

Concert Promoters' Committee *NEWSLETTER* September 2005

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 - Norman Cutter gives our first 'Promoter's Profile'
- (If you would like your society profile featured, please send 600 words to b.ran@virgin.net)

Who we are now

Lewis Orchard retired from the committee by rotation and was eligible for re-election. At one point there was nearly the need for an election, but in the end we only had the one nomination and Lewis was re-elected. But we have also had a number of volunteers to act as 'listeners' - reporting to the committee about artists who have applied to the scheme (but who are not yet known to the committee).

The **committee** is now:

Berkeley Ranby (<i>Chairman</i>)	
Mike Alexander (<i>Network Co-ordinator</i>)	
Shirley Mitchell (<i>Secretary</i>)	Sue Hudson (<i>Treasurer</i>)
Rosemary Allen	Richard Phillips
Lewis Orchard	Tomas Sherwood
Kate Fearnley (<i>Co-opted</i>)	Linda Young (<i>First Call Director</i>)

Consultant: Frances Shepherd

Listeners:

Peter Marchbank	Chris Thomas
Anna Hill	Eleanor Lamb
Paul Cutts	Richard Turner
Ken Griffin	

Recent Progress

You should all have received your Concert Promoters' Network brochure back in May. About 220 societies returned the Reply Slip in the last newsletter (120 did not) and so brochures were sent to the Concert Organiser and additional members as requested. Mike Alexander is currently looking after this database, so if further changes are required please let him know at: 01332 862 549 or cpn@makingmusic.org.uk

Tomas Sherwood has been creating a web site with help from the committee and this will be launched shortly. It will be linked to the national web site and accessed via the 'About Us' link.

Philip & Dorothy Green Award for Young Concert Artists

This year's award winners are outstanding and delegates to Conference in York have been able to hear at least 3 of them.

The artists' fee until Christmas 2006 is £190, and the first 50 Societies to apply for them also get a £100 subsidy towards that. As I write, about half of the fully subsidised engagements have been snapped up by

societies from Dunblane to Weymouth performing recitals, oratorios and concertos. In recent years I have been delighted by the number of orchestras engaging the artists, especially for less well-known works. Don't delay - get your application in as soon as your season starts again!

Kate Fearnley kate@makingmusic.org.uk

Development of Voluntary Promoters Programme

In December 2004, Orla Lonergan (née Martin) moved onwards and upwards within Making Music, and the excellent programme she had been running was passed on to myself, Laura Drane (Young Professional Seminars) and Julie Cramer (Education Tours).

The programme has now drawn to a close, and we are currently in the process of finalising reports, preparing case studies and sourcing new avenues to carry on the programme in another guise. Below is a brief round-up of the Development of Voluntary Promoters Programme, 2003 - 2005.

Paul Abbott Promoters Development Officer Making Music 2-4 Great Eastern Street
London EC2A 3NW Tel: 0870 909 2613 (direct) Email: Paul@makingmusic.org.uk

Education Tours

The aim of the Education Tours was to allow a number of voluntary promoters to undertake audience development and education work with professional artists.

No fewer than 21 societies took part in the Education Tours, which took place throughout England and Scotland. Approximately 1,850 students attended in total, aged 5 - 18, with reactions including "I like the way the conductor uses his hands to tell them to go high and low and slow and fast". Many Societies noticed an increase in the number of first-time attenders as a result of the workshops, and commented on the re-evaluation of their process of contacting schools.

Young Professional Seminars

These seminars were aimed at informing graduating music students about the promoting societies currently within Making Music Membership. Each seminar was held as a one-day event, with issues including:

- How Promoting Societies operate.
- Accessing the voluntary sector.
- Expectations of the voluntary sector.
- Developing self-marketing skills.

32 students attended the three seminars, held at the Royal College of Music, London, University of Huddersfield and Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester.

Feedback from the seminars was excellent, with strong support from the universities and from the students.

Promoting Societies' Development Project

Eight Societies around England took part in this strand of the programme, which was to develop the activities in relation to the promotion of contemporary music.

Activities promoted took a number of guises, for example:

- New commissions: Hinckley Music Club - Colin Riley's *Shenanigans* for clarinet and piano; Maidenhead Music Society - Quentin Thomas' clarinet trio to complement Mozart's *Kegelstatt Trio* (The Skittles).
- Education initiatives: Birmingham Chamber Music Society, composer Liz Johnson, Birmingham conservatoire students and secondary students; Plymouth Jazz Club with saxophonist Tony Kofi and local young people; Douglas Music Parbold with Celtic music for primary schools.
- Collaborations: Barnes Music Society with Filmclub, Barnes and Mortlake.
- Alternative presentations: Woking Music Society with Royal Academy of Music PhD student Briony Williams discussing contemporary women composers.
- Marketing techniques, including web-based marketing; improved flyer images; approaching community radio; communication with groups such as the Women's Institute, Mothers' Union and Music Action Zones.

Audience surveys were conducted at each performance. Responses indicated that each concert had an average of 40% first-time attendees.

Showcase Concert

Imagining Audiences was established as an event designed to enable promoting societies to find out more about audience development and programming with regard to "adventurous" musical styles. The first showcase took place on Saturday 18 September 2004 at Manchester's Bridgewater Hall, with performances by the Thalia Ensemble, Blake Wilner quartet and London Jing Kun Opera Association.

The next Showcase Concert took place at the Making Music 2005 annual conference in York on 24-25 September. **Classic Rhythm**, one of the Making Music Concert Promoters' Network Artists 2006-2007, performed a number of pieces and highlighted their education workshops. Tuba quartet **Tubalaté**, also Network artists, have performed and championed all styles of new music, and brought over 300 new works to the repertoire. They performed a number of pieces and discussed their approach to performing to a wide range of audiences.

Tours Planning Conferences

Three Tours Planning conferences took place throughout the programme. The aim of the conferences was to give networking opportunities to representatives of voluntary promoters and to enable them to plan in collaboration mini-tours for artists and ensembles in their regions.

The conferences were held in Peterborough, London and Dorking, during 2003 and 2004.

Case studies

As a result of the two-year Development of Voluntary Promoters Programme, we have created around 30 new case studies on the many issues surrounding promoting. We hope to have these available online and for postage very soon, so please keep an eye on the Making Music website,
<http://www.makingmusic.org.uk>

What have we learned?

There is an enormous range of promoting societies within Making Music's membership and a great number of experienced, knowledgeable people.

While some projects have exceeded expectations, not all the projects have been resounding successes. Excellent relationships have been developed; revised pricing structures to enable a more family-focused concerts and further education workshops are some of the positive outcomes.

This is a time when promoters have a large part to play in the development of their local community - developing audiences not for the now, but for tomorrow. I recently spent a day with Sowerby Music in Northallerton, North Yorkshire, and experienced a society that has grown in the past decade to entrench itself locally as a provider not only of artistic excellence and social gatherings, but of music education for young people on a vast scale.

What's next?

Over the past months I have been in discussions with a number of organisations and funders, and working within the Making Music Business Development Team to devise new strands of activity.

We are currently in the middle of an application process in collaboration with Live Music Now. In addition to this, I am also in early discussions with similar voluntary arts umbrella bodies including Jazz Services and Folk Arts England to collaborate on a national audience development scheme aimed at broadening audiences for live music over a number of genres.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Concert Promoters Committee for their dedication and outstanding representation of voluntary promoters nationally. If you would like more information on the opportunities offered by Making Music, please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the Making Music staff or representatives nationally and in your area.

Promoter's Profile: Live at St Wilfreds!

St Wilfrid's Church dates back to the 12th Century at the head of a picturesque street in Grappenhall, Warrington.

The first concert was on 4th October 1991, attracted an attendance of 140 and went under the banner "Live at St Wilfrid's!" - a title giving the impression of activity, dynamism and energy. The concert went well and people suggested other concerts. A need for regular concerts was established and a mailing list produced.

By 1993 our brochure covered 11 concerts, (7 of which by professional artists). A network of 9 shops that acted as ticket outlets was established. Season tickets were introduced in 1994. The mailing list rose to over 300 and newsletters were sent out 3 times per annum.

When our mailing list reached 450, a questionnaire was sent via someone who was studying Arts Management. We felt it would elicit more replies as it would help towards her degree. The response to the questionnaire was over 40%. Amongst the answers given:

- 43% said they decided to go to a concert at least a month in advance
- 2% decided on the day.
- 54 % were never influenced by posters
- 20% were influenced occasionally.

The pleasing aspect was that the overwhelming majority liked the variety of artists and music provided.

We introduced "Patrons" tickets incorporating reserved seats and a mention in the programme. This allow Patrons, if they so wish, to have a meal at the nearby pub and take their seats at about 7.20pm for

a 7.30pm start. We raise roughly £400 extra revenue through this.

We make use of Grants available through North West Classical Music Tours by selecting artists from their brochure. We also take advantage of the discounted fees negotiated for multiple bookings.

Hence we have revenue enhancement by the Patrons scheme and cost reduction through the use of specific artists on offer also by The Countess of Munster Musical Trust, The Concert Promoters Network and The Young Concert Artists Award (the latter two organised by Making Music). We also give opportunities to young local musicians to perform with a professional orchestra.

When our mailing list again built up to 470, we issued another questionnaire to be completed in order to remain on the list. We received back good information, reduced the list to 218 and saved 250 mailings three times per annum - getting on for £200 per annum plus a lot of wasted effort.

Apart from "word of mouth", a "diary" was the most effective reminder of our concerts. Mini-brochures' suitable as a bookmark or, when folded, to slip into a purse or wallet was the other popular method of reminding people about our concerts. Our website is quoted on all publicity material otherwise a valuable resource is wasted.

We received national publicity in the March 2004 edition of Classic fM Magazine. We were described as one of ten 'secret' venues that "attract some of the world's finest classical artists" and entice people because of "a magical location, special acoustic, sheer ambience or all three".

Norman Cutter

Large Print edition of this newsletter

If you would like a large print version of this newsletter, please contact
Berkeley Ranby, 25 Demage Lane, Chester CH2 1EL

Tel: 01244 381 995 E-mail: b.ranby@makingmusic.org.uk