

ABO

ASSOCIATION OF **BRITISH ORCHESTRAS** **REVIEW OF THE YEAR** **2008/09**

INTRODUCTION

Last year we reported 2007/08 to be a year of great change within the ABO. This year has seen a period of consolidation and stability, as the ABO settled down under its new Chair and an expanded board, and under its new Director and staff.

There were two changes to the board. Following Hazel Province's retirement, Peter Harrap, Chorus & Orchestra Director at Welsh National Opera was appointed, in order to ensure that the interests of the opera and ballet members continued to be represented. And Leonora Thomson, Head of Media & Public Relations at the Barbican Centre was co-opted to the board to help enhance the ABO's communication strategy at this crucial period in the arts funding landscape. The membership of the board was confirmed at the Annual General Meeting in November.

The Annual General Meeting also saw agreement from the membership for investment in a communications campaign in the run up to the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2010/11. This is a key component of the ABO's Strategic Plan for 2008-2011, which was approved by the board in July 2008. DHA Communications were duly appointed and the campaign formally launched at the AGM.

The conference in February 2009 was held to be one of the best ever, and thanks are due to Welsh National Opera and the Wales Millennium Centre for making it such a success. While the theme of 'sustainability', and the potential impact of climate change on orchestras, was the starting point for the conference, sustainability during what is proving to be one of the most serious recessions in our history became the dominant topic. The consensus was clear – orchestras need to hold their nerve, continue to take risks, and weather the storm. And the loyalty and support of our audiences, funding agencies and other stakeholders is immensely reassuring, providing an element of stability in an uncertain world.

The conference itself saw a healthy attendance across the range of managerial positions within orchestras, along with representatives from the wider music industry. The Board was delighted to present during the conference the ABO Award to Sir Neville Marriner for his invaluable contribution to orchestral life in the UK, along with a special posthumous Award for Vernon Handley CBE.

Healthy Orchestra Bronze Charter Marks were awarded during the year to Manchester Camerata, Orchestra of St Johns, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Orchestra of Welsh National Opera. We must once again express our gratitude to the Musicians Benevolent Fund for supporting the Healthy Orchestra programme during this year.

The ABO continues to serve its members in line with its key objectives of Advocacy, Communication, Information and Learning, and further information follows in this Annual Review.

My thanks go to all our members and staff for their support during the year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Timothy Walker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Timothy Walker AM
Chair

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2008/09

TO BE PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ORCHESTRAS

VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

Our vision is of a society where orchestral music is valued as a core component of contemporary culture.

The ABO exists to support, promote and advance the interests and activities of professional orchestras in the UK.

The key objectives of the Association cover four areas of activity:

- **Advocacy**
- **Communication**
- **Information**
- **Learning**

The ABO exists:

- to be an advocate for the orchestral profession of the UK, ensuring that the voice of British orchestras is heard by all relevant parties.
- to provide the principal forum through which members communicate collectively with each other to facilitate shared knowledge, collaborative initiatives and problem solving.
- to provide accurate, timely and comprehensive information on issues and events that impact on the management, development and legal responsibilities of orchestras.
- to provide and enable training and continuing professional development opportunities for all levels of orchestral management

ADVOCACY

The primary focus of the ABO's advocacy during the year was the implementation of a communications campaign, to raise the profile of British orchestras in advance of the next **Comprehensive Spending Review** in 2010/11. DHA Communications were appointed in November 2008 to work with the ABO on delivery of the campaign.

The ABO met regularly during the year with representatives from the DCMS, Arts Council England and Arts Council of Wales, and is a member of the ERA21 project, bringing together the UK's arts associations and entertainment unions for regular meetings to discuss arts policy and funding.

ABO/MU CASUAL CONCERT/FREELANCE ORCHESTRAL AGREEMENT

Negotiations with the Musicians Union were concluded in May 2008 with a new agreement backdated to 1 April 2008. A Foreign Touring Code of Practice and indicative per diems were also agreed during the year. The ABO meets regularly with the MU through its working party comprised of Mark Pemberton, Director of the ABO, Timothy Walker of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and Elaine Baines-Robins of City of London Sinfonia, with Hannah Donat of Britten Sinfonia and Marc Stevens of the London Symphony Orchestra joining the working party in January 2009.

ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY CLASSICAL MUSIC GROUP

The inaugural meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Classical Music Group took place in March 2009. The Group's purpose is to bring together parliamentarians who have an interest in and wish to further the appreciation of classical music; to act as an interface between British orchestras' on and off-stage activities, the wider classical music industry, including broadcasters and the recording industry, and key decision makers and opinion formers; and to look at the potential for establishing parliamentary classical music awards and promoting and supporting young musicians. The ABO serves as the Group's secretariat.

CONTROL OF NOISE AT WORK REGULATIONS

The ABO continued to monitor the impact of the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 on British orchestras and participated in the Health & Safety Executive's Music & Entertainment Sector Working Group, which developed guidance for the music and entertainment industry.

HEALTHY ORCHESTRA CHARTER

The Healthy Orchestra Charter is a joint initiative by the ABO and the Musicians Benevolent Fund. Launched at the 2006 ABO Conference in Newcastle/Gateshead, the Charter aims to set an industry-wide standard of care and award charter marks to orchestras that are displaying good practice towards the physical, mental and emotional health of employees - both orchestral musicians and their management. Awards for the Bronze Charter Mark were presented during the year to Manchester Camerata, Orchestra of St Johns, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Orchestra of Welsh National Opera.

PEARLE*

The ABO and its members benefit hugely from membership of PEARLE*, the European League of Performing Arts Associations, which helps the ABO keep track of legislative developments within the EU. The ABO attended conferences in London and Paris during the year, and hosted a meeting of the European Orchestras Forum in London in May 2008.

VISAS FOR VISITING ARTISTS

The ABO was a member of the UK Border Agency's Arts & Entertainment Taskforce, the purpose of which was to advise the Home Office and UK Borders Agency in advance of and during implementation of the new Points Based System for Migrant Workers, which went live in November 2008. Various concessions were made by the Home Office following submissions by the ABO and other arts associations to avoid difficulties with visa processing for visiting artists. In January 2009 the ABO was invited to make a submission to the Migration Advisory Committee in support of the recommendation that orchestral musicians be included on the Shortage Occupation List for Tier 2 Skilled Workers. The submission was successful, with the recommendation of the Migration Advisory Committee accepted by the Home Office in May 2009 for implementation in June.

COMMUNICATION

ABO CONFERENCE

The Conference, sponsored for the seventh time by **Classic FM**, and with **Guardian News & Media** as its Media Partner, was held at the Wales Millennium Centre from 25 to 27 February 2009, with some 300 delegates attending. The Conference was opened by the Rt Hon Lord Kinnock, Chair of the British Council, followed by the keynote speakers, Lord Smith of Finsbury, Chairman of the Environment Agency and David Buckland, Director of Cape Farewell. The conference concluded with a speech by Jeremy Hunt MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

The Conference theme was *Sustain*, which embraced both the impact of climate change and sustainability during a period of recession.

The ABO's partnership with the **Musicians Benevolent Fund** continued with an ongoing programme of activity relating to Health and Safety issues for players and management alike. Awards for the Bronze Charter Mark were presented by David Sulkin (Chief Executive of the MBF) to senior staff from the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Orchestra of Welsh National Opera.

The **ABO Award** was presented to Sir Neville Marriner during the pre-dinner reception at the National Museum Cardiff, while the late Vernon Handley CBE was honoured with a Special Posthumous Award.

Our hosts, **Welsh National Opera** presented their production of *Salome* in the Donald Gordon Auditorium. In addition, musicians from WNO, Sinfonia Cymru and the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama entertained delegates during the conference. The ABO gratefully acknowledges the support of Visit Wales, the National Assembly of Wales, Arts Council of Wales, the British Association of Concert Halls, the Incorporated Society of Musicians and all the team at WNO and the Wales Millennium Centre.

SPECIALIST MANAGER MEETINGS

Specialist Manager Meetings continued to form the backbone of ABO's events programme. Meetings for Archivists, Chamber Orchestras, Concert & Orchestra, Education, Development & Sponsorship, Finance and Marketing Managers, along with Opera & Ballet and Scottish members, and, following their inaugural meeting in September 2008, Digital Managers, took place during the year and provided opportunities for colleagues from different organisations to meet and discuss subjects of mutual interest and benefit from the latest developments in the field through talks and surgeries given by experts. Reports of the meetings are available to download from the ABO website.

SEMINARS

A seminar with arts marketing professional **Doug Kinzey** took place in May 2008 at the Barbican Centre, in association with Orchestras Live. The seminar provided an opportunity to reflect on current marketing practice, challenge assumptions about audience and organisational behaviour and consider new organisational models for long-term engagement with audiences and financial stability.

A seminar held in collaboration with LCACE took place in June 2008, entitled **The Academy and Academia – what Universities can offer to Orchestras**. The event saw a series of short presentations by academics on areas of their work which are appropriate to orchestras either now or in the future, and possible sources of funding, along with an orchestra which was already working with academics to demonstrate what can be achieved. Presenters included:

- Jonathan Vaughan, Head of Music at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama on their relationships with the LSO and the Barbican
- Professor Daniel Leech-Wilkinson of King's College London on their work in the area of musicology and learning from performance, as well as introducing the Kings Sound Archive
- Professor Mark Sandler of Queen Mary, University of London on recent developments in the field of Digital Music
- Nancy Evans, Education Manager of BCMG on their 'Resonance' project with the University of Birmingham

WEBSITE

A new website was launched in November 2008, designed by John Good, providing clearer navigation and more extensive information about the ABO. It also included the addition of online booking and payment for the conference. A new-style monthly Update was launched in December, providing a more attractive medium for communicating with members. A Conference blog took place in February and the ABO's Facebook page was launched in March 2009.

INFORMATION

The ABO continues to provide access to a range of briefing sheets on topics of relevance and concern to the membership, and provides up-to-date information on events and information via its monthly email Update for members. Briefing papers on the Points Based System for Migrant Workers and Data Protection were added during the year. The ABO continued to offer helplines on Contracts and VAT for the benefit of its members.

The ABO's ground-breaking guidance on Noise at Work, **A Sound Ear II** was published in Spanish and Portuguese editions.

LEARNING

BRASS TACKS

These ever popular "Introduction to..." courses were run again during the year. Four courses were run twice and included *Finance for Non-Finance Managers*, *Press and Public Relations*, *Fundraising* and *Introduction to Marketing*. Feedback from the courses was overwhelmingly positive.

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The ABO **Early Years Cluster Programme** continued into 2008/09, coordinated by Fiona Harvey, the ABO's Early Years Cluster Programme Manager and funded by Youth Music.

All seven Cluster Projects completed their projects and overall the Programme has been very successful and has achieved its aim of increasing the confidence, skills and knowledge of professional musicians and early years practitioners working in music with children aged 0-5. All the Cluster partners intend to continue the work in one way or another, with some already continuing, and others raising funding to continue. The RLPO secured a three-year contract from Liverpool City Council worth £100,000 to continue working in Children's Centres in Liverpool. This was a direct result of the RLPO players being in a Children's Centre on the day of an OFSTED inspection and the subsequent report stating that it was the best early years music the inspectors had seen to date.

Dr Susan Young, a member of the Evaluation team appointed by Youth Music, presented to the ABO Education Managers meeting in October and Education Managers from the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, CBSO and RLPO contributed extra feedback to the ensuing discussion.

The National Association of Music Educators (NAME) invited Fiona Harvey to chair 2 sessions at their annual conference in Birmingham in October. They invited two of the Clusters to present their projects in these sessions and they were represented by Dan Somogyi, Dorset Music Service and Penny Tweed, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (South West Cluster); and Linda Bance, Hertfordshire project manager and Sarah O'Flynn, Britten Sinfonia (Bedwell Sounds, Stevenage project).

Earlier in the year, NAME commissioned Fiona Harvey to write an article on the Early Years Cluster Programme for their book on Partnerships and Collaboration.

The ABO board agreed to proceed with a **mapping project** for the orchestras' pledge to perform live for every child during their time at school. The project working group met for the first time in October and agreed questions for the mapping project. The questionnaire was sent by Fiona Harvey to all ABO orchestras in England in the first instance and her report will be published in June 2009.

WHERE DO I START?

The annual 'Where Do I Start?' seminar was held at the Barbican Centre in London, led by Trevor Ford. A range of speakers from across the membership discussed different facets of the industry and gave advice on how to find that first job. Feedback from delegates was yet again overwhelmingly positive and has provided numerous recruits for the ABO's Volunteer Register.

FINANCE

The surplus for the year ended 31 March 2009 was £17,281. The higher than expected surplus was the result of increased income from subscriptions following an increase in membership numbers and a higher than expected surplus on the conference. This resulted in the reserves increasing to £126,028. The reserves will be reduced in 2009/10 through investment in the communications campaign.

The ABO continues to be a regularly funded client of Arts Council England and acknowledges the support of ACE and is grateful in particular to Susanna Eastburn, Director, Music Strategy, and Dominic Fyfe, Senior Music Officer at Arts Council England, London, for their interest and involvement in the activities of the Association.

Following a very generous rent-free period the ABO negotiated a reduced rental on its premises in Rupert Street, London W1. The Association is deeply indebted to Jonathan Lane, Chief Executive and all his colleagues at Shaftesbury plc for this very generous support.

MEMBERSHIP

Four new Full members joined during the year: English National Ballet, New Mozart Orchestra, Scottish Ballet and Welsh Sinfonia. Sinfonia Cymru joined as an Associate member.

Royal Concert Hall Nottingham, ClassicalMusicHomepage, Rayburn Tours, THAMES (Tower Hamlets Art & Music Education Service) and Jonathan Cooke Ltd joined as Corporate Members.

GOVERNANCE

Dawn Day, General Manager of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields and Peter Harrap, Chorus & Orchestra Director at Welsh National Opera were elected to the Board at the AGM in November 2008, and Bob Riley (Manchester Camerata) and Simon Woods (Royal Scottish National Orchestra) were re-elected. This brought the number of orchestra representatives to seven and ensured representation across the range of orchestras within the ABO's full membership.

Andrew Jowett, Director of Town Hall & Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Chi-chi Nwanoku MBE and Leonora Thomson, Head of Media & Public Relations at the Barbican Centre were co-opted to the Board.

The Board met five times during the year, ensuring scrutiny of the Association's activities and finances.

The ABO is very grateful to Laurie Watt, Senior Partner at Charles Russell, for all his support as the Association's Honorary Solicitor, particularly for the use of meeting space. The ABO is also grateful to his colleague Sarah Jane Turcan who has provided invaluable advice during the year.

STAFF

Mark Pemberton continued to serve as Director. Keith Motson commenced employment as Projects Manager and Orla Molony as Membership Services Officer in April 2008.

The staff were supported by Fiona Harvey, Early Years Cluster Programme Manager, who continues to make an enormous contribution to the ABO's support of orchestras' education programmes, and Chris Wright, Financial Consultant, who oversees book-keeping and management accounts.

Kate Whyman continued to provide public and media relations for the ABO until March 2009, when this was taken on by DHA Communications. We are grateful to Kate for her support these past few years.

The ABO is committed to providing meaningful internships for those seeking work experiences at the start of their careers. Theresa Traynor served as Intern from March to August 2008, before commencing employment at the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and Hester Warner from September 2008 to March 2009. Kirsten Mackay commenced an internship from February 2009.

ABO BOARD

2008/09

Timothy Walker AM <i>Chair</i>	Chief Executive & Artistic Director	London Philharmonic Orchestra
Dawn Day (Resigned 6 May 2009)	Managing Director	Academy of St Martin in the Fields
Peter Harrap	Chorus & Orchestra Director	Welsh National Opera
Andrew Jowett	Director	Town Hall & Symphony Hall, Birmingham
Stephen Maddock	Chief Executive	City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
Chi-chi Nwanoku MBE	Musician	
Bob Riley	General Manager	Manchester Camerata
Gavin Reid	Director	BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra
Leonora Thomson	Head of Media & Public Relations	Barbican Centre
Simon Woods	Chief Executive	Royal Scottish National Orchestra

ABO STAFF

Mark Pemberton	Director	Mark@abo.org.uk
Keith Motson	Projects Manager	Keith@abo.org.uk
Orla Molony	Membership Services Officer	Orla@abo.org.uk
Fiona Harvey	Education Consultant	Fiona@abo.org.uk
Chris Wright	Financial Consultant	Chris@abo.org.uk

Association of British Orchestras
20 Rupert Street
LONDON
W1D 6DF
020 7287 0333 / info@abo.org.uk / www.abo.org.uk