

ABO

ASSOCIATION OF **BRITISH ORCHESTRAS**
REVIEW OF THE YEAR
2003/4

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PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF **BRITISH ORCHESTRAS** | 3 NOVEMBER 2004

INTRODUCTION

The year began with the success of the Association's sell-out Cultural Diversity symposium attended by 167 delegates, over half new to the ABO. It also marked a new season of stability following a move to a new office in Rupert Street, again most generously donated by Jonathan Lane *Chief Executive* and his team at Shaftesbury Plc. This support makes a significant contribution to the ABO and the board and staff are most grateful to Shaftesbury.

The year saw the ABO become a regularly funded client of the Arts Council of England for the first time in its history. The Association is grateful to Hilary Boulding and Andrew Pinnock, from the ACE Music Department, for this investment and their continuing support.

Although, at the time of writing, *Listen Up!* still has a week to run, the highlight of the year has been this unique celebration of orchestras in partnership with BBC Radio 3 and Making Music. Early indications suggest that this has been well received and has achieved many of its objectives. A full evaluation will take place over the autumn but more concerts, more broadcasts, orchestra's broadcast for the first time, a huge publicity drive and successful projects, such as interval talks and Musicians on Call, all point to a very encouraging first festival. The ABO is delighted that the initiative will be repeated in partnership with the BBC and Making Music in 2006.

During the year, as promised in the Strategic Plan, members of staff met with all full members to undertake an Audit Meeting. These were well received and taken very seriously by members. They were an opportunity to exchange information and for head office to hear directly from members about their needs and desires from the ABO. The board and staff were pleased that members approved of the large majority of ABO's activity and the ABO's satisfaction rating was extremely high.

The ABO's website was completely rebuilt and launched at the start of *Listen Up!* It has been very well received and is already receiving twice as many hits as the old site. Adam Powell and Becky West must be congratulated for the hours of work that went into the successful conclusion of this project on time and within budget.

Finally, the Association is on a stable financial footing and reported a £19,000 surplus for the year ended 31 March 2004.

ABO CONFERENCE

Widely hailed as the best ABO Conference yet – sponsored for a second year by Classic FM – a record 345 delegates attended this year's Annual Conference at the De Vere Royal Bath Hotel in Bournemouth, including colleagues from the USA, Australia and across the UK and Europe. Key addresses were given by Rt Hon David Mellor PC QC, Jude Kelly OBE and Alan Davey from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, with contributions from over 70 other speakers including representatives from the Rugby Football Union, Natural History Museum and Visit Britain. American composer, John Corigliano and Marin Alsop, the BSO's Principal Conductor, contributed to the event on a number of occasions including a fascinating closing conference session giving the audience a unique insight into a conductor's life.

An equally popular session on “branding” drew on the expertise of branding gurus Tony Allen and Marksteen Adamson formally of Interbrand, with orchestral input from Anthony Brown and Karen Cardy on perspectives from the BSO and LSO respectively.

The three conference strands of New Music, New Marketing and Education were well received and the support of spnm and Youth Music ensured maximum relevance and expertise in these areas. The education theme took the form of a successful one-day satellite conference entitled “What about the other 92%”.

Around 30 delegates took part in an intensive four-hour management workshop featuring role-play with Boston-based consultant Grady McGonagill. A range of staff from a wide variety of organisations assumed the roles of ‘tops, middles and bottoms’ during an event which became the talk of the Conference during the dinner on the first night.

On Saturday morning, Terry Burwell from the RFU was accompanied by a very special guest, in the shape of the William Webb Ellis Trophy – the Rugby World Cup.

The ABO would like to thank the following generous supporters who have made this Conference possible: Classic FM, PRS Foundation, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Borough of Poole, Lighthouse, Poole’s Centre for the Arts and BBC Radio 3 and the following people for their support and input prior to and during the Conference: Michael Henson and all at the BSO, particularly Anthony Brown, Andrew Burn, Anne Dolan and Christina Rocca; Deirdre Gribbin and Abigail Pogson and all at spnm; and David Sulkin and the team at Youth Music.

ABO WEBSITE REDEVELOPMENT

The past year saw the ABO decide to bring forward the development of its website to enable it to provide a wide range of members’ services and information as well as a much improved public face. Planning began in the spring and the new website was launched to coincide with the start of *Listen Up!* The new site is a vast improvement on the previous one and includes:

- up to date news and comment
- a Directory area including a webpage for each full member
- comprehensive events information with online booking
- a dedicated members’ area with update online, information services and forums for Specialist Manager groups
- a range of information about orchestras and ABO’s work
- a Jobs area with lists of current vacancies which members can submit online

The project will not stop here, development of the content will continue and ideas are already being formulated for a ‘phase 2’. Thanks are due to the team at Full Blast, especially Abby Bowen, who are the ABO’s appointed web designers and have done a fantastic job in developing a website that is an invaluable resource for members.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

As a result of the change to the Constitution the board was reduced in number from 12 to 8, of which two directors were to be co-opted from outside the field. Jennifer Weller, Director of Communications at GE, became the first external director.

CHARLES RUSSELL

The Association is very grateful to Senior Partner Laurie Watt for all his support as the Association's Honorary Solicitor, particularly for the use of meeting space and for chairing the ABO Trust and Chairmen Specialist Manager Meeting. The ABO is also very grateful to his colleagues Sarah Jane Turcan and Peter Carey who have provided invaluable advice during the year.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

In October 2003, the ABO presented a highly valuable one-day symposium entitled *Cultural Diversity and the Classical Music Industry*, attracting an enormous range of organisations and individuals from orchestras, composers and performers to venues, funders and broadcasters. A stimulating keynote address from Lord Claus Moser *Chairman, British Museum Development Trust*, followed by contributions from senior representatives from BT, Ford, HSBC and a number of arts professionals and practitioners made certain that discussions continued beyond the event and were subsequently heard on BBC Radio 4, BBC Radio 3 and read in the pages of the Daily Telegraph, Independent and Evening Standard. A full report of the symposium is available from the ABO website.

The most audible outcome of the Symposium was the need for greater networking opportunities and forums in which to exchange opportunities, project details and examples of best practice. In order to tackle this, funding from decibel made possible a series of facilitated discussions on programming, partnerships and participation and we were delighted that Lady Hollick *Chair, London Regional Arts Council* was able to host the first *Diversify Your Network* at the London Hilton on Park Lane. The event was attended by over 40 ABO-member orchestra chief executives (from London and the South of England) and composers, performers and practitioners from culturally diverse backgrounds. A whole range of diversity issues were discussed and all left with plenty of food for thought. This was the first of two events, the second of which will be taking place in Manchester in 2005. ABO would like to thank Colin Beesting and his team at the decibel programme at Arts Council England for their assistance over the last two years and also Beverley Mason and Sally Taylor.

The ABO remains committed to enabling greater dialogue and networking between culturally diverse artists and performers and mainstream organisations – particularly its member orchestras – as well as promoting awareness of the potential classical music audiences that exist in varied communities across the UK. Continuing the Association's cultural diversity commitment the ABO is delighted to have been accepted onto the Arts Council of England, London / Arts & Business GAIN Board Development programme to encourage ethnic diversity within board membership.

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The ABO Education Managers meetings continue to be the well-attended of all ABO Specialist Managers groups. After the record-breaking attendance at the September 2003 meeting (46 people), a further 60 broke the previous record to attend the September 2004 meeting at the Barbican. The increase in attendance obviously shows an interest by the Education Managers in meeting with each other and is also a clear reflection of the growth and importance of this work in general.

In September 2003 a small working group of Education Managers was set up to look at issues relating to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Research. Its first project was to map what was already being provided and paid for by orchestras. The draft report of this informal research was presented to and debated by the Education Managers in March 2004. The final report was approved in September 2004 and will be presented to the ABO Board at its next meeting. Thanks go to the working group

which counts amongst its members, Lincoln Abbotts *BBC Symphony Orchestra*, Judith Agnew *Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra*, Katy Bignold/Rachel Selvidge *Philharmonia Orchestra*, Fiona Lockwood *The Sage Gateshead*, Clare Lovett *London Philharmonic Orchestra*, Keith Stubbs *City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra* and Sue Withers *Orchestra of the Royal Opera House*. Other issues discussed at the Education Managers meetings included Child Protection, Creative Partnerships, the Music Manifesto and Youth Music's Endangered Species Instrument Development Days initiative.

The ABO's Education Advisory Committee met in May 2004 and discussed the ABO's education role and its advocacy and work with other organisations on behalf of orchestras, including work with the DCMS and DfES, and the Music Manifesto. The Association participated in the seminars that led to the creation of the Music Manifesto, and was represented at the launch in July 2004 by ABO Chairman, Simon Crookall, and ABO Education Manager, Fiona Harvey. *Listen Up!* was pledged to the Music Manifesto, as a unique collaboration between the ABO, BBC Radio 3 and Making Music, in making orchestras and orchestral music accessible to people of all ages and in particular as a first means of access to music for young children.

January 2004 saw the launch of the ABO's document 'Education Programmes of ABO Orchestras and Organisations'. This has been used as a profile-raising and information document. It is in the process of being updated and the first edition is available from the ABO website.

Fiona Harvey represented the ABO at the first conference of the British Conservatoires' new representative body, Conservatoires UK, hosted by the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (RSAMD), in Glasgow, 25/26 October 2004. Under the theme 'The Conservatoire as the Cultural Catalyst', the delegates were addressed by David Miliband MP, by video, and in person by Patricia Ferguson MSP *Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport*. We were inspired by the keynote speaker, Professor Nigel Osborne Reid *Professor of Music, Edinburgh University* and participated in discussions about 'the Conservatoire in the Community' and 'the Conservatoire in Education & Training' – a case study of the RSAMD. Fiona also continues to represent the ABO at several external meetings, including: the Music Education Council Executive Committee; the National Music Education Forum, co-hosted by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA), and Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS); ACCORD – the alliance for new music; and the Music Manifesto seminars hosted and chaired by David Miliband MP *Minister for School Standards, DfES*.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

During the year the Director addressed representatives of German orchestras at a special conference in Berlin and attended the American Symphony Orchestra League conference in Pittsburgh. Through its membership of PEARLE (European League of Employers' Associations in the Performing Arts) the Association continues to play an active role with its European partners to ensure effective lobbying of European institutions, collaboration with other orchestral associations and a stream of knowledge for members on issues such as the EU Noise and Working Time Directives.

NEW MEMBERS

During the year we welcomed into, or back to, membership:

- New Queen's Hall Orchestra
- Orchestra of English National Opera
- Scottish Ensemble
- Ulster Orchestra
- Cadogan Hall
- Co:create
- Perth Concert Hall
- Reading Arts & Venues

- The Anvil
- United Music Publishers
- Trevor Green
- Anwen Lewis
- Judith Webster

Following reorganisation, the Arts Council of England is now an Associate Member as is Eastern Orchestral Board.

NEW MUSIC: A CONCORDANT APPROACH

In September 2004 the ABO presented a symposium on New Music with ACCORD: The Alliance for New Music in association with the Canadian High Commission supported by the Performing Right Society. The symposium was dedicated to developing a shared manifesto for contemporary classical music and was attended by 80 delegates involved in all corners of the new music sphere. Delegates discussed the challenges currently facing new music; from its role in society to the economic pressures on all those present. The keywords of the day were: curiosity, communication and context. Thanks go to Susannah Simons *Head of Public Affairs and Outreach, BBC Radio 3* for chairing the symposium and all those who contributed to the programme and supported the day, including Jenny Goodwin *MPA* and Abigail Pogson *spnm*.

NOISE TRAINING

The ABO's research into noise damage to orchestral musicians was once again in the broadsheet media as we announced a series of two-day training workshops to be run for orchestral musicians and managements in 2004 in association with the Musicians' Benevolent Fund. Copies of the original report, along with a report of the hugely successful seminar held in September 2002 continued to be widely circulated. The training programme is nearing completion under Alison Wright Reid's expert guidance and reinforces how the ABO remains committed to continuing the work initiated by the publication of the report, working closely with the Musicians' Union, Musicians' Benevolent Fund and other bodies, and keeping this issue firmly on the agenda. The ABO is very grateful to Christopher Yates, Helen Faulkner and Michael White from the MBF, funding from which has enabled the next phase of *A Sound Ear* to take place. To date training has taken place with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Hallé, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra of Opera North, and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. A further six orchestras will undertake training sessions shortly.

SPECIALIST MANAGER MEETINGS

Over 290 people attended the 2003/4 season of Specialist Manager Meetings as they continue to be popular meetings that form the backbone of ABO's event programme. Meetings for Archivists, Artistic Planners, Chair's, Concert and Orchestra, Education, Development and Sponsorship, Finance, and Marketing Managers provide opportunities for colleagues from different organisations to meet and discuss subjects of mutual interest and benefit from the latest business developments through talks and surgeries given by experts. This year saw the inaugural meeting of the Artistic Planners group which has filled an important gap in provision. Meetings for various membership groups have also been held, including Scottish Members and Chamber Orchestras as well as London Members meeting with the GLA to discuss London's Cultural Strategy. Following the London Members meeting, the ABO submitted a response to the draft strategy and many of the points raised were adopted in the final publication.

The production of a report, available to download from the new ABO website, has enabled discussions to be more effectively logged and archived. The new space for each group on the website plus a dedicated forum is aimed to develop continuity of discussion and the provision of more relevant

information between meetings. It is hoped to provide further professional development opportunities to those who attend regularly by enabling individuals within a group to Chair their own meeting.

STAFF

There were no changes to the ABO team during the year. Becky Guest married Craig West *Concerts Manager, Academy of St Martins in the Fields*; Adam Powell became a father and was Acting Director of the Association for three months whilst Russell Jones undertook a sabbatical with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

TRAINING

The annual series of basic management training workshops, Brass Tacks, has continued to be popular and courses were repeated in the spring for the first time due to popular demand. *ABO Learning*, the Association's major commitment to continuing professional development will be launched in 2005.

VOLUNTEERS AND INTERNS

The ABO relies enormously on its dedicated team of volunteers and interns. Everyone is valued but particular thanks must go to Joe McCann who serves as Honorary Finance Director and comes to the office each week to keep the books and accounts shipshape. Thanks also to Chris Wright who gave many months of pro-bono support and helped with the production of the annual accounts.

The ABO is committed to providing meaningful internships for those seeking work experience at the start of their careers. The Association is grateful for all the commitment and hard work of Ashley Hayworth, Evan Tucker and Anya Norton.

WHERE DO I START?

A record 90 delegates, from graduates to careers advisors, attended this year's careers seminar 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 your first job. Work on the ABO's University and Careers contact network improved the reach of information and this will be complemented in future by the dedicated Jobs area on the new ABO website. Feedback from delegates was yet again overwhelmingly positive and has provided 50 recruits for the ABO's Volunteer Register. Future developments may include providing the seminar for specific Conservatoires as well as the current September event. Special thanks to MUSO Magazine for their support of and attendance at the seminar, which is hoped will be continued next year.

ABO BOARD

2003/4

Simon Crookall
Chairman

Chief Executive

Royal Scottish National Orchestra

Andrew Connolly
Cathy Graham
Michael Henson
Stephen Maddock

General Manager
Managing Director
Managing Director
Chief Executive

BBC Concert Orchestra
London Sinfonietta
Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra
City of Birmingham Symphony
Orchestra
Orchestra of Opera North
GE plc

Malcolm Warne Holland
Jennifer Weller

Orchestra / Concerts Director
Director of Communications

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In addition to all those listed above the Director of the ABO would particularly like to thank the following for their support during the past year:

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Graham Elliott, haysmacintyre

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David Francis, PRS Foundation

Henry Fogel, American Symphony Orchestra League

Trevor Ford

Darren Henley, Classic FM

Roger Lewis, Classic FM

Joseph McCann, Honorary Finance Director

Robert Moir, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Richard Pulford, TMA/SoLT

Sally Taylor

Colin Tweedy, Chief Executive, Arts & Business

Roger Wright, BBC Radio 3