

The Conductor: Musical Director - or Simply a Time-Keeper?

How amateur choristers view
the role of the choral conductor

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Within the Western music tradition, the role of the conductor as a leader of the choral organization is a relatively recent innovation. What is now often considered the most important function within the choral ensemble - a leadership role - used to be that of merely a “time-keeper” who would keep track of the meter. This article looks at the function of the choral conductor from the perspective of choral members and examines the nature of an (often) complex relationship. This lecture is based on a recent article co-authored with Njörður Sigurjónsson, PhD, assistant professor at Bifröst University. The article presents preliminary results from a qualitative study of an amateur community choir in Southwest England, where the members discussed their ideal conductor.

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The Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts
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