

COLCHESTER OPERATIC  
SOCIETY



RULES

2015

# COLCHESTER OPERATIC SOCIETY

## RULES

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# Colchester Operatic Society Rules

## **Title**

1. The Society shall be called “Colchester Operatic Society”

## **Objects**

2.a) To advance the education of the public in the dramatic and operatic arts and to further the development of public appreciation and taste in the said arts;

2.b) To assist and further such charitable institutions and charitable purposes as the Executive Committee may from time to time determine.

## **Powers**

3. In furtherance of the objects, but not otherwise, the Society through its Executive Committee shall have the following powers:-

(a) To promote plays, dramas, comedies, musicals, operas, operettas, concerts and other dramatic and operatic works.

(b) To purchase, acquire and obtain interests in the copyright of or the right to perform or show any such works.

(c) To purchase or otherwise acquire plant machinery, furniture, fixings, scenery and all other necessary effects.

(d) To raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, donation and otherwise.

(e) To appoint a suitable Youth Liaison Officer thus ensuring that in accordance with current legislation and guidelines, matrons/chaperones are provided as necessary for all Society business following the “Good Practice” laid down in said guidelines.

(f) To do all such other things as shall further the objects of the Society.

## **Constitution**

4. The Society shall consist of Junior Members (11 to 23 yrs.), Members (16 yrs. and upwards), a President and may also include as Life Members such other persons as shall have rendered special services to the Society. All, except Junior Members, shall be entitled to vote and to be nominated for election to serve on the Executive Committee.

## **Management**

5. The Society shall be managed by an Executive Committee consisting of the following, namely:- Chairman, Business Manager, Treasurer and Secretary (Officers), together with no less than eight other members.

A Management Committee, in accordance with Supplemental Rules hereto attached, shall manage a Junior Section, called CO2.

## **Executive Committee's Powers**

6. The Executive Committee shall have the power to decide any question arising from, or not covered by, these Rules (except matters specifically stated therein as requiring to be dealt with by the Society in a General Meeting), and shall make, maintain and publish all necessary orders, regulations and bye-laws in connection therewith.

## **Executive Committee Meetings**

7. The first meeting of the Executive Committee shall be called by the Secretary and shall be held within 21 days after the Annual General Meeting. All subsequent Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be called by the Secretary in accordance with any resolution to that effect passed by the Executive Committee, and failing any such resolution at the discretion of the Chairman and Secretary. Seven shall form a quorum.

## **Executive Committee Responsibilities**

8. At its first meeting after election, the Executive Committee shall:-

(a) Elect a Vice Chairman for the year and, if felt necessary, an Assistant Secretary for a like period.

(b) Appoint a Chairman for CO2.

(c) Determine those Society functions (other than those covered by the Officers) which require individual oversight, and appoint Committee members to undertake the resulting responsibilities. e.g. Stage Direction, Membership, Publicity, etc. All such responsibilities, together with those of the Officers, shall be clearly defined and published as Executive Committee orders.

## **Appointment of Sub-Committees**

9. The Executive Committee shall have power to appoint Sub-Committees under such conditions as the Executive Committee shall decide. The terms of reference, including aims, responsibilities, powers, reporting style and membership of such Sub-Committees shall be agreed by the Executive Committee and minuted. For any Sub-Committee required to continue in being from year to year, those same terms of reference etc. shall be published as an Executive Committee order.

## **Retirement of Executive Committee**

10. The Executive Committee and the Auditors shall retire annually but each individual shall be eligible for re-election. Nominees for election as Officers of the Society must have (a) served as elected (not co-opted) Executive Committee for not less than five years or (b) been past Officers of the Society or (c) been recommended by the Executive Committee. The names of the candidates for those positions (other than existing Executive Members who have served for the whole of the past Society year) shall (supported by six Members signatures for each candidate) be sent to the Secretary in writing 21 days at least before the Annual General Meeting, and if more names are proposed than the number required to fill the vacancies and sufficient names

are not withdrawn at or before such Meeting, the election shall be by ballot. If all the before-mentioned positions shall not be filled at such Meeting or any casual vacancy shall thereafter be filled at the complete discretion of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall continue to hold office until the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting at which its successors are elected.

### **Finance**

**11.** The funds of the Society shall be applied solely to the stated objects of the Society.

**12.** The Society shall be conducted as a non-profit making concern and it shall be the general rule that no Officer or Member of the Society either directly or indirectly shall benefit financially by virtue of membership. Subject to the following proviso no Officer or Member of the Society shall receive payment directly or indirectly for service to the Society or for other than legitimate expenses incurred in its work.

However, the Executive Committee may, at its discretion, pay an honorarium to an individual Officer or Member of the Society in respect of a function performed by that person for the Society at the specific request of the Executive Committee. Where the Committee decides to pay an honorarium the level shall be separately determined in each case and shall not in any case be paid unless agreed by at least two thirds of the members of the Executive Committee.

### **Financial Year**

**13.** The financial year of the Society shall commence on 1<sup>st</sup> April and an annual profit and loss account and balance sheet shall be prepared within two calendar months after 31<sup>st</sup> March of each year.

### **Recovery of Money Due to The Society**

**14.** All monies due and owing to the Society including the Subscription of Members shall be recoverable at law in the name of the Secretary.

### **President**

**15.** The President shall be appointed by invitation of the Executive Committee.

### **Life Members**

**16.** Life Members may be appointed by the Executive Committee in recognition of their outstanding service to the Society over a long period of years and shall be notified to the Society at the Annual General Meeting.

### **Application for Membership**

**17.** Application for Membership shall be made in writing, signed by the Applicant and sent to the Membership Secretary who shall submit the same to the Executive Committee for its decision. The Membership Secretary shall ensure that written notice of the decision is sent to the applicant.

## **Expulsion of Members**

**18.** The Executive Committee may, by a two thirds majority of its members, vote to remove from the list of Members the name of any Member

(a) who has persistently neglected the work undertaken by the Society,  
or

(b) whose conduct it considers likely to endanger the welfare of the Society.

## **Subscriptions**

**19.** The annual subscription to the Society shall be determined from year to year by the Annual General Meeting.

**20.** First annual subscriptions shall become due and be paid to the Membership Secretary on receipt of notice of acceptance from the Membership Secretary. Members elected for the first time shall pay a full subscription.

**21.** Subsequent annual subscriptions shall become due on 1<sup>st</sup> April in each year and shall be paid no later than 30<sup>th</sup> April in the same year.

## **Non-Payment of Subscriptions**

**22.** Any Member whose annual subscription is not paid by 30th June in the year it becomes due shall be liable to be deleted from the membership list of the Society by ordinary resolution of the Executive Committee. No Member whose current subscription remains unpaid shall be eligible to partake of the benefits of the Society, in particular to take part in any committee, general meeting, audition or production. When an EGM or an AGM fall between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 30<sup>th</sup> June attendance at these meetings will only be permitted upon receipt of membership fee due as technically membership will have lapsed within these dates.

## **Application for Membership (Lapsed Past Members)**

**23.** An individual who has been a Member of the Society, but whose membership has lapsed, and wishes to re-join must apply for membership.

## **Annual General Meeting**

**24.** The Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held in the month of June. The business to be transacted shall be:

(a) To receive the report of the Executive Committee and the duly audited accounts for the past year.

(b) To receive the report on CO2 activities for the past year.

(c) To elect Officers, Executive Committee Members and Auditors for the ensuing year.

(d) To fix subscriptions and fees for the following year.

(e) Other business notified to Members in advance of the meeting as an agenda item. Such items may be introduced by the Executive Committee or on receipt by the Secretary of a request signed by 6 Members entitled to vote. Such requests must be in the hands of the Secretary 21 days before the date of the meeting.

**25.** Following the close of the AGM, a period shall be allowed for an Open Forum, during which any Member present may raise any subject pertaining to the Society, and discussion may follow. No voting shall be allowed, and no decisions may be taken, but a note shall be taken of issues raised, and included on the Agenda of an Executive Committee meeting within two months for consideration and subsequent resolution.

### **Extraordinary General Meeting**

**26.** An EGM of the Society may be called at any time at the discretion of the Executive Committee and shall be called within 21 days after the receipt by the Secretary of a requisition in writing to that effect, stating the business of the meeting and signed by at least 20% of the Membership. Every notice calling such meeting shall specify the business for which the meeting is to be convened and no other business shall be transacted at such meeting.

### **Quorum at General Meeting**

**27.** No business other than the formal adjournment of the Meeting shall be transacted at any General Meeting unless a quorum be present and such quorum shall consist of not less than 30 present and entitled to vote.

### **Resolution at General Meeting**

**28.** Unless otherwise provided by these Rules all resolutions brought forward at a General Meeting shall be decided by a bare majority of votes properly recorded at such Meeting and in the case of an equality of votes the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

### **Notice of General Meeting**

**29.** A printed notice of every General Meeting, accompanied in the case of the Annual General Meeting by the duly audited Statement of Accounts for the past year, particulars of nominations for the Executive Committee and Auditors and any other business arising from Rules 23 and 33 to be transacted, shall be sent to each member at least 14 days prior to the day fixed for such Meeting.

### **Selection of Cast**

**30.** The cast for any production shall be selected by the Executive Committee or by a Cast Selection Committee appointed by the Executive Committee and comprising Production Director, Musical Director and such other members as may be considered appropriate. The membership shall be given the opportunity to appoint one of their number to observe, but not to take part in, the conduct and actions of the Cast Selection Committee. The Executive Committee shall have power to make a cast selection from outside the Society, paying for such services if necessary. Each cast member will be subject to a probationary period after selection and may be replaced if, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, he or she does not measure up to their allotted role.

### **Obligations of Cast**

**31.** Cast Members shall, to the best of their ability, play the Parts assigned to them whether principal or chorus and obey the directions given at all rehearsals and performances. No Member shall be eligible to take part in any performance

if in the opinion of the Executive Committee the Member is not proficient or has not attended sufficient of the rehearsals for which the member has been called. Failure to attend three rehearsals without providing an explanation deemed satisfactory by the Executive Committee shall necessitate the forfeit of the assigned part by the offending Member. All members of the company shall exhibit polite consideration to all involved with the production affording all participants, both severally and equally, due courtesy and respect at all times.

### **Register of Attendance**

**32.** The Secretary shall be responsible for ensuring that a record of attendance is kept at committee meetings and rehearsals. Individuals including members and paid production staff may only be admitted to rehearsals with the permission of the Executive Committee.

### **Dissolution of Society**

**33.** The Society shall only be dissolved by resolution passed by a majority of at least five sixths of the Members present and voting at a Special General Meeting called for the purpose of considering such dissolution. In the event of dissolution any balance of cash remaining in hand after the realisation of assets and payments of debts shall not be distributed among the Members of the Society but shall be applied for such charitable purposes similar to those of the Society or be paid, distributed or transferred to such charitable institutions or institution as the Executive Committee with the consent of the Meeting shall determine.

### **Alteration to Rules**

**34.** Alteration of these Rules may be made only at a General Meeting and must be introduced by the Executive Committee, or upon receipt by the Secretary of a written notice of the proposed alteration, or of one substantially to the like effect, signed by 10 members entitled to vote. Such written notice shall have been given to the Secretary 21 days prior to such Meeting. The Secretary shall give 14 days notice thereof to the Members and the resolution embodying such proposed alteration shall be carried by a majority of at least two thirds of the votes recorded at the Meeting. Upon acceptance of any alteration to the Society rules at a General Meeting said rule will be in force following a period of 28 days.

## Colchester Operatic Society Junior Section Supplementary Rules

### **Title**

1. The section shall be called 'Colchester Operatic Society 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition' Abbreviated 'CO2'.

### **Aims and Objectives**

2. To support and uphold the Aims and Objectives of Colchester Operatic Society (C.O.S.) with emphasis on the promotion of interest in all aspects of the theatre for young people and to act as a feeder for the Society. To ensure that in accordance with current legislation and guidelines matrons/chaperones are provided as necessary for all Society business following the "Good Practice" laid down in said guidelines. To Produce an annual musical show and to perform it in front of the general public in a venue to suit the production.

### **Management**

3. CO2 shall be managed by a Management Committee consisting of an elected member of the Executive Committee as the appointed Chairperson and other members deemed necessary by the Executive Committee. Officers of the Society shall be deemed ex-officio members of the Management Committee.

### **Election of Management Committee**

4. Following the election of the CO2 Chairperson by the Executive the rest of the Management Committee shall be invited or appointed by the CO2 Chairperson following ratification by the Executive Committee at or before the first meeting of the Management Committee. A Members Representative can be elected annually by the CO2 membership at the first full company call subsequent to the formation of the Management Committee. Each member will be given due notice of the election. Each candidate must be a CO2 member and must be 16 years old or over. Each candidate must be proposed and seconded and supported by a further eight members signatures. All Management Committee members must be approved by the Executive Committee.

### **Meetings**

5. Meetings shall be held monthly and shall be called by the Secretary. Five members shall form a quorum.

6. All business conducted by the Management Committee shall be reported to the Executive Committee via written minutes before the next Executive Committee meeting.

### **Finance**

7. All business and funding of CO2 shall be under the direction and subject to the financial rulings of the Executive Committee.

## **Membership**

**8.** The age group will be from 11 to 23 years with flexibility at each end of the age range according to casting requirements and as directed by the Management Committee. Membership, as a Junior Member of C.O.S. shall be attained

(a) by paying a non returnable audition fee to audition for a part in the main yearly CO2 production plus the balance of the membership fee as determined at the A.G.M. if the audition is successful.

(b) applying to the Secretary if membership is desired in order to take part in associated activities.

Membership of C.O.S. covers CO2 membership. When CO2 members become 16 years of age they may automatically become members of C.O.S. upon payment of any additional subscription required, unless they choose to remain as Junior Members and restrict their participation to CO2 activities.

The CO2 Management Committee, by two thirds of its members, may terminate or refuse membership of CO2.

## **Selection of Show**

**9.** The Management Committee will select and recommend the next production from a short list of shows, taking into consideration, before the final recommendation, casting, venue, cost, etc. The resulting recommendation must be ratified by the Executive Committee.

## **Auditions**

**10.** Auditions will be held at a time and venue as directed by the Management Committee. For the benefit and in consideration of the age of the auditionees, auditions will be closed. The conduct of the auditions will be under the direction of the Auditioning Panel, which will consist of the Chairman, Director, Musical Director, Director's Assistant and other members agreed by the Executive Committee. The Auditioning Panel shall have the power to ask individuals to re-audition and/or to invite players outside the age group to play parts not cast from the original auditions, with the agreement of the Executive Committee.

## **Obligations of Cast**

**11.** Cast Members shall, to the best of their ability, play the Parts assigned to them whether principal or chorus and obey the directions given at all rehearsals and performances. All cast members will be subject to a probationary period and if in the opinion of the Management Committee the Member is not proficient or has not attended sufficient of the rehearsals for which the member has been called they will be taken out of the cast and replaced as required. Failure to attend three rehearsals without providing an explanation deemed satisfactory by the CO2 Committee shall necessitate the forfeit of the assigned part by the offending Member. All members of the company shall exhibit polite consideration to all involved with the production affording all participants, both severally and equally, due courtesy and respect at all times.

### **Register of Attendance**

**12.** The Membership Secretary shall keep a record of attendance at rehearsals.

### **Alteration to Rules**

**13.** No changes may be made to these rules unless agreed by the Executive Committee, upon which the changes will be placed before the next A.G.M. in the manner described in Rule 34 in the main body of the rules.