

Press release

4 July 2008

## Welsh National Opera Orchestra Director Appointed to the ABO Board

The ABO has announced the appointment of **Peter Harrap**, Chorus and Orchestra Director at Welsh National Opera, to its Board of Directors. Harrap replaces Hazel Province, who has stepped down following her appointment as Director of Planning at the Royal Opera House.

**Timothy Walker**, Chairman of the ABO, said: "The ABO is very pleased that Peter Harrap has joined the Board to take over the position vacated by Hazel Province. He will be a worthy successor as the representative of opera and ballet orchestras in the UK and, with the next ABO Conference located in Cardiff in February 2009, will play a pivotal role in finalising plans for this significant event."

In the early years of his career Harrap combined working as a professional trombonist with roles in orchestra management, first at Scottish Ballet and then at D'Oyly Carte Opera Company. However, his appointment as Orchestra Manager at Welsh National Opera (WNO) in 1992 marked the start of a dedicated management career.

Harrap now oversees the management of the entire WNO music department – the orchestra, the chorus, the company's music staff and staff conductors, together with the music library.

The other members of the ABO Board are: **Dawn Day**, General Manager, Academy of St Martin in the Fields; **Andrew Jowett**, Director, Symphony Hall, Birmingham; **Stephen Maddock**, Chief Executive, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra; **Chi-chi Nwanoku** MBE, Musician; **Gavin Reid**, Director, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra; **Bob Riley**, General Manager, Manchester Camerata; **Timothy Walker** AM (Chairman), Chief Executive and Artistic Director, London Philharmonic Orchestra; and **Simon Woods**, Chief Executive, Royal Scottish National Orchestra *ends*

## **Biography**

Peter Harrap was born in Manchester. He went to King's School, Macclesfield in Cheshire and his musical education as a trombone player continued from 1975 at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, where he studied with Denis Wick, Eric Cree and Peter Gane. He moved from London in 1981 and has since lived and worked in Glasgow, and then Cardiff. He continued to play professionally until he moved to Cardiff in 1992.

For all but two years of his early playing career, he has been heavily involved in orchestra management; firstly as Assistant Orchestra Manager at Scottish Ballet (where he was already Principal Trombone).

In 1988, when the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company was re-launched, he was asked to form the orchestra from scratch, then to be Orchestra Manager and also play. This he did for the London-based company (from Glasgow) for just over 3 years. Very many of the young players of that orchestra, first put together exactly 20 years ago, have gone on to have extremely successful careers in the profession.

Whilst based in Scotland, Peter combined the above positions with freelance playing work for all of the Scottish orchestras; most particularly with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra where, in addition, he was a founder member of SCO Brass – an innovative and successful group that was heavily involved in formal recital and education work throughout Scotland. He was a busy instrumental teacher and youth orchestra coach, as well as being involved with additional orchestra management work for organisations such as the Edinburgh Festival and the Scottish Theatre Company.

Peter moved to Welsh National Opera in Cardiff in March 1992, originally as Orchestra Manager. Three years later, concerts management was added to his remit as in this respect, the activity of the orchestra was now increasing considerably. In 2001, he moved to a new position becoming Chorus and Orchestra Director. He now oversees the management of the entire WNO music department – the orchestra, the chorus, the company's music staff and staff conductors, together with the music library.

WNO is the largest touring opera company in the UK, operating throughout Wales and England, performing well over 100 main-scale theatre performances in each year together with many orchestral and also chorus concerts. In addition, the Company produces a fully integrated and significant community and education programme on many levels, through WNO Max.

## **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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