

Friday 26th August

- 14:00 **Registration opens**
Young Conductors' course opening session with Amy Bebbington and Mark Griffiths
- 15:15 **Opening of Exhibition and tea and cake, sponsored by Aldeburgh Music's Friday Afternoons**
- 16.15-17.15
- 1a) **Obtaining a quality sound in adult choirs** with **Deborah Miles-Johnson**. See how Debbie dramatically improves the sound of adult choirs – by experiencing her technique yourself as choir-member in a mock workshop. For twenty years BBC Symphony Chorus vocal coach, she has a rare gift for communicating technique clearly and in an effortlessly engaging way which leaves singers enthralled and enthused.
 - 1b) **Wake up your conducting!** With **Catherine Beddison**. Is your conducting on the sleepy side? Let Catherine show you how to add that extra sparkle, to galvanise and inspire your choir! Singer and conductor in her own right, Catherine is Head of Preparatory School Music, Cranleigh, Chief Executive of Sing for Pleasure, and works as a Senior Tutor for their Conductor Training Programme.
 - 1c) **Exploring music of different faiths and cultures** with **Jeremy Haneman**. This session will explore music for your choir from a variety of cultures and faiths including Arabic, Buddhist, Jewish and others. Suitable for beginners to more advanced choirs, the session will involve score-reading as well as improvisation and learning by ear and examining some of the advantages of programming music from non-Christian traditions in your concerts. Jeremy conducts the Mixed Up Chorus, an intercultural, intergenerational 80-voice choir.
 - 1d) **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!
- 18:15 **Chair's Reception** Meet and greet other delegates over a glass of wine.
- 19:00 **Dinner and close of exhibition**
- 20:30-21:45 **Christmas comes early at abcd!** Sing carols in August and plan that all important Christmas programme with the help of **Jo McNally** and **Jonathan Willcocks**. Newly-published repertoire for 2016 plus a tribute to our late President, the much-missed Sir David Willcocks.

Saturday 27th August

- 09:00 **Exhibition opens**
- 09:30-10:30
- 2a) **Choral tone: the anatomy of text.** With John Dickson and the Louisiana State University A Cappella Choir. Professor Dickson, Director of Choral Studies at Louisiana State University School of Music and an internationally-famed conducting master, illustrates the vital influence of text and style on choral tone. Choral music, he believes, contains the essence of the human experience and, using his superb LSU choir to sing music by contemporary US composers, John will convince you this is true.
 - 2b) **The science of the voice** with **Ann-Marie Speed**. As Professor, Vocal Faculty, Musical Theatre Course, Royal Academy of Music, Anne-Marie is one of the UK's most experienced teachers and trainers of the Estill Model, which develops vocal skills by teaching you how to become aware of, and then use, different parts of your vocal mechanism. Her session demonstrates the truth of Jo Estill's saying *"Everyone has a beautiful voice. You just have to know how to use it."*
 - 2c) **Repertoire reading session – music for SAB.** **Jonathan Willcocks** introduces newly published music specially designed for mixed voice choirs with limited forces, a situation that so many conductors find themselves in, whether permanently or when their regular singers are away.
 - 2d) **The importance of Pop (and how to get it right).** Ideas from Popchoir leader **Helen Hampton**. Many choirs now include at least some contemporary music in their repertoire, but with varying degrees of success. In this session, Helen will show you how to make pop music work for your choir, whatever their age group; how to avoid the common mistakes and give you hints and tips for making your choir sound chart-worthy.
 - 2e) **Young Conductors' course** Session 2.

10:45-11:45

- 3a) **Advanced conductors' masterclass.** Our Advanced level masterclass, with three conductors in each for 15-20 minutes' individual tuition, along with observer delegates. Over here for Convention, **Professor John Dickson** has chosen three short, contrasting, pieces for conductors to prepare to work with members of his Louisiana State University A Cappella Choir. This is a wonderful chance to conduct truly excellent, established choirs; to receive more details, email Penny Homer – penny.homer@abcd.org.uk – or see our website. A panel will choose those fortunate enough to take part.
- 3b) **Conquer stress: do less, achieve more!** With **Mark Smith**. Mark is a professional drummer who delivers remarkably effective, entertaining workshops on the management of stress. He explains how our minds function, letting us access our fullest potential. He advises companies and individuals on time management by teaching efficient thinking, reducing procrastination and time wasting and eliminating so-called "multi-tasking". For busy choral leaders his session is an absolute must!
- 3c) **Repertoire reading session – music for upper voice choirs** with **Sarah Quartel**. Canadian composer and conductor Sarah Quartel introduces new repertoire from our exhibitor publishers for upper voices of all ages – great for school, youth and ladies choirs.
- 3d) **Choral Futures: a healthy choral community?** What makes a healthy choral community? What happens to a community if a choir folds? What has changed in the last decade and what will change in the next? In this discussion session representatives including the Chair of Making Music, the General Secretary of the National Association of Choirs, Helen Hampton of Popchoir and **abcd** air their predictions and invite your views.

11:45

Coffee and Exhibition

12:15-13:15

- 4a) **Intermediate Level conductors' masterclass.** The first of two Intermediate level sessions, with three conductors in each for 15-20 minutes' individual tuition, along with observer delegates. **Alice Farnham** is Music Director of Welsh National Youth Opera and an ex-Oxford Organ Scholar, one of Britain's leading female conductors and passionate about encouraging women into the conducting profession. She has chosen short, contrasting, pieces, sent out in advance, for the conductors to prepare to work with members of the **Waynflete Singers**. A wonderful chance to conduct truly excellent, established choirs; to receive more details, email Penny Homer – penny.homer@abcd.org.uk – or see our website. A panel will choose those fortunate enough to take part.
- 4b) **Conquer stress: do less, achieve more!** With **Mark Smith**. Mark is a professional drummer who delivers remarkably effective, entertaining workshops on the management of stress. He explains how our minds function, letting us access our fullest potential. He advises companies and individuals on time management by teaching efficient thinking, reducing procrastination and time wasting and eliminating so-called "multi-tasking". For busy choral leaders his session is an absolute must! *Repeat of session 3b).*
- 4c) **Repertoire reading session – music by exhibitor composers.** Discover a wide range of new repertoire for all voice combinations from our many composer exhibitors, who this year are all introducing their own works – a unique opportunity to try out new repertoire and know exactly what the composer intended.
- 4d) **The story of Farnham Youth Choir.** With **David and Gillian Victor-Smith** and members of **Farnham Youth Choir**. For thirty years, Farnham Youth Choir under David's direction has been one of the UK's leading upper-voice choirs for twelve to eighteen year olds, winning fourteen international awards in the last five years alone. Hear the remarkable story of how the way a young choir was organised within the UK's education system led to international recognition. The session comprises an interview with David Victor-Smith, interspersed with singing by the choir, and gives insights into the secrets and challenges of running a young choir today. *NB this session runs until 1.30pm.*
- 4e) **Young Conductors' course** Session 3.

13:15

Lunch and Exhibition time

15:00-16:00

- 5a) **Intermediate Level 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. **Alice Farnham** is Music Director of Welsh National Youth Opera and an ex-Oxford Organ Scholar, one of Britain's leading female conductors and passionate about encouraging women into the conducting profession. She has chosen short, contrasting, pieces, sent out in advance, for the conductors to prepare to work with members of the **Waynflete Singers**. A wonderful chance to conduct truly excellent, established choirs; to receive more details, email Penny Homer – penny.homer@abcd.org.uk – or see our website. A panel will choose those fortunate enough to take part.
- 5b) **Never too young to sing well.** Good vocal health for young singers, with **Jo Tomlinson** and members of **Farnham Youth Choir**. As the incoming Director of Farnham Youth Choir and teacher of singing at Bedales School and the junior departments of the Royal College of Music and Trinity College, Jo knows how to obtain a quality sound from young voices. Helped by members of Farnham Youth Choir she shows just how it's done and the excellent results you can achieve with children's choirs.

5c) **Repertoire reading session – music for SATB with Mark Griffiths.** Mark is Musical Director of the prize-winning chamber choir Coro and has worked with numerous larger choruses, so is ideally placed to lead delegates through the latest publications for SATB choirs.

5d) **Typesetting your music scores** advice from **Alan Bullard, Mike Sheppard** and **Leslie East.** Two experienced composers show how conductors, composers and arrangers get the most out of music software, focusing on Sibelius (up to 7.0). Expert advice on setting up a template choral score and finalising a score to publication quality, supplemented by a Q and A session dealing with common problems. There is also the opportunity for one to one discussion with Alan and Mike during the weekend: see below for details.

16:00 **Tea and Exhibition**

16:30-17:30

6a) **Meet the composer – Sarah Quartel.** Over here from Canada especially for Convention, Sarah is an internationally-performed composer, conductor and educator with a fresh and exciting approach to choral singing, catering for singers of all abilities and experience. Last year Bob Chilcott conducted the premiere of her *Wide Open Spaces* at the American Choral Directors Association national conference in Salt Lake City. This is the chance to meet Sarah in person and to get to know her unforgettably poignant music.

6b) **Recording your choir with Ken Blair.** From the founder of the prestigious BMP recording company, everything you need to know about successful choir recording: why it pays you to have professional recording sessions, the recording process from start to finish, budgets, copyright issues and what to expect from the company you use.

6c) **Repertoire reading session – Sacred music.** Jeremy Haneman, Royal Opera House Community Chorus Director and founder conductor of the multi-faith Mixed Up Chorus, introduces newly published sacred repertoire, both liturgical and non-liturgical.

6d) **Singing and Wellbeing** A panel session focusing on how choral singing promotes physical, mental and social health; learn the latest research, likely future developments in this increasingly-important field, and the opportunities it gives choral leaders like you. Chaired by *Live Music Now's* Executive Director **Evan Dawson**, who are leading the *A Choir in every Care Home* project, with panellists including Kathryn Deane (Sound Sense) and Phoebe Cave (Singing For Breathing).

17:30 **Exhibition time**

18:00 **Dinner and close of exhibition**

19:00 Travel to Gala Concert

19:45 **Gala Concert in New Hall, Winchester College.** Featuring the Louisiana State University A Cappella Choir (conductor John Dickson) and Riga Cathedral Girls' Choir (conductor Aira Birziņa).

Sunday 28th August

09:00 **Exhibition opens**

09:00-10:00 **Annual General Meeting of *abcd***

10:15

7a) **Meet the choir – Riga Cathedral Girls' Choir** The opportunity to hear more from our Latvian choir, watch them work with their conductor Aira Birziņa, and find out more about their repertoire.

7b) **Using Kodály with Early Years and Primary** lots of practical tips from Len Tyler. The Len Tyler Music School is a specialist music kindergarten offering music classes for children from birth to about 9 years. The workshop will focus on the use of the Kodály approach in early childhood and primary school classroom situations. Ideal for anyone wanting to find out more about Kodály and how it works at all levels including instrumental teaching, and more advanced work. Lots of tried and tested songs and routines complete with handouts.

7c) **Women as choral leaders and composers.** Conductor and *abcd* tutor Sarah Tenant Flowers chairs a session with Convention Artistic Director Amy Bebbington, Sian Edwards, Alice Farnham, Sarah Quartel, Errolyn Wallen & Janet Wheeler celebrating women's increased leadership of choirs since *abcd's* foundation, identifying current issues and suggesting ways in which women can play an even greater part as choral leaders and composers.

7d) **Social Media and IT – the choral leader's friend.** Social media tips and digital aids for the choral leader. New technology helps choral directors in so many ways that no-one dare ignore it. This session looks at ways everyone can use IT to source printed music, help singers learn music quickly through websites, easily record individual vocal lines and share audio and text files. Also to use fabulous resources like Facebook and Twitter as tools for PR and audience-building quickly and at minimal cost.

11:15 **Coffee and Exhibition**

11:45-12:45

- 8a) **Teaching musicianship to young children through singing and movement.** A practical session with **Nikhil Dally**. Nikhil runs the highly-successful Stepping Notes music school for 2s to 8s in Egham. Inspired by the philosophies and methods of Kodály, Dalcroze and Géza Szilvay, it is the ideal way to help young children discover and develop their singing voice, and acquire the musicianship skills necessary to start to read music and learn an instrument.
- 8b) **Gospel truths with Mike Sheppard.** Composer and arranger Mike Sheppard has many years' experience of arranging and directing Gospel music for choirs. Steal away to his session and he'll show you some very useful tricks of the trade! Repertoire will include Mike's new work *Sing, Glory!* With help from Amy Bebbington and members of Dorking Camerata, who gave the world premiere of the piece in May.
- 8c) **Behind the music: achieving a healthy relationship between choral leader and choir.** This workshop, led by **Jonathan Startup**, *abcd* Trustee and Chair of Barts Choir, aims to determine what makes a healthy relationship between a music director and a choir, its officers and committees, its audience and supporters. It looks at how choirs govern themselves and their interaction with the musical director, including the process of choosing and contracting.
- 8d) **Obtaining a quality sound in adult choirs with Deborah Miles-Johnson.** See how Debbie dramatically improves the sound of adult choirs – by experiencing her technique yourself as choir-member in a mock workshop. Previously BBC Symphony Chorus vocal coach for twenty years, she has a rare gift for communicating technique clearly and in an effortlessly engaging way which leaves singers enthralled and enthused. *Repeat of session 1a*).

13:00

Lunch and last chance for exhibition

14:30

Exhibition closes

Convention Requiem Final session with **Sian Edwards**. A fresh look at interpreting the Fauré Requiem with one of our leading conductors. Sian is Head of Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music. She has worked with many of the world's leading orchestras and at all the major UK opera houses, making her operatic debut in 1986 conducting Weill's *Mahagonny* for Scottish Opera and her Royal Opera House debut in 1988 with Tippett's *The Knot Garden*. She was Music Director of ENO from 1993 to 1995.

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.

Typesetting clinics

With Alan Bullard and Mike Sheppard

Following their main session on Saturday (session 5d), Alan and Mike will be available separately for 15-minute clinics on typesetting choral scores in Sibelius. These clinics are scheduled for:

- Saturday 27th 17.30-17.45 (AB or MS)
- Sunday 28th 09.45-10.00 (AB or MS)
- Sunday 28th 11.30-11.45 (AB only)
- Sunday 28th 14.00-14.15 (AB or MS)

To sign up to attend one of these clinics, delegates will be asked to visit the *abcd* reception desk and indicate the area of or problems with typesetting they want Alan or Mike to address, and if they wish, bring a Sibelius file (exported to v.7 or lower) on a memory stick.

25 August (3pm) to 26 August (4pm)

Pre-Convention Conducting Course

Peter Broadbent and **Jo McNally** lead this practical course looking at rehearsal 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

Individual tuition will be available for conductors with more experience or who have already attended previous *abcd* courses.

Young Conductors' Course 26-28 August, led by Amy Bebbington and Mark Griffiths.

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.

Conductor, teacher, singer, pianist and composer, Amy has been described as 'one of the brightest talents of her generation.' She has directed numerous choral ensembles in the UK and US. Mark, a graduate of Cambridge University and the Royal College of Music, is Musical Director of Coro and Director of Choirs at the Junior Department of Trinity College of Music.

This timetable is correct as of 22 June 2016 but **abcd** reserves the right to make alterations or substitutions should circumstances make this necessary.