

# TONALIS COMPANY OF SINGERS

## A NEW VISION OF SINGING IN CHOIRS

Classical

World  
Musics

Early Music

Folk

Contemporary

West Gallery  
Shape Note

Sacred

Gospel



© W.Hughes wren@232.org

OPEN UP TO A NEW WORLD OF CHORAL SINGING

- ◆ Sing an Extraordinary Range of Choral Music including Glorious Sacred and Seasonal Musics
- ◆ Develop the Freedom of Your Voice
- ◆ Go Deeper into Music

*Tonalis*

Choir Leader: Michael Deason-Barrow

Choir Meeting Times: 1 Weekend / Month

- Saturday - Full Choir
- Sunday - Semi Chorus

VENUE - Tonalis Music Centre, Stroud, Gloucestershire.  
Enquiries: Tel./Fax: 01666-890460 / info@tonalismusic.co.uk

# A NEW VISION OF CHOIRS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

*There is a change going on today in the World of Singing in Choirs.*

e.g. New alternative voices are sounding out from the wellsprings of world, early and contemporary musics. These voices - allied to a wider vision of musicing that includes the creativity of choral improvisation, etc. - are stretching the boundaries of choral singing.

So, if you are looking for an amazing choir to sing in, that -

i) truly loves what it does,

ii) has a compelling vision, and

iii) takes a pride in striving for 'a cappella' singing of the highest quality -

take a look at 'Tonalis Company of Singers' - directed by Michael Deason-Barrow - which consists of a **CHAMBER CHOIR** of 35 Voices and a **SEMI-CHORUS** of 16 Singers.

## TONALIS COMPANY OF SINGERS

is where the striving for choral excellence, well blended free voices, stylistically informed practices, and vocal/musical development of

**GOOD CLASSICAL, EARLY AND CONTEMPORARY MUSIC CHAMBER CHOIRS**

meets

the socially inclusive ethos and oral repertoire of **COMMUNITY CHOIRS** (e.g. World Musics).

**We Invite You to :**

**OPEN UP TO OTHER SIDES OF CHORAL SINGING AND  
DISCOVER A NEW WORLD OF EXPANDED MUSICAL HORIZONS.**

e.g.

- SING AN EXTRAORDINARY RANGE OF MUSICAL AND VOCAL STYLES
- SING GLORIOUS SACRED MUSICS - (e.g. John Tavener)
- EXPLORE AN INTEGRATED HOLISTIC APPROACH TO VOCAL DEVELOPMENT
- BRING CREATIVE IMAGINATION INTO REHEARSALS (e.g. Improvisation)
- EXPLORE BODY-MIND-VOICE APPROACHES (e.g. Alexander Technique)
- SING NEW MUSIC INSPIRED BY NEW MUSICAL PARADIGMS - (e.g. J. MacMillan)

*If you are interested in this new and holistic approach to choral singing, come and join this cutting edge community of singers whose inspiring performances are demonstrating the new possibilities available to choirs today.*

# SING THE WHOLE WORLD OF MUSIC

- ◆ NEW CHORAL MUSIC FOR OUR TIME, e.g. Tavener, Gorecki and MacMillan
- ◆ GLORIOUS MEDIEVAL & RENAISSANCE MUSIC from Hildegard of Bingen to Tallis
- ◆ BAROQUE, CLASSICAL & ROMANTIC MASTERPIECES from Bach and Mozart to Bruckner
- ◆ SOARING SACRED CHANTS, e.g. Gregorian, Byzantine, Native American and Irish
- ◆ ELEMENTAL WORLD CHORAL TRADITIONS from Bulgaria and Georgia to Africa
- ◆ SEASONAL SONGS OF CEREMONY FROM ENGLISH AND CELTIC FOLK TRADITIONS
- ◆ HEARTFELT GOSPEL, SPIRITUALS, WEST GALLERY AND SHAPE NOTE TRADITIONS

*Through this glorious repertoire, the Choir -*

i) TELLS THE WHOLE STORY OF MUSIC

so that you experience the wonder and fullness of music,  
not music reduced to the partial perspective of just one style.

ii) SINGS WHAT WAS, WHAT IS, AND WHAT WILL BE.

## SING FREEDOM. VOICE TECHNIQUE FOR 21ST CENTURY SINGERS

The Choir has a strong focus on raising standards through their commitment to improving their vocal skills. A part of each rehearsal is therefore dedicated to helping members awaken an awareness of how to free their voices through exploring all the components of vocal development. e.g. How to ◆ Liberate the Range of one's Voice ◆ Expand the Palette of Vocal Colours, and ◆ Develop Whole Body Breathing, etc. Moreover, our integrated approach means we ◆ Sing with the Whole Human Being - Body-Soul-Mind-and-Spirit.

*N.B. Tonalis Voice Techniques are often used in connection with:*

i) NEW AND ENERGISING FORMS OF VOCAL WARM-UPS which get the  
● Body ● Voice ● Listening ● Musicianship and ● Community of the Choir ready for singing,

ii) BODY-MIND-VOICEWORK

informed by the ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE & DALCROZE EURYTHMICS,

iii) VOCAL IMPROVISATION which brings the benefits of creative imagination and spontaneity into voicework to help choir members unlock their full array of vocal responses.

## > GET INSIDE THE INNER LIFE OF MUSIC

At the heart of our work is the goal of helping all choir members develop their musicianship skills and a deeper understanding of the inner life of the music so that we can sing each composition as expressively as possible.

# NEW ELEMENTS IN CHORAL SINGING: A WIDER VISION

## > THE CREATIVE VOICE - IMPROVISING IN CHOIRS

During our rehearsals we often improvise on the elements of music found in each composition in order to enter more deeply and creatively into the composer's imagination. In addition, we sing exciting New Choral Compositions which employ Improvisation.

## > SING THE SACRED - OPEN DOORS INTO WONDER

A key feature of the Choir's repertoire is the uplifting range of sacred musics we sing which are as vibrant in light and colour as a stained glass window, from songs filled with yearning for the divine → sacred choral musics from around the world → new music that 'sings something new of that which is eternal', e.g. John Tavener.

## > MUSIC IN HARMONY WITH THE SEASONS

Music has traditionally been used to help people celebrate and live in harmony with the deeper rhythms of each season. Thus our Choir repertoire and performances always link the mood of each season/festival with corresponding qualities in music.

## > SOUNDS IN SPACE - SOUNDS IN MOVEMENT

The Choir offers you the exciting opportunity to explore a new approach to singing Tonalis is famous for, namely, the Choir explores how the musical structures/architecture of a composition are enhanced through the spatial placement/choreography of the singers. Moreover, we sometimes use NEWLY DESIGNED ACOUSTIC INSTRUMENTS to accompany our pieces.

## > TUNING IN: THE CIRCLE OF SINGING LISTENERS

We practice becoming 'Harmonic' instruments - not just melodic ones - through learning how to adjust our voices in relationship to the other parts. We also strive for good intonation and vocal blend through working on balancing vowel harmonics and vocal resonance, etc.

## > NEW CHORAL MUSIC FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Choral Music being written today is opening us up to new visions of music that enlarge and extend us. Our Choir is dedicated to manifesting these new ideals. Thus, during the last 2 years we have sung inspiring new pieces by contemporary composers, including • *M.Finnissy* • *H.Gorecki* • *M.Lauridsen* • *J.MacMillan* • *S.Martland* • *P.Maxwell-Davies* • *M.McGlynn* • *I.Moody* • *K.Nystedt* • *T.O'Regan* • *A.Pärt* • *U.Sisask* • *J.Tavener and* • *V.Tormis*.

N.B. The Choir also commissions and premières vibrant New Choral Works.

## > HOLISTIC CHOIR TEACHING METHODS

Tonalis uses a holistic multisensory balance of visual, aural and kinaesthetic processes to teach the music so that the whole human being - body, mind, soul and spirit - is addressed.

In addition, we explore how EVERY SONG TELLS A STORY

i.e. how different cultural values, aesthetics or religious beliefs, etc. inform each song, in order that our singing can express the deeper meaning underlying each piece.

## JOIN THE TONALIS SEMI-CHORUS

Tonalis Company of Singers offers opportunities for choir members with more advanced music reading and vocal skills to participate in our **SEMI-CHORUS OF 16 SINGERS**.

In addition, each concert includes music written for the unique sound qualities of different vocal ensembles, including • **UPPER VOICES** and • **MALE VOICES** singing alone, and the **TONALIS CONSORT OF VOICES**.

## PERFORMANCES

Performances are given at the end of the 3 terms, - (& occasionally at other times by agreement with the choir). Each Concert takes our audience on a wonderful musical journey which is full of variety, but also unified by the programme theme that underlies each performance.

## A NEW MEETING FORMAT FOR CHOIR REHEARSALS

You may well say you live too far away from Tonalis' Centre in Stroud, Glos, but the way the choir is set up enables participants from all over the country to become involved. How?

*The Choir Meets 1 Weekend / Month (excluding the Summer Holidays)*

- Saturdays = Full Choir
- Sundays = Semi-Chorus

**N.B. FOR THE 1ST REHEARSAL OF EACH TERM ALL CHOIR MEMBERS**

**ATTEND THE WHOLE WEEKEND IN ORDER TO LAUNCH THE NEW REPERTOIRE.**

- Term 1: January → March
- Term 2: April → mid-July
- Term 3: September → Dec.

*TIMES:* Saturdays: 11:00am → 7:00pm, Sundays: 9:45am → 4:00pm.

*Through meeting one weekend per month (excluding August) 'Tonalis Company of Singers' offers a new concept for choir rehearsals which brings many advantages,*

*e.g.:*

- i) The weekend format enables deeper levels of vocal/musical development to take place
- ii) Social/community aspects of the choir are enhanced,
- iii) Music learning happens more efficiently as people's energy levels are better on weekends than on weekday evenings.

**CHOIR RETREAT.** Each Year the Choir enjoys a weekend at a beautiful centre.

During this time we work on special themes connected to developing our voices and musicianship, as well as going on outings to sing in Sacred Spaces.

## MEMBERSHIP

All Choir Members are advised that they need to have • Good Pitch Matching and

- Aural Awareness Skills, as well as a Foundation Level in • Music Reading.

(N.B. This does not imply the ability to sight sing.)

*On receipt of your application form, a short questionnaire will be sent to you to determine if the musical and vocal level the choir works at is right for you. We then invite you to come and meet our choir leader, Michael Deason-Barrow, and take a short voice and music reading appraisal (if applicable), so that through knowing your abilities he can support you and enable your choir skills to develop.*

N.B. Members actively participate in the Management of the Choir and help shape its organisational structures.

## TESTIMONIALS

"Michael Deason-Barrow is one of the finest voice coaches in the world."

MIKAL NIELSEN - author of 'The Heart of Your Voice, You too can Sing!'

"Here, we become the living cathedral, not made with the sound of hammers,  
but with the wonder and amazement of our singing."

PEGGY COOPER - inspired by singing on a Tonalis Voice Course.

"Michael Deason-Barrow offers a new paradigm to voice work and choral singing. His work offers an unparalleled vibrant, holistic weaving together of cultural, artistic and spiritual 'vocal' threads; led by an artist, performer and teacher of the highest musical and vocal prowess. This approach is equally essential for the amateur, student or professional alike."

MARTYN HILL, Professor of Singing, Trinity College of Music, London

## CHOIR LEADER

*Michael Deason-Barrow* (GRSM, ARCM) - Director of 'Tonalis: Centre for the Development of Music' - is a master singing teacher and an inspirational choir leader. He regularly gives courses all over the world - including voice master classes in conservatoires - as well as working with community and children's choirs. He is increasingly being recognised as a leading authority on voice techniques for 21st Century singers and for bringing deeper sacred dimensions into choral singing.

*Pia Poulsen and Andrew Thompyson* lead sectional rehearsals, help with vocal warm-ups, and give singing lessons to choir members wanting to develop their voices.

## FEES

• *Saturday Full Choir* £20 • *Sunday Semi Chorus* £18 • *Weekend* £38

(There is also a small rental each term for sheet music.)

Fees for each term are payable 1 month in advance to confirm membership.

*£20 Concession / Term for Full-time Students and People on Job Seekers Allowance .*

*£15 " " each for Couples / Partners.*

The above Membership Fees are revised annually.

To confirm the current membership fee please contact the Tonalis office.

**TONALIS, 4 Castle Farm Close, Leighterton, GLOS GL8 8UY**



## **Application Form - 'Tonalis Company of Singers'**

*Please complete and send to the above address.*

*A Questionnaire, Membership Guidelines and Dates will be sent on receipt of the Application Form.*

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tel.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**email** \_\_\_\_\_