

# CHAMBER ORCHESTRAS MEETING

WEDNESDAY 24 MAY 2006, 10.30 – 4.00pm  
FOUNTAIN ROOM, BARBICAN, LONDON



Chaired by Cathy Graham *General Manager, London Sinfonietta*

## R E P O R T

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Cathy Graham, *Managing Director, London Sinfonietta*, welcomed members to the meeting. During the introductions Cathy discussed the staff changes at the London Sinfonietta with Gillian Moore moving to the South Bank Centre to work as Jude Kelly's Assistant Artistic Director.

Antony Lewis-Crosby, *Managing Director, London Mozart Players* discussed forming a working group to finalise the proposal to DCMS to aid the Treasury bid. This meeting should take place before the end of June and include Russell, Antony, Peter Helps with invites to all to attend.

### ABO Conference 2007

During the discussion regarding the conference it was suggested that Jude Kelly was invited to talk about her vision for the South Bank Centre.

There was also a suggestion that a management artist was invited to the autumn meeting in order to break down barriers between artists and orchestra managers.

### Listen Up! 2006

Joanna Morrison Mayo, *Projects Manager, ABO* confirmed that 25 orchestras had signed up for the Musicians on Call scheme. The Cultural Revolution initiative was being organised by Mark Prescott at the Major's office and there would be an Open Rehearsal weekend in September. Listing for all Listen Up! concerts would be collated via the ABO, a spreadsheet to be completed by the end of June. These listings would then appear on the BBC events website.

### National Insurance

Russell Jones, *Director, ABO* explained that the situation was the same as the end of April when the Chamber orchestras met for a NIC meeting.

### Orchestras Live Update

Cathy Graham gave an update on the Orchestras Live project being delivered by the Eastern Orchestral Board. Funding of £560,000 had been secured for 2006 – 2008 and this would enable EOB to expand the number of concerts and locations reached.

Dawn Day, *General Manager, Academy of St Martin in the Field* told the group how touring funding had run into difficulties. Dawn had been told by the ACE London Music Officer that touring in future would need to be 'significantly different'.

Cathy Graham suggested that clarity was required over the policy of ACE and the potential clash with the EOB. It was suggested that Russell should talk to Hilary Boulding about the current policy regarding funding.

**Action** : ABO to invite David Richardson along to autumn SMM to talk about the changes ahead for EOB.

## Special instrument fees

There was a discussion regarding the special fees applicable for certain period instruments and the policy regarding doubling fees.

## Publishers' hire charges

There was a discussion regarding hire charges and fees for CD downloads and the differences in charges between different countries and first performances etc.

**Action:** ABO to invite a publisher along to the next meeting, such as Boosey & Hawkes, Schott or Music Sales.

## Noise Update – Alison Wright-Reid

Alison explained how regulations around Noise were introduced by the Health & Safety (H&S) Executive in the 1980s. During the 1990s Alison worked for the BBC. The H&S law in the UK is different to the rest of the world and new rules are being introduced in 2008 to limit the average exposure during the working day to 85 decibels.

Currently a working group are meeting once a week to discuss Health & Safety issues. Representatives from the MU, BECTU, Equity, SoLT/TMA, ROH, ENO, ABO, BBC, MoD are at these meetings.

Alison explained how the exposure to Noise for musicians was driven by instrument, repertoire and locality. Research so far has recorded various noise levels in orchestras, such as 75 decibels for brass in a Haydn piece to 85-90 for strings for Mahler I. There is little information for chamber orchestras.

Meters costing approximately £1000 would monitor the performance and give average readings. It is also possible to hire equipment on a weekly basis.

Many problems arise with monitoring noise for freelance musicians as they are their own employer and employee concurrently. For the duration of the performance/rehearsal session they are also the orchestra's employee. In future freelancers will be expected to get their own hearing tests (with certificates). The H&S executive will be checking the Noise legislation and employers will be expected by law to keep records and assessments.

Alison noted that MU members can get hearing tests for £15 (and get custom moulded earplugs fitted at the same time). There was a potential e-learning training package being put together by MU/BAPAM. It was not possible for employers to pass on the charges to employees for any H&S equipment.

**Action :** Joanna Morrison Mayo to investigate if funding (from MU, MBF, HSE or BAPAM) could be made available to train core players in the chamber orchestras. The training can be shared between more than one chamber group.

## AOB

There were no items raised.

**Date of Next Meeting:** 15 November 2006