

Singers' Club appoints new artistic director



The [Singers' Club of Cleveland](#) has named local conductor and musician Don VerKuilen as its new artistic director, effective June 1.

VerKuilen is the Director of Music and Liturgy at Saint Rocco Parish on Cleveland's West Side, where he serves as organist and directs all choirs, including a schola cantorum he has created for the return of the Latin Mass.

VerKuilen has directed choirs across the United States as guest conductor and has held choral directing positions in prominent churches, including Pulaski Heights Methodist in Little

Rock, Arkansas, and The Old Stone Church, Cleveland. He has performed as concert organist across the United States and Europe. VerKuilen began his organ and conducting studies at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and is continuing those studies at The Cleveland Institute of Music.

VerKuilen succeeds Natalie Mallis, who led the Club from 2016 to 2019 and is now director of choral programs at the University of South Florida. Longtime Club member and assistant conductor Bob Bellisario served as interim artistic director for the 2019-20 season.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Club suspended rehearsals in early March and cancelled its scheduled March and May concerts. The Singers' Club is tentatively planning its 2020-21 season to start in the fall if conditions permit, Club President Bill Davis said. "We will follow the guidance of public health experts as we decide when to resume rehearsals and concerts. We are excited about Don's leadership and eager to get back to singing, but the health of our members and audiences must remain our top concern. As the season takes shape, we will keep patrons updated by email, social media, our website, and other channels."

Formed in 1891, the 60-member Club is the city's oldest performing arts organization. It rehearses at the Breen Center for the Performing Arts at St. Ignatius High School and performs there and at other venues.

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