBA singers will be using those areas; but we are committed to disability-related accommodations as needed. Please don’t hesitate to let us know about accommodation needs.

**Is there an audition?**
There is no formal audition. However Reuben, our director, will want to hear you sing by yourself for a few minutes (not in front of the group, don’t worry!) This is to make sure he knows the unique voice of every person in the chorus, so that he can help your voice grow and stay healthy. Over the first few weeks of rehearsals, the director will listen to everyone, to find out where your highest and lowest notes are, what kinds of singing you most enjoy, and what section you will be most comfortable singing in. There is nothing you need to prepare ahead of time.

You’re also encouraged to talk with the director at that time, if you choose, about your unique vocal situation and how it relates to who you are.

**What kind of commitment do I have to make in order to participate?**
All singers are expected to attend the entire rehearsal every week, as well as all performances and special events (3-5 per year.) Specific schedules will be available for each semester, and all dates will be on the calendar well ahead of time.

Occasionally, a singer will have a valid reason to miss a rehearsal. Singers may miss up to two rehearsals each semester; if you think you’ll miss more, please speak with the director. Consistent attendance is critical for any choral group to learn, develop our sound and make great music.

**How much does it cost to join?**
There is no cost. To make sure there would be no financial barriers for any trans, intersex or gender-queer singer, CMC has worked to make NVBA a tuition-free program. There may be very small costs occasionally, such as bus fare to a performance location or purchasing a chorus T-shirt to wear for performances.
Although there is no tuition or membership cost, if you can afford to make a donation of any size to support the chorus, it is deeply appreciated. Your donation helps CMC to continue to welcome all TIGQ singers, regardless of financial means. To donate to support NVBA, you can donate to Community Music Center and note that you want the donation to support the NVBA chorus.

**What if I have no singing experience? Or I don’t read music?**
No experience or background in music is required! There are various ways that the music can be learned, for example through recordings or practicing with others on your same part. Our wonderful accompanist is at every rehearsal to help us out on the piano. Even if you’ve never sung before in your life, come try it out! Whatever your experience level is, you won’t be alone.

**What if I have lots of singing experience?**
If you’re an experienced singer, we will be thrilled you have you sing with NVBA. We know that there will be a wide range of experience levels in the group: some of the singers who are signed up have professional careers as vocalists. Others have never sung in a chorus before. If you have strong vocal and musical skills, NVBA is excited to provide additional opportunities for challenging music and small-ensemble and solo opportunities.

**How do I know if I would fit in a trans / intersex / genderqueer group?**
If you identify as transgender, intersex, or gender-queer, non-conforming or non-binary, we welcome you to sing with us. Our community is very diverse in how we think of ourselves, the words we use, how we look and how we sound. Some of us have been on a journey with gender for many years; some of us are intersex; some of us are just beginning to explore who we are and how we want to live. No questions asked here—if being trans, intersex or non-binary is part of your experience, we want you to join us.

**What if I’m taking hormones or otherwise transitioning physically? Can I still participate?**
ABSOLUTELY! The entire purpose of New Voices Bay Area is to provide an opportunity for all members of the trans, intersex and gender-queer communities to keep singing, or start singing—no matter where you are in your journey. If your voice is changing, you will be singing with others having a similar experience. For singers with changing voices, the director will check in with you periodically, to hear where your voice might be now, to make sure that you are singing in a section of the chorus that’s healthy and comfortable for you, and to provide extra support in making adjustments as necessary.

**I’m not trans / intersex / gender-queer, but I want to support NVBA! How can I help?**
If you are cisgender (not trans, intersex, or gender-queer), we welcome and deeply appreciate your support! There is always need for donations and volunteers. To donate to support NVBA, you can donate to Community Music Center and note that you want the donation to support the NVBA chorus. If you’d like to volunteer your time or skills to the chorus, please contact rzellman@sfcmc.org We are grateful for your enthusiasm and generosity.

**What kind of music will we sing?**
NVBA plans to sing a wide variety of music, from spirituals and freedom songs to queer pop anthems, classical music and folk music from around the world...and some of the plans will depend on our
singers! Bring your ideas, your interests and your passions about what kind of music you want to work on and perform for the wider community.

**When and where will the chorus perform?**
The chorus will perform at both trans community events and at diverse venues and occasions in the Bay Area. We want to uplift our own TIGQ and LGBTQ communities with our music, as well as represent the TIGQ communities in a wide variety of settings, and collaborate with other trans and queer arts organizations.

**Who can I contact with other questions?**
NVBA’s director, Reuben Zellman, is very happy to talk with you about any questions, ideas or concerns. Come chat with him during rehearsal break or after rehearsal; or e-mail him at rzellman@sfcmc.org
Don’t miss our chorus launch event and first rehearsal! Sunday September 16, 2018, 7:00 – 8:30 pm.