

David Clover Festival of Singing

News Bulletin no.3 – May 2024

Festival Weekends 2024

We had many more entries this year than last – particularly for the Festival Weekend – which means that we are well over all the disruptions of Covid and lockdowns which had affected us over the last few years. It also reminds us of the importance and demand of the Festival. Not everyone, even in Sheffield, recognises the uniqueness of our offering as the only amateur music festival in the UK dedicated wholly to singing, and it has been suggested that we should try to promote what we do and raise our profile further. The context for doing this is, of course, the fact that the government has had other priorities – to put it politely – than promoting the Creative Arts, including music; and this has had a negative impact on the provision of music in schools. Sheffield Music Hub reminds us that there has been no increase in the government's financial support for Music Education over the last 10 years, which amounts to a 40% cut in real terms.

The increase in the number of entries in no way meant a lower standard of performances, and we were particularly pleased to see that the new Mozart Class for the Singers' Platform proved very popular attracting no less than 17 singers. Another cause for satisfaction was to see the successful launch of the new Elizabeth Hampshire Award Class, which caters for the hitherto-neglected category of singers, 14-19, studying at a Conservatoire Junior Department.

However, as in past years, we were disappointed that the Singers' Platform Finals Evening did not attract a bigger audience. While Festival Weekend Finalists, who are mostly local, can expect relatives and friends to support their opportunity to repeat their best performances from the previous days, Singers' Platform soloists, coming from throughout the UK and occasionally abroad, can at most rely on a partner or friend. All this while performing to a very high, near professional, level which always impresses. The DCFS Committee has been wracking its brains to try to ensure the Platform gets the audience it deserves: we advertise in the local press, through flyers, on Facebook, on the Classical Sheffield website and our own DCFS website. May we suggest that singers and parents from the Festival Weekend consider popping in to the Singers' Platform Finals Evening in 2025, which will take place on the Saturday before the Festival Weekend, full details below? You won't be disappointed. If you want a taste of what might be on offer go to the DCFS website and you will find compilations of recordings of the Finals' Evening performances of the last few years.

The flip side of recognising how important the Festival is, and the strength of our belief in what we are doing, is ensuring it will continue in the future and grow stronger as it does. We say this conscious of how many music festivals have folded over the last few years and of the relatively unfriendly financial climate in which we operate. So we must fundraise. Accountants may argue amongst themselves quite how precisely to calculate our ongoing expenses but on the days of the Festival Weekends a ball park figure for each day of something a little shy of £1000 is not too far out. So dear Friends, Sponsors, singers and parents can we reiterate how very grateful we are for the support you continue to give us? And since, God helps those ... This year we are organising a fundraising Craft Fare ourselves whilst hiring out unwanted stalls to other organisations also keen to fundraise.

Saturday 9th November 10 am at Bents Green Methodist Church, Ringinglow Rd/Knowle Lane, S11 7PU. Please come and support us.

The rest of 2024

WORKSHOP

Under the title A VOICE FOR LIFE the Festival is offering a workshop led by our distinguished 2024 adjudicator Frith Trezevant – a treat for singers young and old, their teachers and audiences. It will feature essentially practical sessions for all, as well as mini master classes with pre-invited soloists.

May 11th, 2 – 5.30 pm at Bents Green Methodist Church, Ringinglow Rd., Sheffield S11 7PU

SHOWCASE CONCERT

After some discussion it was agreed that our annual Showcase Concert should be moved to later in the year than it has been in the past. This year the concert will feature Sheffield Music Makers, Lodge Moor Children's Choir and, of course, eight soloists who performed particularly well during the Festival Weekend.

September 27th, 7.00 pm at Holy Trinity Church, Millhouses, Grove Rd., S7 2HB

Future Developments

A THIRD WEEKEND?

For some time the Committee has been considering the possibility of organising a third DCFS Weekend for young singers for whom the Classical repertoire may not be a first choice. It is part of our mission to widen our appeal and support music-making as best we can. We are also very conscious that fashions change, so our Third Weekend would focus on rock and pop music. This is new territory for us and we want to get things right, so we are taking things slowly. But watch this space for more on the subject.

FESTIVAL FRIENDS

After many years' service to the DCFS with the Festival Friends' Scheme, Di Hallatt is passing the job to Geoff Littleddyke. The Committee is very grateful for her valuable contribution to its work. This change coincides with a thorough revision of the scheme, of which more in our next Bulletin.

FESTIVAL WEEKEND 2025

There will be a new Vocal Solo class for 7-8 year olds, and new Recital classes: Preparatory for 12-13 years and Junior for 14-15 years. To accommodate these changes there will be no English Words and Song class.

The Molly Petrie Award will be given to the best performed British Song of the weekend.

Adjudicator: Maria Jagusz

**31st January, 1st February, Dore and Totley United Reform Church, Totley Brook Rd, S17 3QS
2nd February, Tapton Hall, Shore Lane, Sheffield S10 3BU**

SINGERS' PLATFORM

The number of finalists from the recital and opera classes will be limited to four. Recitalists will perform 3 songs only and Opera performers one. Verbal feedback will be given for the Elizabeth Hampshire and British Song; written adjudication will be available for collection after the classes have finished.

Adjudicators: Mark Wildman, Iain Ledingham and Vivien Pike

23rd, 24th and 25th January, St Andrew's, Psalter Lane, Sheffield, S11 8YL

We advertise our activities on Facebook, Twitter, on flyers, on the Classical Sheffield website and above all on our official website www.davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk which we recommend you consult. Further to that you can consult me, Tony Trippett, anthonytrippett5@gmail.com as publicity officer.



Festival Weekend 2024 Prize winners



Singers' Platform
2024 Prize winners

Natalie Fooks Festival prize winner and

Johannes Moore Singers' Platform

BBC Chorister of the Year



winner with David Heslop Chair DCFS

