



Registered Charity No 1106279

*Presidents*

Sir Thomas Allen, Michael Chance CBE, Sir Nicholas Hytner  
Graham Johnson OBE, Dame Cleo Laine, Dame Patricia Routledge  
Professor Robert Saxton, Dame Harriet Walter

## Winter Newsletter 2017

### **A note from the chair**

I hope you are all having a very successful 2017, despite our inclement weather.

Firstly, we have a new committee member and I would like to welcome on your behalf Anthony Dawson to our fold. His career has spanned choral singing, opera performances (especially with Britten's English Opera Group), music management and teaching as head of Singing at Sevenoaks School. Like the rest of our hard working committee, he has a wealth of experience to share with us.

I am learning the art of patience and perseverance and, at last, the new Century of English Song Volumes 8 – 10 are on sale with Good Music. They can be found at <http://www.goodmusicpublishing.co.uk/search/default.aspx?search=aess>

We are all indebted to David Good of Good Music Publishing <http://www.goodmusicpublishing.co.uk> for taking on the mantle of printing the music. Full details of the contents of each volume can be

found on our website and on Good Music's website. Michael Pilkington and Garry Humphreys are now busy updating and re-editing volumes 1 – 7 so that they can also be printed by Good Music. Soon, we will be publishing the full set – an ambition held dear by many people. Do obtain copies for yourselves and tell as many people as you can. Word of mouth is the best advert!

After a lot more patience, the new Actors Prize is finally up and running. We are very grateful to Timothy West and Prunella Scales for agreeing to sponsor the 1st prize. The AESS will sponsor the 2nd and 3rd prizes this year. The finals will be held on Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. The venue is the London Bridge Campus of **The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama**, Central Bankside, Emerson Building, 4 – 8 Emerson Street, London SE1 9DU. The finals of all our competitions are open to our members and the public, and as the AGM and dinner are on Sunday April 30<sup>th</sup>, some of you might like to make the whole weekend an AESS extravaganza!

Our AGM and Dinner is now open for booking and Anthony Dawson is the man to contact. All the details are on our website under the events heading, and below.

I am delighted that James Bowman will be our guest speaker and that the Hilliard Ensemble will entertain us after the AGM. They have officially retired, but they occasionally perform together, and I know they will be a joy to hear. The evening is a chance for us all to enjoy the company of our fellow members and I hope to see you there.

At our AGM last year, we passed the motion to raise our membership fee to £25 for single membership, £35 joint membership and £15 student membership. This will come into effect in April. Our membership secretary Pat Williams and I would be most grateful for prompt renewals. I feel it is still a very modest sum and the benefits to our members include advertising their local events on our website, entering pupils for our competitions, attending the finals of all our competitions, attending our formal dinner with entertainment and speaker, attending events for members and their pupils, and above all helping to support the valuable work we do in supporting and giving opportunities to talented young singers and speakers. Several members have been judges at our competitions thus widening our pool of judges and we always welcome new offers.

It has been mentioned to us that our name, The Association of English Singers and Speakers is quite long and maybe a little old fashioned now. Do any members have strong feelings about either keeping the name as it is, or updating it in some way? I would be grateful for your thoughts.

We are starting a regular feature of “mini rants” and Patricia Williams has given us her thoughts on poor English pronunciation. Do you have any “mini rants” for inclusion in our newsletters?

Below is a list of all our forthcoming competitions this spring. Do enter your pupils and pass the word around.

I look forward to seeing many of you during the year.

Best wishes

Sarah Leonard  
Chairman

sarahleonard1@me.com

**The Courtney Kenny Award 2017**

Preliminary round March 4th, Finals March 12th.

Closing date for entry Feb 25th

**The Timothy West and Prunella Scales Speech Prize for Actors 2017**

Preliminary round April 22nd, Finals April 29th

Closing date for entry April 13th

**The Fell Musical Theatre Prize 2017**

Sunday May 14th 2017 TBC

**The Patricia Routledge National English Song Competition 2017**

Preliminary round May 28th, Finals May 31st

Closing date for entries May 20th

**For full details visit: [www.aofess.org.uk](http://www.aofess.org.uk)**

## CAN YOU HELP?

After a very constructive and enjoyable day in Bath two years ago we would like to hold our next 'Unsung Heroes' event in the eastern counties, preferably in Cambridge, in September.

Can any member in the area suggest a suitable venue? We will need a hall, theatre space or church with a good piano, a practice room or vestry with piano or keyboard, and facilities for serving teas and coffees. Good public transport links would be helpful.

Any suggestions, please, to Patricia at [williams.typhnigerror@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:williams.typhnigerror@tiscali.co.uk)

## "MINI-RANT"

### ANYTHING GOES?

The BBC was once renowned for its perfect pronunciation and had a language unit devoted to correctness in every tongue. Nowadays it seems that 'anything goes' in the name of language evolving. Here are a few of my pet hates:

- 1) 'The' - 'thuh opera' ..... 'thuh other.' It is so much smoother when pronounced 'thih opera,' thih other'.
- 2) 'A' pronounced 'ae' on every occasion. It gives a false emphasis to an unimportant word.
- 3) 'Shtudio' 'shtreet', 'jrama' 'jriver' - Why?
- 4) "Several trains have been counselled". Perhaps they are upset at being cancelled?
- 5) Assemblerly. An added syllable to make up for the missed one in 'acc(id)ent'?
- 6) Lost consonants: we need a new letter symbol for the dropped 't's in 'celebri\*y,' 'daugh\*er' 'Harry Po\*\*er'.

Language evolving is all very well but can cause misunderstandings. The final line of 'Silent Night' is 'Sleep in heavenly peace'. Drop the final consonant sound and you will have a very different image!

Patricia 'pernickety' Williams

The 2017 AESS Annual General Meeting and Dinner will be held on Sunday, April 30th 2017 at The Royal Over-Seas League, St. James's Street, London SW1A 1LR

I am delighted to announce that our guest speaker will be the counter-tenor, James Bowman, and we are also grateful to the members of the Hilliard Ensemble who have agreed to come out of retirement for one night only to give us a short concert of English repertoire at 6pm after the AGM at 4:30pm.



James Bowman



The Hilliard Ensemble

It should be a splendid occasion, so do put it in your diary. The concert and dinner are open to members and non-members, and friends are very welcome.



The Association of English Singers & Speakers

Honorary Presidents

Sir Thomas Allen Michael Chance CBE Sir Nicholas Hytner
Graham Johnson OBE Dame Cleo Laine
Patricia Routledge CBE Professor Robert Saxton Dame Harriet Walter

Registered Charity No. 1106279

The Annual General Meeting 2017
followed by
The Annual Dinner

will be held on Sunday, 30th April
at the Royal Over-Seas League, Park Place,
St. James's Street, London, SW1A 1LR (nearest tube station Green Park).

The AGM will commence at 4.30 pm.
At 6.10pm The Hilliard Ensemble will provide the entertainment
The bar will be open for purchasing drinks from 6.00pm.
and Dinner will commence at 7.00 pm.

We are delighted to announce that the Guest of Honour and Speaker will be

James Bowman

Tickets, to include a three-course meal and wine, are £50, available
until the 21st of April (no refunds after this date) from:
Anthony Dawson, Coach House, Lossenham Lane, Newenden, Kent TN18 5QA
Tel: 01797 253632

Application form for tickets for the AESS Annual Dinner on Sunday 30th April 2017.

Name(s).....

Address.....

Tel:..... Email:.....

I would like ..... tickets @ £50, and enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to AESS
and a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Special dietary requirements .....

Please send the application form to: Anthony Dawson, Coach House, Lossenham Lane, Newenden,
Kent TN18 5QA. Tel: 01797 253632

# The Catherine Lambert Junior Recital Prize Final 2016

Saturday November 26th at 16:30 at The Royal College of Music  
Panel of judges: Jonathan Courage, Penny-Price Jones, Mary Mogil

1st prize £300 – Ellen Pearson accompanied by Jessica Pearson

2nd prize £200 – James Cobb accompanied by Joan Taylor

3rd prize £100 – Sophie Benfield accompanied by Deborah Shah

Spoken prize in memory of Marion Lines £200 – Sophie Benfield

The AESS is most grateful to The Royal College of Music for allowing us to use The Recital Hall, and to Veronica Veysey Campbell and Liza Hobbs in the Junior Dpt. for all their help.

Special thanks go to Carolyn Richards, the competition administrator, for all her hard work in organizing a delightful event.

Thanks also go our three excellent judges whose thoughtful notes will be passed on to the finalists.

The judges felt that the standard of singing and speaking from all the young competitors was even higher than last year, and we wish them every success in their future endeavours.

The AESS is indebted to Catherine Lambert for her continued support of the Junior Competition and also to the family of Marian Lines for continuing the Speech Prize in her memory.



James Cobb – 2nd, Ellen Pearson – 1st, & Sophie Benfield -3rd & Speech Prize

The Association of English Singers and Speakers is delighted to announce a new competition for actors in full or part time education.

## **The Timothy West and Prunella Scales Speech Prize for Actors will take place as follows:**

Preliminary Round Saturday April 22nd, between 10am – 5pm

Final Round Saturday April 29th between 2pm – 5pm

Venue - The London Bridge Campus of The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Central Bankside, Emerson Building, 4 - 8 Emerson Street, London SE1 9DU

**1st Prize £750, 2nd prize £500, 3rd prize £250**

Competitors aged between 18 – 23 are asked to prepare an eight minute themed programme from memory, to include at least one poem or sonnet, and prose from plays and literature, from any period, within a creative framework.

Full details and an application form from [www.aofess.org.uk](http://www.aofess.org.uk)

Go to the competitions drop down menu on the home page

**The AESS is grateful to Timothy West and Prunella Scales for their generosity in sponsoring this new initiative.**



## **The Timothy West and Prunella Scales Speech Prize for Actors 2017**

The competition will take place at the London Bridge Campus of **The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama**, Central Bankside, Emerson Building, 4 – 8 Emerson Street, London SE1 9DU

### **Competition date**

Preliminary round Saturday April 22nd 2017 between 10 am – 5pm

Final round Saturday April 29th 2017, 2pm – 5pm

The deadline for entries is Thursday 13th April 2017.

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of the Timothy West and Prunella Scales Speech Prize for Actors, in accordance with the general aims of the AESS, is “to encourage the communication of English words, with clarity, understanding and imagination”

### **Eligibility:**

The competition is open to young actors aged 18 to 23 who are in full or part time training at a recognized institution.

### **Requirement:**

Competitors are asked to present a themed programme to include at least one poem or sonnet, and prose from plays and literature, from any period, within a creative framework.

The programme should not exceed 8 minutes in total.

The entire programme must be delivered from memory.

The programme will be the same for both rounds.

The judges will be looking for clarity of expression, fluency of delivery, imaginative use of material and an ability to take the audience on a dramatic journey.

### **Age Limit:**

Actors should be within the above age-range on or before the date of the final.

### **Prizes:**

First Prize – £750 – sponsored by Timothy West & Prunella Scales

Second Prize – £500

Third Prize – £250

### **The Competition:**

The competition will be in two stages.

Preliminaries on Saturday April 22nd between 10am – 5pm

Finals on Saturday April 29th between 2pm – 5pm.

The panel of judges will be drawn from AESS members and other members of the acting profession.

### **Entry:**

A nominal, non-refundable, entry fee of £20.00 is charged to cover administrative expenses. Entries must be made on the official forms provided and must be received no later than April 13th 2017

Please send the completed form to: Stephen Varcoe, Ansells Farm,  
Alphamstone, Bures, Suffolk CO8 5HN Tel: 07952 269550  
[svarcoe1@googlemail.com](mailto:svarcoe1@googlemail.com)

**OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM – The Timothy West and Prunella Scales  
Speech Prize for Actors 2017**

Name:.....

Address:.....

Telephone Number:.....

Email:..... (Most correspondence will  
be conducted by email. Please check regularly leading up to the  
preliminary date).

Date of Birth:.....

Institution where studying.....

Theme of 8 min. performance:

.....

**Titles of Poems and Prose and authors** in correct running order

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Signature of student.....

Signature of Head of Department.....

**Entry fee £20.00 cheque made payable to AESS.**

**Preliminary auditions will be on Saturday 22nd April between  
10.00am – 5.00pm**

**Finals will be on Saturday 29th April between 2pm – 5pm.**

**Venue for both - Central Bankside, Emerson Building, 4 – 8  
Emerson Street, London Bridge, SE1 9DU**

Please send completed form to: Stephen Varcoe, Ansells Farm,  
Alphamstone, Bures, Suffolk CO8 5HN Tel: 07952 269550  
svarcoe1@googlemail.com

**THIS FORM MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN 13th April 2017.**

## The Courtney Kenny Award 2017

The final will take place at Tonbridge School on Sunday March 12th.

The preliminary round will take place on March 4th at Taggs Yard, Barnes in London.

The deadline for entries will be Saturday February 25<sup>th</sup>

Details are on the AESS website under Competitions.

## The Courtney Kenny Award 2017

The final will take place at Tonbridge School on Sunday, March 12th.

The preliminary round will take place on March 4th at Taggs Yards, Barnes in London

The deadline for entries will be Saturday February 25th

Entrants are encouraged to explore the vast wealth of material from five hundred years of song writing, prose and poetry, of writers and composers world-wide who employ the English language. Ideas can be found in the AESS Century of English Song – Volumes 1-10, details of which can be found at [www.aofess.org](http://www.aofess.org)

## The Courtney Kenny Award 2017

### Prospectus

#### Purpose:

The purpose of the AESS Courtney Kenny Award, in accordance with the general aims of the AESS, is “to encourage the communication of English words, in singing and in speech, with clarity, understanding and imagination”.

#### Requirement:

Competitors are asked to present and sing a themed recital of classical ‘Art Songs’ and the spoken word, with original English texts. (N.B. ‘Art Songs’ does NOT include opera, oratorio, operetta or musical theatre).

The integrated programme may include spoken links and must contain poetry and/ or prose. The programme should not exceed 20 minutes in total. Candidates should provide their own accompanist.

The entire programme must be delivered from memory in both rounds.

The judges will give equal emphasis to the spoken and sung elements of the programme.

#### Eligibility:

The competition is open to young singers aged 18 to 23. The application form must be signed by an AESS member.

#### Age Limit:

Singers, together with pianists eligible for the accompanists’ prize, should be in the above age-range on or before the date of the final. In 2017 this is 12th March.

#### Prizes:

First Prize – £1,000

Second Prize – £500

Third Prize – £500

Accompanists' Prize – £500

The Competition:

The competition will be in two stages.

Stage One:

There will be a preliminary session on Saturday, March 4th at Tagg's Yard, Barnes, London. The panel of judges will be drawn from members of the Association, who have not themselves submitted candidates. They will select a maximum of 6 competitors for the final.

Stage Two:

The final will be held in the Recital Room of Tonbridge School in Kent from 2.00pm on the afternoon of Sunday March 12th 2017.

Entry:

A nominal, non-refundable, entry fee of £20.00 is charged to cover administrative expenses. Entries must be made on the official forms provided and must be received no later than February 20th 2015.

## The Patricia Routledge National English Song Competition 2017

The final will take place at the London College of Music, Ealing on Wednesday, May 31st from 6.00pm

The preliminary round will take place at the LCM on Sunday, May 28th

The deadline for entries is Saturday, May 20th

Entrants are encouraged to explore the vast wealth of material from five hundred years of song writing, prose and poetry, of writers and composers world-wide who employ the English language. Ideas can be found in the AESS Century of English Song – Volumes 1-10, details of which can be found at [www.aofess.org](http://www.aofess.org)

## The Patricia Routledge National English Song Competition 2017

Prospectus

Purpose:

The purpose of the Patricia Routledge National English Song Competition, in accordance with the aims of the AESS, is “to encourage the communication of English words, in singing and in speech, with clarity, understanding and imagination”.

Requirement:

Competitors are asked to present and sing a themed recital of ‘Art’ songs with original English texts. The integrated programme may include

spoken links and must contain at least one piece of poetry or prose. It should not exceed 20 minutes in total. Candidates are required to bring their own accompanist.

The same programme must be delivered from memory in its entirety in both rounds. (A high number of entrants might necessitate that one song be omitted in the preliminary round.)

The judges will give equal attention to the spoken and sung elements of the programme.

Eligibility:

The competition is open to full-time students at institutions of further education in the UK and Ireland where singing or speech are taught. Each institution may nominate up to four candidates but may at the discretion of the committee be allowed further candidates if they are of a very high standard. Also, the competition is open to members and to students who are pupils of members of the Association.

Age Limit:

Open to those who are 23 – 32 years of age on 31st May 2017.

Prizes:

First Prize – £2,000

Second Prize – £1,000

Third Prize – £1,000

Accompanist's Prize – £1,000

The Competition:

The competition will be in two stages.

Stage One:

The preliminary round will be held at the London College of Music, Ealing on Sunday 28th May. Candidates should state a preference for a particular time, if they have one, (please check this with your accompanist first), although this cannot necessarily be guaranteed. The panel of judges is drawn from members of the Association who have not themselves submitted candidates. They will select up to six competitors from this round to compete in the final.

Stage Two:

The final will be held at the LCM on the evening of Wednesday 31st May beginning at 6.00pm.

Expenses:

Competitors will be expected to defray their own expenses for the first stage. Standard class travel expenses will be offered to finalists travelling to London.

Entry:

A nominal, non-refundable, entry fee of £20.00 is charged to cover administrative expenses. Entries must be made on the official forms provided and must be received no later than Saturday, 20th May 2017.

Previous winners of this competition are not eligible to enter a second time.

Feedback from the judges will be given to all entrants as soon as is practicable for both rounds.

The application form can be found on the AESS website.

## The Fell Musical Theatre Prize 2017

The 2017 competition will take place on Sunday, May 14th TBC

The AESS with the Toni V Fell Musical Charitable Trust offers The Fell Musical Theatre Prize of £1,000 to be held in London on Sunday, May 14th 2017 TBC at the Sylvia Young Theatre School, 1 Nutford Place, London W1H 5YZ.

Full details will be available in due course on the website and by email to the membership.