Choirs Ontario

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Guidelines for the Management of Responsible Choral Libraries

The Canadian choral community - including choirs, conductors, publishers, Provincial Choral Organizations (PCOs), and other music organizations and enterprises - has an important role to play in developing and maintaining a culture of appreciation of and support for all choral artists. This support should also include those who create music for choirs to perform: composers, arrangers, lyricists, publishers, and others.

Responsibly run choral lending libraries provide many benefits to the choral community. Having scores available in libraries increases the reach of compositions and the visibility of composers and other creators. Libraries help make choral performances possible, resulting in increased performance royalties. PCO programs, which also contribute to increased library holdings when music is purchased, assist in the discovery and curation of great choral music, and can showcase composers and compositions on an ongoing basis.

Lending libraries also help to keep older scores and composers in the public mind. They enable choirs to try a piece of music that they may later purchase. They enable choirs to discover, perform, and grow to love composers whose work would otherwise be inaccessible to them, and thereby assist in building support and appreciation for choral creators.

As responsible and ethical libraries that lend choral music, the Choirs Ontario choral lending library makes the following commitments:

- Encourage the inclusion of Canadian compositions in choral programming
- Remind borrowing choirs that SOCAN/Entandem* fees must be paid for choral performances so that royalties go back to composers/artists
- Remind borrowing choirs that copying music, by photocopying or otherwise, is illegal
- Strongly encourage choirs to purchase music as their means allow, and in particular, to support local and Canadian composers and arrangers.
- Encourage choirs to build lasting relationships with and commission arrangers and composers to create new choral music
- Inform and encourage strict adherence to licences for purchased digital music (when PCOs purchase digital music and/or when choirs print music using PCO equipment)
- Limit the number of titles choirs may borrow for a concert, so that borrowed music supplements a choir's concert repertoire and does not form the entirety of the program
- Comply with Canadian legislation and regulations regarding copyright and intellectual property, particularly when it comes to digital music lending, if applicable
- Operate so as not to profit financially from lending libraries
- Share these responsible and ethical library usage guidelines on our website and distribute them to borrowers on an annual basis.

Entandem administers licences for music performed at live concerts, shows and festivals on behalf of SOCAN. If recorded music is also used as ambiance, in the background or to compliment the live show, then a RE:SOUND music licence is also required. You can obtain both RE:SOUND and SOCAN music licences at https://www.entandemlicensing.com/. Licence fees collected for live concert performances are distributed to the rights holders of the music performed at the show. Music programs and setlists are submitted to SOCAN by artists and their representatives, which are then used by SOCAN to distribute the royalties to the applicable rights holders (whether domestic or international creators). If you would like to submit a setlist for a performance at your show, please email it to concertsetlist@entandemlicensing.com.

These guidelines have been created in cooperation with other PCOs across Canada. Any questions about these guidelines should be directed to info@choirsontario.org.