

CHAMBER ORCHESTRAS MEETING

WEDNESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2005, 10.30 – 3.30pm
TRUST ROOMS, ROYAL OPERA HOUSE



Chaired by Cathy Graham *General Manager, London Sinfonietta*

R E P O R T

Cathy Graham, *Managing Director, London Sinfonietta*, welcomed members to the meeting and introduced Joanna Morrison Mayo, *Projects Manager, Association of British Orchestras*.

ABO Conference 27 & 28 January 2006 The Sage Gateshead

Russell Jones, *Director, Association of British Orchestras* highlighted the dates, venue and themes of the 2006 ABO Conference; the themes being **Healthy**, **Engaging** and **Live**. He explained **Healthy** covered the health of the orchestra and its staff (and with support from the Musicians Benevolent Fund would include the launch of a Healthy Orchestra charter); **Engaging** covered relevance, outreach and education (at which Marc Jaffrey was to speak) and **Live** included new music.

Russell reminded the group that booking information was available on www.abo.org.uk.

Listen Up! 2006

Russell Jones confirmed that the *Listen Up!* festival would run again in the calendar month of October 2006. He explained that the two themes were **concert presentation**, for which BBC Radio3 were offering a £5k prize, and music by **British living composers**. Peter Maxwell Davies had been asked to be the festival's patron and would be commissioned by the BBC to write an encore. BBC Radio 3 would be broadcasting concerts during the month as it did with Listen Up in 2004.

Russell explained that sponsorship was currently being sought for Musicians on Call to run as part of Listen Up! 2006.

There was a group discussion on how the BBC (particularly local BBC) could be further engaged in the project. David Curtis, *Artistic Director and Principal Conductor, Orchestra of the Swan* suggested that there be an advert in the BBC Proms programme for the festival. It was agreed that Musicians on Call stories provided perfect subject matter to interest local broadcasting. Cathy Graham urged the group that orchestras themselves should take the initiative themselves wherever possible.

ICON (International Chamber Orchestras Network)

Cathy Graham explained to the group that the ICON project, the planned second round of chamber orchestra funding, had folded and that the monies involved had gone back to Arts Council England. She explained that the model for this network has been unsuccessful - venue take up had not been good.

It was suggested by the group that this initiative would be better used to expand the Orchestras Live festival, making it longer.

Cathy Graham suggested that it would be good if the ABO could proactively be involved in venue model discussions with Arts Council England to ensure any such future project was more likely to succeed.

National Insurance

Russell Jones summarised the latest situation for attendees explaining that the issue was being handled in three different ways:

- 1- A lobbyist had been engaged using funds collected from ABO members. Invoices had gone out to all members.
- 2- Arts Council England had engaged lawyers BLP to look at the historical debt and a way forward to the future with HMRC.
- 3- Charles Russell lawyers being funded by Arts Council England were addressing future contractual issues

Russell confirmed that there was a meeting scheduled with HMRC in early 2006.

Working groups from the London, freelance and chamber orchestras were working with Charles Russell to ensure that contractual changes were applicable to all sectors.

Dawn Day, *General Manager, Academy of St Martin in the Fields* asked the group if they had made provision in their budgets for National Insurance. Julian Knight, *General Manager, New London Orchestra* confirmed that they had placed a contingency sentence in their accounts and there was some discussion over the wording of this.

Orchestras Live Update

David Richardson, *Director, Eastern Orchestral Board*

David spoke to the group giving them an update on the Orchestras Live festival.

He handed round the latest booklet on the festival, which he explained would be sent out in the post shortly.

Noise

Cathy Graham voiced concerns that, as a sector, chamber orchestras were behind on preparations for the Noise legislation and this was generally agreed by the group. It was suggested that Alison Wright-Reid attend the next Chamber Orchestras meeting.

AOB

Education Managers

Cathy Graham noted that the London Sinfonietta had had problems recruiting for an Education Manager vacancy recently and noted a dearth in senior Education Managers. Several other members of the group had also experienced this problem. She explained that they had overcome this by engaging an Education Consultant who worked 2 days a week and then employing a full time Education Projects Manager (at a less senior level to that originally planned) who was being mentored by the Education Consultant. She asked whether there was a need for the ABO to create a CPD programme for Education Managers and suggested that this should be discussed at the Education Managers' meeting, the Annual Conference and the next Chamber Orchestras meeting.

Date of Next Meeting: 24th May 2006