



GUILDFORD CHAMBER CHOIR

Guildford Chamber Choir wishes to appoint a Principal Conductor with effect from 1st September 2018. For just over 11 years the choir has been led by Steven Grahl who has recently been appointed to be the conductor of Schola Cantorum of Oxford. Previous Principal Conductors of the choir include Stephen Farr, Owen Rees and Peter Wright.

Guildford Chamber Choir aims to bring to Surrey audiences a wide range of music performed in fresh and exciting ways, all the time aiming for the highest standards. We are an auditioned choir meeting usually for six two-hour rehearsals for each performance. We rehearse on different weekday evenings to avoid impinging unduly on members' other commitments. Normally we undertake three main concerts each season, which are usually on Saturdays. Usually around thirty members take part in each concert, depending on availability. Our practice is to rehearse without an accompanist. Professional accompanists are employed for concerts where required and usually at least one concert each season involves professional soloists and an instrumental ensemble.

Recent programmes have featured Monteverdi's *1610 Vespers*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, and J S Bach's *Magnificat* and more recent music such as James Macmillan's *Cantos Sagrados*, Janet Wheeler's *Magnificat cum Angelis*, Will Todd's *Mass in Blue* and Philip Moore's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day* (a companion piece for Britten's *St. Nicolas* commissioned to mark the choir's 30th anniversary).

As well as concerts, we organise workshop days and visit cathedrals to sing when the cathedral's regular choir is taking a break. We also undertake short tours abroad.

We are keen to work with other local groups and organisations. Recent collaborators include Guildford Jazz, Surrey Mozart Players, and The Occam Singers.

All our main concerts are organised in conjunction with a local charity. At each concert, the charity's representatives are given an opportunity to talk about its work and take a retiring collection.

The management of the choir, which is a Registered Charity No. 1074661, is in the hands of a committee consisting of a Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and up to seven other members. The committee usually meets not more than four times a year. The Principal Conductor is entitled and actively encouraged to attend committee meetings, but is not a member and may not vote. The choir holds an Annual General Meeting at which the Principal Conductor reports to the whole membership.

Principal Conductor's responsibilities

It is the Principal Conductor's responsibility to:

1. Establish dates for concerts in consultation with the committee, and choose the repertoire for each concert.
2. Establish the rehearsal schedule for each concert in good time and agree the participation of members in performances.
3. Audition potential members of the choir and make recommendations to the committee about admission to membership.
4. Be present at all rehearsals and concerts or appoint a competent deputy in case of unavoidable absence.
5. Procure the services of any musicians, instrumental or vocal, required to take part in concerts at least eight weeks in advance of the concert date, subject to financial budgets agreed by the committee.
6. Attend AGMs, and EGMs and, where possible, committee meetings.
7. Liaise with the Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, and committee members over choir matters in a timely fashion.

Selection criteria

The successful candidate will be:

1. A skilled choral conductor able to demonstrate a sustained record of accomplishment, commensurate with the stage of their career that they have reached.
2. Able to lead rehearsals in a way that is both enjoyable and makes the best use of limited time, remaining calm under pressure.
3. An efficient and effective planner of music projects, able to build good relationships with members of the committee and to work within budgets and to deadlines.
4. Able to maintain and improve the vocal health and musicianship of the choir.
5. Able to develop the choir's reputation as the promoter of interesting and imaginative concerts.

Contractual arrangements

The Principal Conductor will be appointed by, and responsible to, the committee. The current fee for a concert with six rehearsals is £1,170. This fee is reviewed annually. The choir normally undertakes three concerts of this type in each season. Remuneration for other events, such as workshops and tours, would be negotiated separately. The appointment to the position of Principal Conductor is as an independent contractor and not an employee.

Applications

Applications, including a CV and a statement addressing each of the selection criteria, should be emailed to the Secretary of the choir, Emma Humphreys, at gccpcapplication@gmail.com. Applicants are asked also to provide sample programmes for three concerts, which could be used as a basis for a forthcoming season. Across the three programmes, candidates should aim for a varied balance of repertoire, including one concert with a chamber instrumental ensemble, and the other two a cappella or with small accompanying forces. Recent concert posters are displayed on the choir's website in the repertoire section.

Applicants should supply the names and contact details of two referees.

Applications will close at 12:00 noon UK time on Tuesday 3rd April 2018. The right to accept or reject applications received after the closing date is reserved.

Interview procedure

A shortlist of candidates will be selected for interview. Interviews will take place during the day on Saturday 21st April 2018. Following those interviews not more than three candidates will each be invited to undertake a short audition conducting the choir during the evening of Tuesday 1st May 2018. The interviews and audition will take place in Guildford. The referees of the candidates shortlisted for interview will be approached.

Following the auditions the post will be offered to the committee's preferred candidate, based on the recommendation of the sub-committee. We regret that expenses for attending the interview or, where applicable, the audition will not be paid.

Interviews will be undertaken by

Roger Miller (Chair)

Lesley Meyer (Vice Chair)

Miranda Johnson (Committee member)

The committee will be advised by Jeremy Summerly, Director of Music of St Peter's College, Oxford, broadcaster and freelance conductor.

Data Protection Information provided by applicants will be held securely and used only in connection with the recruitment process. It will not be disclosed to any third party and will be destroyed at the conclusion of the process.