

**abcd 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama**  
**Timetable**

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> August**

- 14:00      **Registration opens**  
                **Young Conductors' course opening session with Amy Bebbington**
- 15:15      **Opening of Exhibition and tea**
- 16.15-17.15
- 1a)      **Welcome Sing with Jeff Howard**, pianist, singer, conductor, arranger and vocal coach for RWCMD and Welsh National Opera, of Welsh-related repertoire, traditional and contemporary.
  - 1b)      **Sing and shine with body and soul** Now living in New York, **Sanna Valvanne** is an innovative conductor from Finland, specialising in children's and youth choirs. She combines in a unique way movement, drama and improvisation with vocal expression and music performance. In this session she'll explore how these different elements can help us and our students sing, make music, and express ourselves freely and introduce elements such as warming up through playful vocal and group dynamic exercises, working with songs from around the world by engaging singers in the process of interpreting and performing music in new and interesting ways and developing confident young performers.
  - 1c)      **Young Conductors' course continues**
- 17:30      **Regional meetings** The opportunity to meet and network with others leading singers in the same field as you. Exchange problems and find solutions!
- 18.00      Welcome by **London Welsh Male Voice Choir**, conductor Edward-Rhys Harry
- 18:15      **Chair's Reception**
- 19:00      **Dinner and close of exhibition**
- 20:30-22:00      **Jazz with Will Todd** Join in a post-dinner sing-through of Will's wonderful *Mass in Blue* with the help of **Cardiff Polyphonic Choir** and the Will Todd Ensemble with Bethany Halliday.

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> August**

- 09:00      **Exhibition opens**
- 09:30-10:30
- 2a)      **Male Voice Choir masterclass** **Neil Ferris** joins **Edward-Rhys Harry** and his **London Welsh Male Voice Choir** for a masterclass conducting session. This is for current male voice choir conductors and for those of you interested in leading a male-voice choir yourself. Masterclass places now filled; observer delegates very welcome.
  - 2b)      **Repertoire reading session – secondary, youth and community music** One of the UK's most versatile conductors, **David Lawrence**, takes delegates through new repertoire for secondary schools, youth choirs and community choirs singing in unison or a limited number of parts. There will also be a look at repertoire which involves young choirs and adult choirs together.
  - 2c)      **Same choir, better sound** As vocal coach for the Cardiff Polyphonic Choir and with thirty years' experience in teaching singing, **Alison Ling** will show you how you can arm yourself with basic singing techniques in order to make good, amateur choirs sound spectacularly better.
  - 2d)      **Arranging for choirs with limited resources** with **Jonathan Wikeley**. Particularly aimed at those leading church choirs, but relevant to anyone with a small number of voices. Jonathan will look at how to rearrange material without, ideally, having to write anything out in musical notation, so you can perform it with flexible resources, and will also give simple tips on how to dress up hymns to use as simple anthems for your choir, and to make the general hymn-singing more vibrant and exciting.
- 10:45-11:45
- 3a)      **Intermediate conductors' masterclass** The first of two Intermediate level sessions, with three conductors in each for 15-20 minutes' individual tuition, along with observer delegates. **Adrian Partington** – Artistic Director, BBC National Chorus of Wales – has chosen short, contrasting, pieces, sent out in advance, for the conductors to prepare to work with members of **Cardiff Polyphonic Choir**, including music by Whitacre, Todd, Bruckner and Rachmaninov.
  - 3b)      **Repertoire reading session – SATB chamber music** One of the most respected names in Welsh choral music, **John Hugh Thomas**, leads this session of new repertoire for chamber choirs. Founder and conductor for more than 40 years of the Swansea Bach Choir and founder of the BBC National Chorus of Wales, he is currently a member of the School of Music at Cardiff University and conducts the University Chamber Choir.



- 3c) **Engaging the Community** **Janice Thompson**, musical director and coordinator of the community production *Swindon the Opera* in 2012, and Chairman of the Association of Teachers of Singing (AOTOS), presents ways to promote and maintain the joy of singing in your local community. She'll give you ideas on how to structure group tuition in order to inspire and raise standards, and illustrate how this core work can be expanded into large-scale productions.
- 3d) **Male Voice Choirs – are they really dying out?** Old-fashioned, hackneyed – why is this a common perception of the male-voice choral repertoire? This fascinating session will challenge this view, looking also at recruitment for male-voice choirs and their current membership composition. The **London Welsh Male Voice Choir** and their conductor **Edward-Rhys Harry** will show off the remarkably broad repertoire available from publishers today.
- 11:45 **Coffee and Exhibition**
- 12:15-13:15
- 4a) **Intermediate conductors' masterclass** The second of our two Intermediate level sessions, with three conductors in each for 15-20 minutes' individual tuition, along with observer delegates. **Adrian Partington** has chosen short, contrasting, pieces, sent out in advance, for the conductors to prepare to work with members of **Cardiff Polyphonic Choir**, including music by Whitacre, Todd, Bruckner and Rachmaninov.
- 4b) **Meet the composer – Karl Jenkins** We're delighted to welcome Karl Jenkins in this, his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday year. His motets, recently recorded by Polyphony and Stephen Layton, show a lesser-known side to this well-loved and much-performed Welsh composer's work, and there will be the chance to sing through them, as well as hearing Karl in conversation with Adrian Peacock, singer, conductor and producer of the new motets CD.
- 4c) **Singing Playgrounds' Singing Games** This practical session will be full of the project's most enjoyable singing games for use in the primary school. **Rebecca Ledgard**, Director of Education for **Ex Cathedra**, created Singing Playgrounds in 2004. The project was designed and developed with her colleague Ula Weber and has since been implemented in over 500 schools across the UK and also in South East Asia by Rebecca, Ula and other members of Ex Cathedra's award winning education team. The project trains a group of children to lead singing games in the playground for their peers. Singing Playgrounds won Best Musical Initiative from Music Teacher Magazine in 2014.
- 4d) **Young Conductors' course** Session 2.
- 13:15 **Lunch and Exhibition time**
- 15:00-16:00
- 5a) **Less gesticulation, more articulation!** From Denmark, a fine classical musician and Associate Fellow of Saïd Business School, Oxford, **Peter Hanke** is a world expert on the linkage between classical musicianship and corporate leadership. He presents a hands-on workshop, featuring MA choral-conducting students from the RWCMD, on how to develop your musical leadership in order to inspire your choir, focusing on the need for a deeper relationship between conductor and ensemble and how to build a shared responsibility for progress. Repertoire includes music by Stanford, Elgar, Tallis and Seiber.
- 5b) **Repertoire reading session – music for primary aged children** Discover refreshing new repertoire for young singers with **Nia Llewelyn Jones**. Nia was the first student in the collaborative choral conducting course between Birmingham University and the CBSO, led by Simon Halsey. She is now Singing Development Leader at Gloucester Cathedral, enthusing and inspiring young people to sing, as well as working with the Cathedral Choristers, the Cathedral Junior and Youth Choirs, and reaching out to the primary schools in the Diocese.
- 5c) **No need for notes?** An archaeologist & historian as well as a hugely-experienced singer and vocal coach, **Paul Deegan** gives a 'warts and all' insight into the weekly struggle to develop a basic musical vocabulary in an adult choir with no music-reading skills, using some ideas about language from Wittgenstein – an intensely musical personality himself.
- 5d) **Singing Shakespeare** An introduction to an exciting project directed by **David Wordsworth** & the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust that focuses on choral settings of texts by William Shakespeare, leading to a world-wide celebration in 2016, the 500th year of the death of the Bard. The session will include a reading of 'The Food of Love' (3 songs for SATB & piano) by Gary Carpenter, the first of many newly commissioned works that will appear throughout the next two years (there will be a further book for SATB choir, one for SSA choir and one for TTB choir, all with piano).
- 16:00 **Tea and Exhibition**
- 16:30-17:30
- 6a) **Less gesticulation, more articulation!** The second of **Peter Hanke's** hands-on workshops, featuring MA choral-conducting students from the RWCMD, on how to develop your musical leadership in order to inspire your choir, focusing on the need for a deeper relationship between conductor and ensemble and how to build a shared responsibility for progress. Repertoire includes music by Stanford, Elgar, Tallis and Seiber.

- 6b) **Repertoire reading session – music for large SATB choirs** Musical Director of Reading Bach Choir, Keele Bach Choir and Salford Choral Society, **Matthew Hamilton** is well placed to take delegates through this session of new repertoire for large SATB choirs.
- 6c) **Basic skills** Newly-appointed **abcd** conducting tutor **Katie Thomas** gives you the chance to brush up on some basic skills and to learn new ones, too. As a professional choral singer as well as a trained and hugely-experienced choral conductor, Katie will show you from a singer's point of view the techniques that successfully communicate what you want a choir to do.
- 6d) **Young Conductors' course** Session 3
- 17:30 **Exhibition time**
- 18:00 **Wine reception sponsored by DCINY to celebrate Karl Jenkins' 70<sup>th</sup> birthday**
- 18:30 **Dinner and close of exhibition**
- 19:45 **Gala Concert in the Dora Stoutzker Hall, RWCMD.** Featuring the Kyoto Echo Choir from Japan (conductor Keiichi Asai), and Côr y Wiber (conductor Angharad Mair Jones).
- Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> August**
- 09:00 **Exhibition opens**
- 09:00-10:00 **Annual General Meeting of abcd**
- 10:15
- 7a) **Advanced conductors' masterclass** The first of two Advanced level sessions, with three conductors in each for 15-20 minutes' individual tuition, along with observer delegates. **Paul Brough** – Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Singers – has chosen movements from the Fauré *Requiem* for the conductors to work with.
  - 7b) **Repertoire reading session – music for church choirs** Discover a wide range of new repertoire for all those working in churches, from the small village choir to large parish churches and beyond with **Adrian Partington**, Director of Music, Gloucester Cathedral.
  - 7c) **No need for notes?** Another chance to hear **Paul Deegan**'s 'warts and all' insight into the weekly struggle to develop a basic musical vocabulary in an adult choir with no music-reading skills, using some ideas about language from Wittgenstein – an intensely musical personality himself.
  - 7d) **Meet the choir – Kyoto Echo Choir** Over here especially for the **abcd** Convention, the Kyoto Echo Choir is one of Japan's most accomplished choral ensembles, Directed by their founder for over 50 years, the choir has amassed innumerable awards nationally and internationally. Here is a unique opportunity to hear more from them, watch them work with **Bob Chilcott** and their conductor Keiichi Asai, and find out more about their repertoire – with the opportunity to try some of it out too.
- 11:15 **Coffee and Exhibition**
- 11:45-12:45
- 8a) **Advanced conductors' masterclass** The second of our two Advanced level sessions, with three conductors in each for 15-20 minutes' individual tuition, along with observer delegates. **Paul Brough** has chosen movements from the Fauré *Requiem* for the conductors to work with.
  - 8b) **Introduction to Russian choral music** Originally from Moscow and a Graduate of the Tchaikovsky Conservatoire, **Irina Walters** has lived and taught in the UK since 1995. This session will give you the opportunity to sing a variety of compositions for choirs of various difficulty: from examples of Russian film music for High school choirs and Russian songs, arranged by Irina for a cappella choirs, to the advanced repertoire of Sergei Rachmaninov, Georgy Sviridov and Nikolai Sidelnikov, to name a few.
  - 8c) **Singing for the young, Paris-fashion** Originally from Sweden, **Sofi Jeannin** studied and taught at the Royal College of Music and Imperial College London. Since 2008 she has been Music Director of the Maîtrise de Radio France, for children aged 9 and upwards and through them she works with children from a wide range of backgrounds throughout Paris. In this session she explains some of the methods she uses and shares her ideas for repertoire.
  - 8d) **Composer forum** Your chance to hear some of Britain's most successful composers reveal the secrets of how they write and arrange pieces for choirs. Learn about the pleasures and perils of commissioning music, too. Chaired by **Bob Chilcott**, with composers **Gabriel Jackson**, **Paul Mealor** and **Roxanna Panufnik**.
- 13:00 **Lunch and last chance for exhibition**
- 14:30 **Exhibition closes**
- The American Effect – final session with Paul Mealor.** Described as *the most important composer...in Welsh choral music since William Mathias*, Paul leads a session both on his own compositions and on contemporary American composers including Morten Lauridsen, Eric Whitacre, Ola Gjeilo, Thomas LaVoy and John Hudson.
- 16:00 **Tea and farewells**

## **Music trade exhibition – open from 3.15pm 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; do earmark both browsing and buying time in your weekend schedule.

## **Running your choir – one-to-one surgeries with Making Music**

Need some administrative help and advice? Staff from Making Music will be on hand throughout the weekend to talk about any issues you may have, whether it's buying new staging, using social media to market your choir, communicating with your committee or you're thinking of starting a new choir. 30 minute individual slots will also be available on Saturday only to book at the **abcd** desk.

## **21 August (3pm) to 22 August (4pm)**

### **Pre-Convention Conducting Course**

**Peter Broadbent** and **Sarah Tenant-Flowers** lead this practical course looking at rehearsals and conducting techniques for leaders of all kinds of choir – no minimum experience required. Delegates can opt to participate or attend as observers and a repertoire list is sent out in advance. The focus includes:

- non-verbal communication
- rehearsal techniques
- conducting technique

For those conductors with more experience or who have already attended previous **abcd** courses, individual tuition will be available.

### **Young Conductors' Course 22-24 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 18 August 2014 but **abcd** reserves the right to make alterations or substitutions should circumstances make this necessary.