

# ORCHESTRA & CONCERT MANAGERS MEETING

Wednesday 1 November 2006, 10.30am – 3.30pm  
BECHSTEIN ROOM, WIGMORE HALL, LONDON



Chaired by Naomi Faulkner, *Concerts Director, Britten Sinfonia*

## R E P O R T

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Naomi Faulkner, *Concerts Director, Britten Sinfonia* welcomed members to Wigmore Hall.

### ABO Conference – 18-20 January 2007 – Manchester

Russell Jones, *Director, Association of British Orchestras* informed attendees that the annual conference would be held in Manchester this year, hosted by the Manchester Camerata, Hallé, BBC Philharmonic and Northern Chamber Orchestra. The conference format had moved back 24 hours and would take place from Thursday to Saturday, mostly located at the Town Hall. There would also be a one day education event at the Royal Northern College of Music called Early Years and Starting Careers.

Russell then added that the programme was published in the 11th November issue of *Classical Music* and explained that sessions were produced in order for managers to make day trips in order to save costs. Speakers would include Peter Hewitt, *Chief Executive, Arts Council England*, who would be discussing his manuscript and the campaign to embrace the arts, and Charlotte Higgins, *The Guardian* who would chair sessions. Russell went on to explain that the Early Years and Starting Careers day would establish the relationship between orchestras and conservatoires, whilst also focusing on the outreach work of other sectors. Other key topics of the conference would be Technology, Individual Giving, Branding and the return of Mission Money Models. A middle Management Academy day would also take place, which was being funded by Arts and Business New Partners and haysmacintyre. Russell highlighted that prices would be frozen at last years' rates and that Classic FM had renewed their sponsorship of the conference, also offering bursaries to first-time conference attendees.

### Healthy Orchestra

Owen Mortimer, *Acting Projects Manager, Association of British Orchestras* informed attendees that with the Musicians Benevolent Fund's sponsorship, the ABO would be issuing Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. Guidelines for orchestras were being put in place and the healthy orchestra sessions would also return. A second edition of *A sound Ear* was also in the pipeline.

An information sheet regarding the Noise at Work regulations is available for download from the ABO website.

Elaine Baines Robins, *General Manager, City of London Sinfonia* noted that these issues did not reflect the effect on chamber orchestras and that a chamber and freelance orchestras' forum should be organised with the Musicians Union's involvement.

### Hand Baggage Regulations

A general discussion took place, with key problems being noticed on Ryanair and Eurostar. Other than that most flights had returned to normal. In some cases, like Poland, there was still the need for instrumental passports as problems had arisen.

### EI01 applications for European touring

Steve Thomas, *Projects Manager, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment* informed attendees on the problems that arose on a trip to Paris. A summary sheet of information is available to download from the website.

### **Health & Safety for concerts and touring**

David Wilson, *Orchestral Manager, London Mozart Players* and Elaine Baines Robins, *General Manager, City of London Sinfonia* invited attendees to introduce questions that could be presented to Christine Critchley, *Human Factors Consultant, System Concepts* in the afternoon session.

### **MU Agreements**

Bill Kerr, *National Organiser - Orchestras, Musicians' Union* informed attendees that there was now an updated version of the News Access agreements and that this would be available on the revamped website in various languages (Russian, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Spanish and Turkish).

In regards to visas, the United States included a passage in the senate immigration bill stating that the maximum waiting time would be 45 days. This is all subject to change if the democrats take control, so only marginal improvements would be expected.

Michael Sweeney and Peter Thomas, *Musicians Union*, added that a one page document was also being produced to secure copyright for archive recordings. They were still lobbying PPL for broadcasting royalties for as far back as 1960 and 1970. They understood that PPL were distributing the money in bulk and had recently merged with PAMRA.

Naomi Faulkner then added that a chamber/freelance orchestras' forum needed to be organised with the MU's involvement.

### **Health & Safety**

Christine Critchley, *Human Factors Consultant, System Concepts ([www.system-concepts.com](http://www.system-concepts.com))* led a Health & Safety demonstration from the stage of the Wigmore Hall. Christine was able to show safe ways to lift heavy objects, such as stacks of chairs, piano lids, etc. Also carrying techniques were demonstrated. Questions were taken from the attendees and David and Elaine also facilitated some useful tips to aid the job of the concerts manager.

### **AOB**

Naomi suggested that the date of next meeting should be timed in conjunction with the next ABO/MU agreement date. It would also be interesting to invite MU advisors again. Naomi asked for the up-to-date MU agreement to be placed on the ABO website.

Nicola informed the group that Artifax would not be running an OPAS session at the conference. Instead a specialist day in central London had been arranged for 6<sup>th</sup> Feb 2007.

Rod Bain raised the issue of Instrument Insurance for freelance orchestras, noting that the Northern Sinfonia were about to get their own insurance through HSBC.

Elaine Baines Robins informed attendees that the CLS were finding it difficult to distribute royalties from Scandinavian countries as they were unsure of which musicians were playing and which piece it was.

Many attendees reported that rehearsal space was quite sparse and asked for the ABO to produce a list of rehearsal rooms to go on the website.