

Timetable

Friday 24th August

- 14:00 **Registration opens**
- 15:15 **Tea and opening of Exhibition**
- 16:30-17:45
- 1a) **Welcome sing with Paul Mealor** Paul Mealor was catapulted to international attention when his motet, *Ubi caritas*, was performed at the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton in April 2011. In November last year *Wherever You Are*, written for Gareth Malone and the Military Wives Choir, was premiered at the Royal Albert Hall and became the Christmas No. 1. Paul is primarily a composer for the voice and this is a great chance to explore some of his new repertoire with him.
- 1b) **Practical vocal session with Richard Frostick, vocal leader** Richard Frostick leads an opening session for all those working with young choirs who would like more ideas on how to provide the maximum challenge for their singers with engaging music that can be quickly learned. Using songs from around the world, he will show how rote-learning and reading are both essential skills and how they can complement each other.
- 1c) **Young Conductors' Course** Session I. With Amy Bebbington.
- 18:00 **Regional meetings**
- 18:45 **Chair's Reception in the exhibition hall**
- 19:30 **Dinner and singing** Traditional Yorkshire fare, with local beer available. During and after dinner, enjoy learning and singing some traditional Sheffield pub carols with Janet Russell, an established voice workshop and community choir leader, a songwriter and a member of the Natural Voice Practitioners Network. Discover more about this unique singing heritage which is still very much alive and kicking.

Saturday 25th August

- 09:00 **Exhibition opens**
- 2a) **Warm Up with Rhiannon Gayle** Join Harrogate Rock Up and Sing's founder Rhiannon Gayle for an energizing start to Saturday. In just over two years Rhiannon's family of choirs has grown to over 400 members. With Rock, Motown, Gospel and three to six-part Swing, Rhiannon's ethos of 'no auditions, no need to read music' inspires experienced choristers and novices alike.
- 2b) **Exhibition time**
- 09:45
- 3a) **Publisher repertoire session – SATB voices** Discover new repertoire from Boosey and Hawkes, Faber Music, Music Sales, Oxford University Press and Peters Edition with one of the UK's most versatile conductors, David Lawrence.
- 3b) **Tips and repertoire for Early Years and Key Stage One** With Jo McNally. Repertoire for all those working with our youngest singers, along with tips for developing activity around singing that will stimulate learning in children as well as making it fun.
- 3c) **Build the repertoire, build choir morale** Composer and conductor Alison West shows how clever choice of challenging and unusual repertoire – including commissions – can boost amateur singers' musicality, self-confidence and enjoyment. Drawing on her experience leading the highly regarded Hepton Singers, Alison shows how particular pieces have galvanised her choir.
- 3d) **High Jazz with Bob Chilcott** Composer Bob Chilcott introduces two new jazz-inspired works for upper voices: his *Nidaros Jazz Mass* and *Jazz Songs of Innocence*. Fun to sing and hear, these catchy pieces suit both adult SA singers and abler children's choirs.
- 3e) **Vocal health throughout life for singers and teachers with Jenevora Williams** All voice users suffer from ill health at some time. Come and find out how to minimise the vocal fatigue suffered as a result of overuse or misuse. You can also learn about the effects of medications, environmental factors, ageing, and of course – stress.
- 3f) **Community singing workshop** in Leeds Town Hall with Ken Burton (continues until 13:00). A workshop for anyone enthusiastic about singing in general, or who wants to learn more about leading gospel music. (No extra charge for delegates, but those attending will need to arrange their own transport. Separate booking form available for anyone wishing to book for the workshop who isn't a delegate).
- 11:00 **Coffee and Exhibition**
- 11:30
- 4a) **Banks Music Publications repertoire session with Simon Lindley** Organist & Master of the Music at Leeds Parish Church Simon Lindley introduces new repertoire from Banks Music Publications.

- 4b) **One Thousand Boys: How high *can* they sing, how high do they *want* to sing?** In 2009, Professor Martin Ashley's book *How High Should Boys Sing?* was published, based on an eight year sociological study of 10 - 14 year old boys' engagement with singing. Since then, a unique digital audio database of 1000 boys' voices has been compiled. The session will cover all the major theories of managing young adolescent voices, illustrated by the database recordings and will reveal exactly how high (and low) boys *can* currently sing, with suggestions of how to accommodate this. But it will go further and reveal how high boys *want* to sing. Prejudices and preconceptions should be left outside. You may be surprised to find out what boys currently really think.
- 4c) **Demon barbershop** Sally McLean has achieved fantastic success with the Leeds-based White Rosettes ladies' barbershop chorus; in the first of two sessions she introduces barbershop singing generally, revealing what we can all take from the style and introduce into our own choirs and genres. Whatever your choir and whatever its specialism, barbershop can be remarkably helpful!
- 4d) **Rock up and sing!** With Rhiannon Gayle This fast-paced Rock Up and Sing! workshop gets new singers harmonising in no time. Using the fun pop song 'Hot Hot Hot' to demonstrate how to build people's confidence in rhythm and harmony, the workshop promises to be packed full of innovative tips and techniques helping to see how quickly and effectively a three part song can be learned and performed.
- 4e) **Young Conductors' course** Session 2.
- 4f) **Community singing workshop** in Leeds Town Hall with Ken Burton (continued)
- 12:45 **Lunch and Exhibition time,
plus a lunchtime recital by the award-winning ladies' barbershop group, the White Rosettes**
- 14:30
- 5a) **Publisher repertoire session – music from exhibitor publishers and composers.** Explore the wide range of repertoire available from our exhibitor publishers and composers with *abcd* tutor and conductor Keith Orrell.
- 5b) **Making a cohesive whole – the Olympic Youth Choir** Youth Music Voices is a youth choir unlike any other in the UK. With its own style, individuality and leadership, the ensemble will produce vibrant and exciting music throughout the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad. Creative Director Richard Frostick describes how the group came to be and how its leaders managed to blend voices and styles and repertoire from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.
- 5c) **'Ring' in the singing voice** Vocal projection, which is probably most commonly associated with the operatic singing voice, is the way in which opera singers manage to be heard over an orchestra in performance. Acoustically known as the 'singer's formant', vocal projection exhibits a peak in an area where the ear is most sensitive, meaning that the human voice is able to 'focus' sound energy into a region in frequency that we hear best. Recent work on 'ring' in children's voices indicates that they too have such a peak but in a different frequency region. Professor David Howard from the University of York and singing teacher Jenevora Williams discuss the origin of 'ring', supported by magnetic resonance images (MRI) of the vocal system of adults.
- 5d) **Singing in colour with Sally McLean** In a second session, Sally and the White Rosettes concentrate on using barbershop techniques to improve sound, timbre and colour and how these can be adapted to any choir.
- 5e) **Advanced skills *abcd*** core tutor Jo McNally shares useful tips on rehearsal technique, score preparation and gesture for the more experienced conductor.
- 15:45 **Tea and Exhibition**
- 16:15
- 6a) **Meet the composer – Cecilia McDowall** How better to get to know new repertoire than to meet its composer? We are lucky to have the prolific, award-winning composer Cecilia McDowall to introduce her own works, described by International Record Review as having 'a communicative gift that is very rare in modern music'.
- 6b) **Singing technique for young voices – a practical approach** Are you giving your young singers the best tools for strong and healthy singing? This session with singing teacher and Vocal Advisor for the National Youth Choir Jenevora Williams will explore the vocal possibilities and limitations at each stage of development, from pre-school to undergraduate. Learning a technique for any physical skill is merely finding a way to perform the task with the minimum of effort – let's help our young singers to make it easier for themselves!
- 6c) **Star chamber choirs** How do you make a good chamber choir a great chamber choir? Director of Music at Uppingham School, Stephen Williams has done it with the York Chapter House Choir. Careful voice blending and rigorous rehearsal techniques are part of the secret. But there's so much more – come and find out!
- 6d) **Publisher repertoire session** Mandy Miller, Head of Music at Lochgelly High School in Fife, focuses on works published by Alfred Music, the world's largest educational music publisher.
- 6e) **Young Conductors' course** Session 3
- 1745 **Dinner and close of exhibition**
- 19:45 **Gala Concert in Leeds Town Hall.** Featuring Lindley Junior School Choir (conductor Alison North), the Chapter House Choir, York (conductor Stephen Williams) and Vocado (Sweden). Plus a performance from the community choir formed at the morning workshop in the Town Hall, led by Ken Burton.

Sunday 26th August

09:00 **Exhibition opens**

Annual General Meeting of *abcd*

10:00

- 7a) **Publisher repertoire session – upper voices** Conductor of the award-winning Taplow Choirs and well-known for her work with schools and upper voices, Gillian Dibden leads delegates through the latest repertoire from Boosey and Hawkes, Faber Music, Music Sales, Oxford University Press and Peters Edition.
- 7b) **Inner-city voices** As the recently appointed Director of the Diocese of Leeds' acclaimed Schools Singing Programme, Tom Leech manages one of the most innovative and successful choral programmes in the country, involving 50 schools and over 1800 children weekly, with its choirs broadcasting regularly on BBC radio and enjoying competition and concert success. Find out how this grew from nothing, and how this model of provision works both musically and financially.
- 7c) **Meet the choir – Vocado Ensemble** The chance to meet our visiting international ensemble, hear them sing again, find out more about their repertoire and how they achieve the unique sound which won them the Swedish Choral Society's prestigious *Choir of the Year* award 2011.
- 7d) **Tools, tips and crazy thoughts from across the Pond** Performer, manager, entrepreneur and seasoned concert warrior, Iris Derke is Co-Founder and General Director of Distinguished Concerts International, New York, with a passion for creating a new cultural landscape for modern times. She is convinced that thinking outside the box and using tools like Facebook and Twitter can revolutionise programming, PR, and audience building anywhere in the world. Use her insights to benefit your choir, your audience and your community.
- 7e) **Conducting choirs and orchestras – the challenges and opportunities** A practical session with Conductor and Artistic Adviser of the Leeds Festival Chorus for nearly forty years, Simon Wright, and string quartet. Conducting orchestras and choirs together poses challenges, but the opportunities for sublime music-making are immense, too. Delegates can opt to be observers or active participants – there will be three places available for those who would like podium time and music will be made available in advance. Repertoire will include arias, recitatives and chorus work.

11:15

Coffee and Exhibition

11:45

- 8a) **Step away from the edge!** We hear lots about how to achieve success, but what happens when... choirs turn bad? Musical Director Tom Leech discusses his own mistakes, and how Bradford Festival Choral Society, a historic choir on the brink of collapse, was rescued and revived.
- 8b) **From Great Exodus of boys to promised land of boys: the story of Cambiata North West** Many in the choral world will be familiar with the concept if not the term. Professor Martin Ashley will demonstrate with the aid of sound and video recordings made during rehearsals, and the candid assistance of some live boys from the choir, the principles behind Cambiata North West. CNW (to its friends) is a regional changing voice choir organised by *abcd* in the North West. CNW's mission is to keep boys singing through putting into practice what research tells us about boys and their voices. The workshop will dispose of the myth that "boys don't sing" and set out the steps that could be taken anywhere in the country to ensure that boys keep singing. If, as a result of this workshop, there comes into existence a Cambiata South East, a Cambiata East Midlands, or a Cambiata anywhere else, its presenter will be a happy man!
- 8c) **Tuning in a cappella singing** When singing a *cappella* repertoire, singers tend to tune in non-equal temperament with pure fifths and thirds, which results in a more musically *consonant* sound. It turns out that this effect can be one of the causes of overall pitch drift if the music itself changes key. Professor David Howard explores the nature of the effect itself and discusses its relevance to choral performance with reference to items from the *a cappella* repertoire.
- 8d) **Popular Voiceworks** Brighten up your Sunday morning as the multi-talented jazz educator and choral director Charlie Beale introduces Popular Voiceworks 2; the second volume of popular songs in OUP's practical Voiceworks series. With a huge range of popular styles, from unison to four parts, it's a great way of introducing jazz, R&B, funk, disco, blues and more to your 'young-at-heart' singing group!
- 8e) **Young Conductors' course** Final session

13:00

Lunch and last chance for exhibition

14:30

Exhibition closes

Final session with Bob Chilcott. A chance to discover and sing some new repertoire with Bob Chilcott, who focuses on Alan Bullard's *Wondrous Cross* and his own *On Christmas Night*. *Wondrous Cross* is a sequence for choir and soloists, interspersed with readings, based on Christ's seven last words. Premiered in Texas in 2010, *On Christmas Night* features known and new material plus the distinctive Chilcott touch.

16:00

Tea and farewells

Music trade exhibition – open from 3.30pm Friday to 2.30pm Sunday

The extensive music-trade exhibition is a major part of Convention and a great place to browse, get ideas, plan new repertoire, plan tours abroad for your choir, book workshops, buy equipment and much more. All the major music publishers, music tour agents and many other music specialists will be there so you can benefit from their knowledge and experience; it's well worth earmarking both browsing and buying time in your weekend schedule.

23 August (3pm) to 24 August (4pm)

Pre-Convention Conducting Course

Mandy Miller, Keith Orrell and **Vivien Pike** lead this practical course looking at rehearsal and conducting techniques for leaders of all kinds of choir – no minimum experience required. The focus includes:

- non-verbal communication
- rehearsal techniques
- conducting technique

Delegates can opt to participate or attend as observers and a repertoire list is sent out in advance.

Young Conductors' Course 24-26 August, led by Amy Bebbington.

Open to all aged 18 to 25 who do not currently earn their living from conducting, this course runs in parallel with Convention, giving students the opportunity to attend some sessions of the Convention, as well as taking part in conducting technique sessions. There will be group and individual tuition in the basics of choir training and conducting, work on rehearsal and performance technique. It is a practical, hands-on course, with the emphasis on informality and tutoring in a small group.

This timetable is correct as of 31 July 2012 but **abcd** reserves the right to make alterations or substitutions should circumstances make this necessary.