



inspiring choral
leadership

ABCD 28th Convention

23-25 August 2013 • Oxford Brookes University

A whole year's motivation from one
unforgettable choral weekend!



Visit www.abcd.org.uk for the latest information

Oxford – dreaming spires teeming with choirs



photo: John Bellars

For one unforgettable, inspirational weekend, *abcd* returns to Oxford, city of its birth. Friends from the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) helped found *abcd* here in 1986, and this year ACDA is back, in the persons of its President Jo-Michael Scheibe and its Executive Director Tim Sharp. Joining them are dynamic conductor and choir builder Gretchen Kuhrmann from Washington DC, composer Mack

Wilberg, conductor of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and *abcd*'s great US ally Therees Tkach Hibbard with her wonderful choir from Nebraska.

Convention's jewel in the crown, the Gala Concert, takes place in the splendid surroundings of the Sheldonian Theatre, featuring the University Chamber Singers from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Commotio, a leading Oxford-based chamber choir; the 175-strong National Youth Choirs of Great Britain Girls' Choir; and VOCES8, the award-winning young octet with a world-wide reputation. Convention welcomes other outstanding ensembles too, performing in more informal concerts and presentations over the weekend.

This year our two prime focuses are **repertoire** and **conducting skills**. You'll discover music in widely varying styles by composers from across the globe; and be stimulated by some really advanced conducting masterclasses, led by Mike Scheibe, one of the world's leading choral-conducting educators, and by Nicholas Cleobury, Oxford's own renowned conductor and teacher. They'll both work with our concert choirs plus intermediate and advanced conducting volunteers.

Other sessions explore a wide range of choral topics to inform and stimulate discussion. We explore the new, incredibly successful, teenage-boys' singing phenomenon, 'Cambiata', and learn from international vocal health practitioner Ghislaine Morgan. Other, home-grown, talent features in the music of composers Francis Pott and Philip Moore, and in experts in Church music, practical marketing, young voices and much more.

Bringing Convention to a climactic close will be Paul McCreesh leading a session on the music of great British 20th Century composers. We are fortunate to welcome him just weeks after he begins his new role as Principal Conductor of the Gulbenkian Orchestra.

By bringing all these people together over one wonderful weekend, none of which would have been possible without the tireless work of Val Withams, we want to give you, our country's choral directors, a wealth of thought-provoking material to benefit, enhance and enrich your work with choirs not just over the coming year but for many years beyond. *Book your place now!*

Bob Chilcott



ABCD gala concert

Saturday 24 August 2013, 7.45pm • Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford

The historic Sheldonian Theatre, Sir Christopher Wren's first major design, is the iconic venue for this year's Gala Concert, FREE to you as a main Convention delegate. Home to Oxford University's chief public ceremonies, the Sheldonian is a magnificent concert venue in its own right. This year the Gala Concert compere is Michael Emery, Senior Producer for the BBC Singers.



Gala Concert Choirs

Nebraska-Lincoln Chamber Singers,
director **Dr. Therees Tkach Hibbard (USA)**

Under internationally-renowned Therees Hibbard's inspired direction, this vibrant chamber ensemble from the Nebraska-Lincoln University School of Music shows the ultra-high standards of choral singing which top US universities now achieve. Sheer class and polish across all genres, from early music to the contemporary repertoire.

Commotio, founder and conductor Matthew Berry

One of Oxford's foremost chamber choirs, Commotio specialises in lesser-known 20th and 21st century material, enthusiastically promoting the younger generation of composers plus little-known works of those who are more established. In short, Commotio offers singers and audiences alike something a little different.

VOCES8

This international award-winning octet, formed by ex-Westminster Abbey choristers, is now at the forefront of British *a cappella* singing. Performing repertoire ranging from Renaissance polyphony to unique jazz and pop arrangements, VOCES8 has been praised for stunning performance, exquisite singing and creating a sound that spans the entire range of vocal colour.



After dinner, Come and Sing!

Opening musical proceedings on Friday evening after dinner will be respected and much-loved composer John Rutter. John's legendary Come and Sing days regularly attract hundreds of singers, and we are proud to link our name with his in a session jointly for *abcd* delegates and singers from the wider community in nearby All Saints Church, Headington.



Themes, presenters and events



Prime focuses:

Repertoire and conducting skills

This year there will be more repertoire sessions than ever before, taking in music for upper voices, boys' changing voices, church music, SATB and community choral music, music from all over the world, especially the USA – plus commissioning your own!

More conducting sessions

For the first time at Convention there are masterclasses involving directing our guest choirs, with hands-on advice for Intermediate and Advanced level conductors. There is also the option of two strands for our popular Pre-convention course.

The US connection

Now is a truly golden age for American choral music; Convention 2013 is your chance to meet some of the leading US conductors, educators and composers who are making this happen.

Change in the air

When boys' voices drop, too often they also drop their singing. Convention this year gives you an insight into the exciting work currently in hand to develop the right repertoire to motivate them to keep on singing and enjoy it, too.

Motivation through world music

Bob Chilcott and David Lawrence

On the Saturday and Sunday mornings, in two whirlwind world tours to enthuse you for the day ahead, Bob and David introduce lively, innovative repertoire from the USA, Australia, Japan, Canada, and across Europe and Scandinavia.

Basic Singing Technique to Maintain Vocal Health

Ghislaine Morgan

Are you and your chorists in the know? Dispel the myths! Have fun elucidating the anatomical realities! Ghislaine's international success as singer, choral director, lecturer and trainer relies hugely on one thing – her voice. After a 20 year performing career, Ghislaine's focus is now educational work and she has a passion for encouraging others to be expressive with confidence, and a desire to demystify vocal technique.

Intermediate & Advanced conducting masterclasses

Nicholas Cleobury with the Nebraska-Lincoln Chamber Singers (Intermediate)

Jo-Michael Scheibe (USA) with Commotio (Advanced)

Two Intermediate and two Advanced level sessions, with three conductors in each for 15-20 minutes' personal tuition, along with observer delegates. Nicholas and Mike, two of the world's most experienced choral conductors, will both choose three short, contrasting, pieces for all their conductors to work with, sent out in advance. This is

a wonderful chance to conduct truly excellent, established choirs; to receive more details, contact Rachel Greaves – details on the back page. A panel will choose those fortunate enough to take part.

Reading sessions

These four incredibly valuable sessions will cover church music, SATB music, upper-voice repertoire, and school & community music. A wealth of refreshing new repertoire with which to excite your choir will be on offer, giving you the opportunity to get to know the pieces in the best way possible, by singing them yourself.

Working with young singers

Therees Tkach Hibbard, Jo McNally and Ben Parry

In a session focused on teenage/youth singers, the new Director of the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain, Ben Parry, joins Therees Hibbard and Jo McNally to give insights from both sides of the Atlantic into how to give the best encouragement and training to singers at this critical time in their musical lives.

Cambiata - boys' changing voices

Don Gilthorpe and Angela Renshaw

Following 2012's session on the new Cambiata North West choir, Don and Angela report on their work and progress in the North West and Cornwall respectively in this fascinating and immensely important musical venture involving teenage boys. Find out what repertoire appeals to these somewhat demanding youngsters – and what doesn't!



Church music forum

Alan Bullard, Andrew Gant and Daniel Hyde

Respectively: widely-published church music composer and editor; Organist, Choirmaster and Composer at Her Majesty's Chapel Royal; and *Informator Choristarum*, Organist and Tutorial Fellow in Music at Magdalen College, Oxford. Alan, Andrew and Daniel's collective church-music expertise is unrivalled and their joint forum will be a must for anyone active in the church-music field.

American forum

Jo-Michael Scheibe, Tim Sharp, Gretchen Kuhmann and Mack Wilberg (all USA)

A unique Q&A session with four of the American choral firmament's brightest stars: ACDA's President and Executive Director, the Founder & Director of Washington DC's outstanding Choralis organisation, and renowned composer & Music Director of the extraordinary Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Topics will include choral study and – vitally important – commercial enterprise for choirs.

Building choirs, practical marketing

Gillian Dibden, Gretchen Kuhmann (USA), Tim Sharp (USA) and Mike Sheppard

A duo-national approach to building up and marketing your choir. You need singers, venues, audiences, publicity, volunteers, friends – and funds! Between them, our four panellists have developed methods to attract all of these; together they'll tell you what they are.

Let your body sing!

Thereses Tkach Hibbard

Use your whole body when singing and you profoundly affect your tone,

phrasing, rhythmic integrity and musicality. Thereses demonstrates how "BodySinging" develops artistry in choral performance by applying it to teaching and conducting specific choral pieces; she also shows how it can improve rehearsals and performances at all levels of choral attainment.

Teaching the very young

Get it right in the early years and you've laid the foundations for the next generation of musicians. Learn some really innovative material and classroom skills specifically to intrigue and benefit Early Years and primary-school children. An essential session for teachers of the youngest children.

Commissioning new repertoire: how to make it work

Alan Bullard, Nicholas Cleobury, Michael Emery, Kate Johnson and Janet Lincé

Discover the satisfaction of commissioning new music – and avoid any pitfalls! Hear the experts' opinion from several essential points of view: of the commissioner, the conductor, the broadcaster, the publisher and – not to be overlooked – the composer.

The commission of uniqueness

Edward Caswell and Janet Lincé introduce Philip Moore and Francis Pott

As hugely experienced choral conductors and concert programmers, Ed and Janet know how uninspiring it is to recycle the same old choral ideas. The solution? Commission new pieces from top-rate composers like Philip and Francis, both well-used to writing for commission. They'll give examples of how commissions have successfully progressed from initial idea to triumphant première.

Buttonhole a composer!

Always hugely popular, 'buttonhole sessions' are available for you to talk individually with a leading composer. Enjoy a five-minute chat about your work – or anything else! – with:-

- Alan Bullard
- Andrew Gant
- Mike Sheppard
- Mack Wilberg
- Ben Parry
- Francis Pott

And finally – a 20th Century singing together

Paul McCreesh

To close Convention on a rousing note, all delegates are invited to sing the music of Walton, Vaughan Williams and their UK contemporaries, led by Paul McCreesh. One of Britain's leading conductors, Paul is founder and Artistic Director of the Gabrieli Consort and Players, with innumerable Deutsche Grammophon and Signum recordings to his name.

Music exhibition – with music!

As always, Convention's Exhibition will showcase the wares of publishers from the UK and further afield, individual composers, tour agencies, and musical organisations. This year Andrew Gant and Vox Turturis, his new contemporary-music chamber choir, will open the exhibition with an informal concert on the Friday afternoon.

Do schedule some browsing and buying time in your busy Convention timetable.

Pre-Convention Conducting Course

22–23 August

Led by Peter Broadbent and Jo McNally
with Therees Tkach Hibbard



This practical course, given by three acknowledged experts in their field, looks at rehearsal and conducting techniques for leaders of all kinds of choir – no minimum experience is required. Delegates can either participate as conductors or attend as observers; a repertoire list is sent in advance. This year there are two strands: one for those starting out in conducting, giving a good grounding in basic skills and another for those who are looking to brush up on existing skills with a quick 'refresher'.

Delegates will be asked for their choice nearer the time.

Between them Jo and Peter have a wealth of conducting experience. Jo is a singer, music educator & adjudicator, and specialist conductor of young and developing choirs.

She has worked for the BBC and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Peter is one of Britain's leading choral conductors, with an extensive repertoire from Baroque to contemporary music and is *abcd's* Director of Training as well as founder and musical director of the award-winning Joyful Company of Singers. Together with Therees Hibbard, they instigated *abcd's* extended course training programme.



Young Conductors' Course

23–25 August

Led by Amy Bebbington



Open to all aged 18-25 who do not currently earn their living from conducting, this course runs parallel with Convention, giving students the opportunity to attend some Convention events as well as taking part in conducting-technique sessions.

Amy gives individual and group tuition in the basics of choir training and conducting and works on rehearsal and performance technique. It is a practical, hands-on, course, with the emphasis on informality and tutoring in a small group.

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 and has also worked for organisations such as Sing for Pleasure, Glyndebourne Education Outreach, the National Youth Choir and Youth Music.

Bursaries available!

A limited number of young conductors can benefit from subsidised places at just £150 each. For eligibility details, contact Rachel Greaves, details on the back page, or see our website.

The city of Oxford

Everyone knows about Oxford, centuries-old seat of learning and architectural treasure-house. Musically, too, the city has been a centre of excellence for centuries, and the scene of many significant events in Britain's musical history. *abcd's* foundation in Oxford in 1986 and *abcd* Convention 2013 continue this long Oxford musical tradition.

Our base - Oxford Brookes University

Named after its founding Principal, John Brookes, when it became a University in 1992, Oxford Brookes has come a long way since its 1865 beginnings as the – one-room - Oxford School of Art. It now boasts many award-winning buildings set in four campuses, of which our base is the Gypsy Lane site of the Headington campus, just a few minutes from the city centre. Ensuite and standard rooms are available in the Clive Booth Student Village, around 10 minutes' walk away from Gypsy Lane.

Travelling to Oxford

Einstein once asked, *What time does Oxford arrive at this train?* In fact Oxford can easily reach you by train or bus and there are regular buses from the station and city centre to the campus. Travelling by car is harder, however, because of parking difficulties, and you are advised to use the city's excellent 'park and ride'. There will be limited parking available on campus during the weekend and no parking at all before 4pm Friday.

For an excellent overview of how to travel to Oxford, see <http://www.visitoxfordandoxfordshire.com/travel-information/Travel.aspx>

For details about travelling to Oxford Brookes, see <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/graduation/travel-and-parking/>

Planning your journey

The easiest way is online: of many travel-timetable websites available, two of the best are Traveline www.traveline.org.uk and Transport Direct www.transportdirect.info. For fares, see the websites of the travel companies themselves.

Convention Fees

Convention fees exclude B&B but include meals and refreshments. Please indicate your convention requirements by ticking the appropriate box(es), then choose any accommodation requirements.

abcd Members

Main Convention, 23–25 August

£270 if booked by 30th June, £290 if later

Saturday only

£125 (includes lunch & dinner but not gala concert ticket)

Sunday only

£105 (includes lunch)

Pre-Convention Conducting Course, 22-23 August

£145 if booked by 30th June, £155 if later

Young Conductors' Course, 23-25 August

£270 if booked by 30th June, £290 if later

Total Convention fee £ _____

Accommodation

Please indicate your accommodation requirements by ticking the relevant boxes below. All prices include bed and breakfast.

Thursday 22 August Friday 23 August Saturday 24 August

Standard single room (£40 per night)

En suite single room (£45 per night)

Total Accommodation fee £ _____

There will be a limited number of subsidised places for the Young Conductors' course at £150 each. Please tick here for further details

- I am not currently a member of *abcd* but wish to join and pay the member's rate for Convention. I enclose my subscription with my payment (the current annual subscription is £53 (individuals), £22 (full-time students). Payment now will last until 30 April 2014).

Total fee £ _____

Your contact details

Name _____

Address _____

County _____

Postcode _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

- I am an *abcd* member, _____ region
Do you have any dietary or other special requirements? Yes/No
Do you require ground floor accommodation? Yes/No
Do you have a disability for which you might need assistance? Yes/No
Will you have any access requirements which we should be aware of? Yes/No
If so please state assistance required _____
- Have you previously attended an *abcd* extended conducting course? We would like to provide a networking opportunity for alumni.

Early bird discounts

Book early! If you book by 30 June, you will enjoy a discount on the full fee. (No discount available for single day delegates). Delegates are encouraged to make enquiries with their local Arts Council England region, or to apply to their employer for assistance with fees as part of Continuing Professional Development where applicable. For more advice on possible funding, please contact the *abcd* office on 01935 389482.

Payment

- I enclose a cheque for full payment (please make cheques payable to Association of British Choral Directors)
- I enclose a non-returnable deposit of £50 (balance due by 31st July 2013)
- Please send an invoice to the address enclosed with this form (in time to allow settlement by 31st July 2013)

Paying by card

We can only accept payment by Mastercard, Visa Debit and Visa Credit cards. Only payment in full can be made this way.

Mastercard / Visa Credit / Visa Debit (please ring type of card)

Card No.

Card valid from / Card expiry date / 3 digit security no. on reverse of card

Cardholder Name (as on card)

Address of cardholder (if different from previous page)

Postcode

Signature Date

Send your booking to: Convention 2013, Len Fletcher, 6 Sunnyhill, Fulwood, Preston, Lancs PR2 9BF

Keep up to date with news about Convention 2013 – visit our website www.abcd.org.uk

For more information and timetable details, please phone Len Fletcher, Convention Administrator, on **01772 704834** or email convention@abcd.org.uk.

For general *abcd* enquiries, please contact Rachel Greaves on **01935 389482** or email rachel.greaves@abcd.org.uk.

Information correct at time of going to press. Please note that *abcd* reserves the right to substitute sessions and presenters without notice.

Cancellation

If you cancel in writing on or before 25 July we will refund you, minus £50 handling fee. If you cancel in writing after 25 July you will receive a 50% refund, minus £50 deposit. **If you cancel on or after 8 August we will not refund you and we therefore advise you to take out your own insurance against cancellation.** If you book after 15 August you may not receive an acknowledgement before the event.

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