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ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ORCHESTRAS

Top orchestras grapple with carbon emissions and the credit crunch at UK's leading classical music conference

ABO Annual Conference 2009
25-27 February, Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff

The UK's top orchestra managers will tackle sustainability – both their own and the planet's – when they meet at the Association of British Orchestras' Annual Conference in Cardiff in February.

More than 300 delegates from 65 professional orchestras across the country – including the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Scottish Ballet and the London Mozart Players – will thrash out ways to ensure orchestras help the UK reach its target of cutting harmful emissions by 80 per cent by 2050.

'Orchestras exist by touring,' says Keith Motson, ABO Projects Manager. 'Whether it's flying the London Symphony Orchestra to China, or driving the Manchester Camerata to Cumbria, it's all touring and some of our members exist purely on doing that. But we need to balance economic survival – and vital outreach work – with environmental responsibility.'

Economic climate change will also be high on the conference agenda. Delegates will grapple with how best to respond to the credit crunch and its possible effects, not just on box office takings but also on corporate sponsorship and individual giving.

'The ABO plans to make advocacy its top priority,' says Mark Pemberton, ABO Director. 'It's clear that whichever political party is in power in the next few years will have to deal with spiralling public expenditure. Our job will be to make the strongest possible case for spending on the arts, and classical music in particular, and we need orchestras to help us build the arguments.'

Experts from inside and outside the industry will join in the key debates, including: Chris Giles, Economics Editor, *Financial Times*; John Holden, DEMOS; David Shukman, BBC Environment Correspondent; John Vidal, Environment Editor, *The Guardian*; Louise de Winter, Director, National Campaign for the Arts; and Colin Tweedy, Chief Executive, Arts and Business. The conference will be opened by Rt Hon The Lord Kinnock PC, Chair of the British Council.

For further information or to register for the conference please visit www.abo.org.uk or call 0207 287 0333.

Notes for editors

About the ABO

The Association of British Orchestras (founded in 1947) exists:

- To be an advocate for the orchestral community of the UK ensuring that the voice of British orchestras is heard by all relevant parties.
- To provide the principal means by 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 training and continuing professional development opportunities for all levels of orchestral management.

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