

ABO

ASSOCIATION OF **BRITISH ORCHESTRAS** **REVIEW OF THE YEAR** **2007/08**

INTRODUCTION

This was, once again, a successful year for the Association, albeit one that involved great change.

The Annual General Meeting in November saw the retirement of Michael Henson, Managing Director of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra after ten years on the Board, the last three as Chair. A huge debt of gratitude is owed to Michael for his commitment to and support for the ABO during a period of difficulty and renewal. I was honoured to be elected Chair for the following three years and am looking forward to moving the ABO forward through the next period in its strategic development.

Gavin Reid, Director of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, was elected to the Board, and Dawn Day, General Manager of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, was appointed to bring the number of orchestra representatives to seven and to ensure representation across the range of orchestras within the ABO's full membership. Following the resignation of the two co-opted directors, Patrick Frederick and Terri Anderson, Andrew Jowett of Symphony Hall, Birmingham, representing venues, and Chi-chi Nwanoku MBE, representing the interests of players, were co-opted to the Board. We are grateful to Patrick Frederick and Terri Anderson for their service on the Board. I look forward to working with the new directors, who I am sure will make a valuable contribution to the Association in the coming years.

There were staff changes for all three posts, with Mark Pemberton replacing Russell Jones as Director in July 2007; Keith Motson replacing Thorben Dittes as Projects Manager in April 2008, following Thorben's exemplary contribution to the success of the annual conference; and recruitment for the post of Membership Services Officer proving particularly difficult. Following Nicola Oliver's departure in October, there was a succession of postholders prior to the appointment of Orla Molony in April 2008.

October 2007 saw the announcement of the Comprehensive Spending Review, prior to which the ABO had campaigned vigorously on behalf of its members, and we are grateful to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport for providing an uplift in funding for the arts. The subsequent announcement by Arts Council England of its regularly funded organisations for 2008-2011 offered mixed fortunes for the membership and provided the backdrop to animated discussions at the conference in January in Brighton. The ABO is also striving to enhance its advocacy role within Scotland and Wales.

The conference itself continued the success of recent years and 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 Nicholas Kenyon for his invaluable contribution to orchestral life in the UK.

Healthy Orchestra Bronze Charter Marks were awarded during the year to English National Opera, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Opera North and the Royal College of Music, as well the first overseas Charter Mark to Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. The first Silver Charter Mark was awarded to the Royal Opera House. We must once again express our gratitude to the Musicians Benevolent Fund for supporting the Healthy Orchestra programme, as well as Noise training for chamber orchestras, during this year.

The ABO continued 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 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 2007/8

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 **Comprehensive Spending Review** and DJH Associates were engaged to provide political advice and support in advance of the announcement of the CSR for 2008-2011. We are grateful to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport for responding to the campaigning by the ABO and its partners within the arts industry and providing an increase in funding for Arts Council England.

The ABO met regularly during the year with representatives from the DCMS and Arts Council England. It co-ordinated a meeting of Scottish members with Scottish Arts Council, and held a meeting of Welsh members with a view to enhancing its advocacy role in Wales in the run-up to the annual conference in Cardiff in February 2009.

ABO/MU CASUAL CONCERT/FREELANCE ORCHESTRAL AGREEMENT

Negotiations with the Musicians Union were delayed due to the change of Director, and were concluded in October with a new agreement backdated to 1 September 2007. The ABO meets regularly with the MU through its working party comprised of Mark Pemberton, Director of the ABO, Tim Walker of the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Elaine Baines-Robins of City of London Sinfonia.

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 is developing guidance for the music and entertainment industry. The Director and Projects Manager took part in the launch of the HSE's draft *Sound Advice* website in July 2007.

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 City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, English National Opera, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Opera North and the Royal College of Music. The first Silver Charter Mark was awarded to the Royal Opera House.

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 Utrecht and Madrid during the year.

VISAS FOR VISITING ARTISTS

The ABO participated in the UK Border Agency's Arts & Entertainment Taskforce, in collaboration with the International Artists Managers Association, National Campaign for the Arts and other arts organisations, to ensure that the proposed Points Based System for migrants wishing to work in the UK on both a permanent and temporary basis would not pose a threat to the engagement of players, conductors and soloists.

COMMUNICATION

ABO CONFERENCE

The Conference, sponsored for the sixth time by **Classic FM**, and with **The Guardian** as its Media Partner, was held at the Brighton Thistle Hotel from 17 to 19 January 2008. Some 350 delegates attended and we were particularly delighted to welcome a delegation of concert hall managers from China, funded by the British Council/DCMS/FCO *Connections through Culture* programme. The Conference was opened by the Minister for the Arts, the Rt Hon Margaret Hodge MP, followed by the keynote speaker, musician and composer Nitin Sawhney. The Conference theme was *Local Roots, Global Reach*, which embraced community engagement, international touring and new technologies.

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 Rosanna Preston (MBF Chief Executive) to senior staff from the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, Opera North and the Royal College of Music. The first Silver Charter Mark was awarded to the Royal Opera House

The **ABO Award** was presented to Sir Nicholas Kenyon, Managing Director of the Barbican Centre, by Tim Walker, ABO Chair, during the pre-dinner reception at the Brighton Corn Exchange. Sir Nicholas was honoured for his support of British orchestras throughout his career at BBC Radio 3 and the BBC Proms.

Our hosts, the **Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra** under Barry Wordsworth gave the Conference Concert at the Brighton Dome, broadcast on BBC Radio 3. In addition, the Brighton Youth Orchestra performed during the dinner at the Brighton Corn Exchange, and gave a spirited accompaniment to the after-dinner speech by Professor Gavin Henderson CBE. The ABO gratefully acknowledges the support of Brighton & Hove Council and all the team at the Brighton Dome.

SPECIALIST MANAGER MEETINGS

Specialist Manager Meetings continued to form the backbone of ABO's events programme. Meetings for Chamber Orchestras, Concert and Orchestra, Education, Development & Sponsorship, Finance and Marketing Managers, along with Opera & Ballet and Scottish members, provide 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 on ***The Cultural Olympiad: The Role for Orchestras*** took place on 28 November 2007, prior to the Association's Annual General Meeting. The seminar explored plans for the Cultural Olympiad in the run-up to 2012 and the opportunities for orchestras to participate in this national celebration. Delegates heard from a panel which included:

- Jude Kelly, Chair of Culture, Ceremonies and Education at London 2012
- Bill Morris, Director of Culture, Ceremonies and Education at London 2012
- Leonie Sakey, Vision 2012 Project Manager, Arts Council England, London
- Katrina Duncan, 2012 Consultant, Youth Music
- Louise de Winter, Director, National Campaign for the Arts

The seminar also offered orchestras the opportunity to discuss their own plans and projects.

On Friday 7 March 2008, the **Paul Hamlyn Foundation** and the Association of British Orchestras organised an event at the Royal Opera House, courtesy of Paul Reeve and the ROH Education team.

This discussion kick-started a consultation process on how the Foundation might best support classical music organisations, and orchestras in particular, to develop their education and learning practices. It attracted well over 100 participants, mostly Education/Learning staff and Chief Executives/General Managers from ABO members.

Using the principle of a series of 'provocation papers', PHF and ABO identified five interesting projects that might challenge existing ways of working and influence possible new developments:

- Musical Futures
- Royal Opera House/Hertfordshire Music Service
- UK Opera Education Forum
- Sistema Scotland
- engage

These five presentations were followed by a discussion and question & answer session so that views could be shared of the potential impact they might have on orchestras and classical music organisations.

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.

In February 2008 the ABO published **A Sound Ear II**, the follow-up to its groundbreaking *A Sound Ear*, written by Alison Wright-Reid and published in 2001. This revised guidance updates the scientific evidence analysed in the original *A Sound Ear* and looks at the lessons learnt from the training offered by the ABO in 2004 and the steps subsequently taken by a representative sample of orchestras to deal with the impact of the legislation.

The ABO published the results of the noise measurements taken at the concert by Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra as part of the annual conference. The ABO is aiming to develop a database of noise measurements taken by its member orchestras.

The ABO also offers helplines on Contracts and VAT for the benefit of its members.

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 throughout 2007, coordinated by Fiona Harvey, the ABO's Early Years Cluster Programme Manager and funded by Youth Music.

Round A of the Cluster Programme consisted of two Clusters: (i) South West Cluster – Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra with Southampton and Dorset Music Services and Children's Centres in Southampton and Bournemouth and (ii) North East Cluster – 20,000 Voices working with vocal leaders, traditional musicians and instrumentalists from Live Music Now, with Children's Centres in Northumberland.

Round B of the Cluster Programme consisted of three Clusters: (i) CBSO with Sound Futures, Birmingham Conservatoire and Children's Centres in Birmingham, (ii) Hertfordshire Music Service, Britten Sinfonia and a Children's Centre in Bedwell, Stevenage and (iii) Leicestershire and Leicester City Arts in Education with Children's Centres in Leicester City and Leicestershire. Round A and most of Round B Cluster partners started their projects in the Autumn of 2007.

Round C of the Cluster Programme consisted of two Clusters: (i) Halle with Children's Centres in Cheshire and students from the RNCM and (ii) Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra with Children's Centres in Liverpool and the Wirral, plus students from Hope University, Liverpool.

NOISE TRAINING

Four training sessions on Noise for chamber orchestra managers and players, delivered by Alison Wright-Reid, took place during the year, in Edinburgh, Manchester and London. After the sessions, each orchestra was expected to develop a noise action plan that integrated with its health and safety policy. The training package included an element of after-care to help orchestras draft the plan. The ABO is grateful to the Musicians Benevolent Fund for funding the training programme.

WHERE DO I START?

The annual 'Where Do I Start?' seminar was held at the Barbican Centre in London. Over 50 delegates, from graduates to careers advisors, attended this 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 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 2008 was £35,333. The higher than expected surplus was the result of increased attendance at the conference and cost savings on salaries due to changes in staff. This resulted in the reserves increasing to £108,705.

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 Hilary Boulding, Director, Music Strategy, and her successor, Susanna Eastburn, and Dominic Fyfe, Senior Music Officer at Arts Council England, London, for their interest and involvement in the activities of the Association.

The ABO continued to enjoy rent free 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

Three new Full members joined the Association during the year: Gabrieli Consort & Players, English National Orchestra and Lancashire Sinfonietta. English Sinfonia re-joined after a year's absence.

GOVERNANCE

Michael Henson (Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra) stepped down from the Board at the AGM in November 2007, after ten years on the Board, the last three as Chair. Michael made a hugely positive contribution to the work of the Association, particularly during the ABO's successful campaign against the imposition of Class I National Insurance for freelance musicians.

Gavin Reid, Director of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, was elected to the Board, and Dawn Day, General Manager of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, was appointed to bring the number of orchestra representatives to seven and to ensure representation across the range of orchestras within the ABO's full membership. Following the resignation of the two co-opted directors, Patrick Frederick and Terri Anderson, Andrew Jowett of Symphony Hall, Birmingham, representing venues, and Chi-chi Nwanoku MBE, representing the interests of players, 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

Russell Jones resigned as Director to take up the position of Vice-President for Marketing & Membership Development at the League of American Orchestras. The new Director, Mark Pemberton, joined in July 2007.

Thorben Dittes resigned as Projects Manager to take up the position of Artistic Administrator at the Monteverdi Choir & Orchestra. His successor, Keith Motson, commenced employment in April 2008.

Nicola Oliver left the post of Membership Services Manager in October 2007. Following a change in responsibilities, Stacy Pobatschnig joined as Membership Services Officer in October but left in November to return to the USA. Cath Welsby was promoted from Intern to take up the position and remained with the ABO until her appointment as Contracts & Auditions Assistant for the BBC Symphony Orchestra in March 2008. Her replacement, Orla Molony, commenced employment 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.

The ABO is committed to providing meaningful internships for those seeking work experiences at the start of their careers. Rebecca Millward served as Intern from March to May 2007, Brian Orr from June to August 2007, Cath Welsby from September to November 2007 and Fraser Anderson from December 2007 to February 2008. Theresa Traynor commenced an internship from March 2008.

* * * * *

ABO BOARD

2007/08

Timothy Walker AM
Chair

Chief Executive & Artistic Director

London Philharmonic Orchestra

Dawn Day
Peter Harrap
Andrew Jowett
Stephen Maddock
Chi-chi Nwanoku MBE
Bob Riley
Gavin Reid
Simon Woods

Managing Director
Orchestra & Chorus Director
Director
Chief Executive

General Manager
Director
Chief Executive

Academy of St Martin in the Fields
Welsh National Opera
Symphony Hall, Birmingham
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra

Manchester Camerata
BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra
Royal Scottish National Orchestra

ABO STAFF

Mark Pemberton
Keith Motson
Orla Molony
Fiona Harvey
Chris Wright

Director
Projects Manager
Membership Services Officer
Early Years Programme Manager
Financial Consultant

Mark@abo.org.uk
Keith@abo.org.uk
Orla@abo.org.uk
Fiona@abo.org.uk
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