



The Association of English Singers & Speakers

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Registered Charity No. 1106279

www.aofess.org.uk

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2016

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

I can honestly say that I am thoroughly enjoying my job as Chair of the AESS because I am supported by a wonderfully dedicated committee and I am very grateful to them all. We also have wonderful long-term sponsors to whom we are all indebted.

We continue to organize our four singing competitions annually which involves much work looking for venues and adjudicators, in addition to documenting the results and sending feedback to every competitor at every stage of each event. I think we are unique in this. As I have been present at all the competitions, I feel that each competitor is treated with respect and consideration and many say they have gained a great deal by just entering. Our judges give of their time most generously and at the moment are paid expenses. We are always keen for members to help with the judging if they feel able to and everyone is welcome to the finals.

I can now announce that we are going to start a fifth competition, this time for actors. ... and about time, too, you may say, as we are an association for speech as well as song. We are delighted that Timothy West and Prunella Scales have agreed to be our first sponsors. It will be open to actors studying at a recognized institution and will probably start at the beginning of 2017. Would any of our members be willing to offer their services to run this competition? The speech prize administrator would become a Specialist member of our committee. Please contact me for further details.

Our *Unsung Heroes* concert at King Edwards School, Bath, was held on Sunday September 27th 2015 and was a great success. We have now made this an annual event and will try to hold it in different parts of the country to accommodate all our membership. We are all extremely grateful to Patricia Williams for organizing this and its continued success is dependent upon our members participation.

Betty Roe gave a master class in the morning to young students and she was her usual enchanting self, full of energy and wonderful advice. In the afternoon, we held a concert, open for anyone to perform in, on our theme of *Unsung Heroines*. The special joy of this concert was that people of all ages and stages performed with such heart and the words, amateur or professional, were irrelevant.

I think Janice Thompson, AESS member and distinguished singing teacher in Swindon summed up this concert and the junior prize very well ...

This Autumn I have become especially aware of the performance and learning opportunities which AESS offers to young singers. We enjoyed a delightful 'Unsung Heroines' day in Bath in September when aspiring singers were able to explore and perform songs by women composers alongside vocal professionals, and the Catherine Lambert Junior Recital Final in November proved a delightful and educational experience for all those privileged to be present. Grateful thanks to the AESS for continuing to provide these valuable experiences to our young singers'

Janice Thompson, Singing Teacher and Vocal Coach, Director JTP Trust (Charity 1101723)

Please continue to let Stephen Miles know of any events you are holding or would like to hold for the benefit of members.

Lastly, do come to our AGM and Dinner held at The Royal Over-Seas League on Sunday April 17th. We are delighted that Stephen Miles and Jane Roberson have agreed to entertain us after the AGM and that Catherine Bott, wonderful singer turned celebrity radio announcer on the BBC and now Classic FM, will be our speaker. I'm sure, like last year, it will be an evening to remember.

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

Sarah Leonard

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

**Let Us Garlands Bring - A Double Celebration
A Feast of English Song
In Honour of Her Majesty's 90th Birthday & Shakespeare's 400th Anniversary
Stephen Miles - Tenor & Kathleen Wyatt - Piano
Saturday, April 23rd at 6.00pm for one hour
Christ Church, Fulmodeston**

Sat Nav: NR21 0LZ Find us south of the A148 between Fakenham and Holt
Free entry, retiring collection for the church
More info Tel: 01328878364

Song in the City Director: Gavin Roberts

Song in the City takes classical music out of its comfort zone. Through the genre of song, we aim to revolutionise the relationship between classical musicians and their audiences through imaginative concerts, and social projects.

Song in the City is more than your average classical venue. We programme concerts around inventive and often challenging themes, bringing talented singers and pianists to the heart of the Square Mile in London, in the intimate and beautiful setting of the Hall at St Botolph without

Bishopsgate. Our regular **FREE concerts** take place on Thursday Lunchtime at 1pm (c45 mins). We are also developing a number of **social projects**.

Somewhere Over The Rainbow
Thursday, 11th Feb 2016, 1.10pm
The Wild Nights of Emily Dickinson

Singers from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama
Gavin Roberts, piano

As part of the LGBT History Month, *Somewhere Over The Rainbow* explores sexuality through song. This opening concert tells the story of the reclusive, yet subversively-voiced, poet Emily Dickinson, who has become something of a lesbian idol. Songs and poems by Ned Rorem, Andre Previn, Aaron Copland, Raymond Yiu, Lee Hoiby, Jake Hegge, Julian Philips, Juliana Hall.

The *Somewhere Over the Rainbow* concerts will be combined with a photo exhibition The Borderline series by talented photographer Felipe Tozzato. Viewing from 12:30pm on each concert day.

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 17th 2016 at 1pm
HAMPSTEAD PARISH CHURCH, CHURCH ROW, LONDON NW3 6UU

"No Man is an Island"
Reflections with John Donne



A selection of readings from Donne's Poems, Letters and Sermons
compiled by Barbara Alden

Lasts about an hour
Coffee and tea available afterwards

ADMISSION FREE

An opportunity to step aside from life's hurly-burly, sit in the peaceful surroundings of Hampstead Parish Church and hear the beauty and power of the English language from the pen of a master, probably best known for his poem "No Man Is An Island"

Given Donne's vast range of writing, from the humorous, the sensuous (even erotic) to the spiritual and mystical, our programme aims, in Donne's own words "to vary, to mingle. to diversifie."

Some background details of Donne's fascinatingly *varied* and *diversified* life will also *mingle* amongst the readings!

Thursday, 18th Feb 2016, 1.10pm

An AIDS Quilt Songbook

Singers from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama
Gavin Roberts, piano

As part of the [LGBT History Month](#), *Somewhere Over The Rainbow* explores sexuality through song. The AIDS Quilt Songbook dates from the early 1990s and is a moving collection of songs that commemorates those who suffered in the AIDS crisis. We perform songs from this collection, with other songs from this difficult era, alongside recollections of those who suffered at this time. We want to use our talents and art to keep in mind this issue which we believe still needs to remain at the forefront of modern society - lest we forget.

The *Somewhere Over the Rainbow* concerts will be combined with a photo exhibition [The Borderline series](#) by talented photographer [Felipe Tozzato](#). Viewing from 12:30pm on each concert day.

Thursday, 10th Mar 2016 1.10pm

Brasil Brasileiro

Singers from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama:
Teresa Arede, soprano
Regina Freire, soprano
Joana Gil, soprano
Ana Sofia Marafona, soprano
Joao Vaz, tenor
Jorge Castro, baritone
Gavin Roberts, piano

Cantigas & Saudade celebrates the rich cultural ties between Portugal and Brazil. Portuguese speaking students from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama perform a programme of songs and spoken word devised by Gavin Roberts. This week we visit Brazil, and explore its folkloric, as well as its more classical musical traditions. Songs by Villa-Lobos, Henrique, Mignone, Braga, Ovalle, Gomes.

UPCOMING COMPETITIONS

The Courtney Kenny Award 2016

The final will take place at Tonbridge School on Sunday, March 6th
The preliminary round will take place on Saturday, February 27th at
Taggs Yards, Barnes in South London
The deadline for entries is Saturday, February 20th

Prospectus

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".

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. 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 2016 this is 6th 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 February 27th at Tagg's Yard, Barnes (TBC), 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 6th 2016.

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 2016.

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.

Entry Form:

[Courtney Kenny Award Application Form](#)

Previous Prize Winners:

- 2010 Angharad Lyddon
- 2011 Raphaela Papadakis
- 2012 Elizabeth Desbruslais
- 2013 Sinéad O'Kelly
- 2014 Meilir Jones
- 2015 Charlotte Yeoman

Enquiries:

Stephen Miles, The Well House, 20 Barney Road, Fulmodestone, Fakenham, Norfolk, NR21 0AT. Telephone: 01328 878 364. Mobile: 07767 688 514. E-mail: miles.s.j@btinternet.com

The article by 2014 Senior Prizewinner, Alexei Winter will be of use to those who are unsure of how to devise a recital for the AESS competitions. You can read it here: [Devising a recital](#)

The AESS Fell Musical Theatre Prize 2016

The 2016 competition will take place on Sunday, May 8th Deadline for applications 22nd April 2016

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 8th 2016 at the Sylvia Young Theatre School, 1 Nutford Place, London W1H 5YZ.

To download an information pack and booking form, please go to the website address shown in the poster.

Prospectus

Competitors must be between 18-25 years old, of any nationality and be in full time training or preparing for a career in Musical Theatre. Competitors are required to perform a song and a scene/speech as a sequence in the original English which can come from any source and be presented in any order; they do not have to be from the same source. There must be a smooth transition between the two elements as though performing within the context of Musical Theatre and appropriate movement may be included as part of the performance.

The programme should not exceed six minutes. The adjudicators will require a copy of both the scene/speech and the song. Costume/props may be used.

Applications must be received by April 22nd 2016. There is a non-refundable entrance fee of £20 (cheques payable to the AESS) which should be sent with the application form to The Administrator, AESS TVF Competition, 1 Hillfield Road, London, NW6 1QD.

List of Previous Winners

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.

To learn more about the Toni V Fell Trust visit: www.tonifelltrust.org

The AESS Senior Prize The Patricia Routledge National English Song Competition 2016

The final will take place at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama on Wednesday, May 25th from 6.00pm. The final is open to the public and admission is free.

The preliminary round will take place at the GSMD on Sunday, May 22nd.

The deadline for entries is Saturday, May 14th.

THE JOHN KERR AWARD FOR ENGLISH SONG

This exciting and unique event for singers explores the rich variety of the English Song genre. This international competition is presided over by a panel of distinguished judges and offers substantial prize money to a number of competitors.

The next competition will be held on Saturday 8th October 2016 at St Lawrence Church, Church Lane, West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP14 3AH

The John Kerr Award is a Corporate Member of the AESS.

For more information, contact Maureen Lyle, The Administrator, Clifton Coach House, Camden Park, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 5AA, email: johnkerraward@yahoo.co.uk

OTHER NEWS

Shakespeare 400th Anniversary Concert News

Do you have any news on concerts to celebrate the Bard's 400th anniversary? Do let us know of any events which celebrate the greatest inspiration for composers in the setting of the English language. Members are encouraged to use the AESS logo on all advertising material.

Please send details to Stephen Miles at miles.s.j@btinternet.com or 20 Barney Road, Fulmodeston, Fakenham, Norfolk NR21 0AT for inclusion.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

At the recent AESS committee meeting, it was decided to recommend the following to the membership at the next AGM, to be held on Sunday, April 17th 2016:

The AESS committee proposes that the annual membership fee be increased from £20 per annum to £25 per annum, to take effect from April 1st 2017. Joint membership would be increased to £35 and student membership to £15.

Members will be aware that there has been no increase for many years. In this time, there has been a noticeable increase in benefits: newsletters, website, electronic communication with the possibility of advertising events and courses run by members, new competitions, annual themed concerts by members and pupils in the Unsung Heroes series, etc.

East Anglia Music School Spring Workshop 2016
For Singers And Observers
With Acclaimed Baritone - Roderick Williams
Accompanist: Karen Smith
9th April 2016, 9:30am to 6.00pm
The Music Room, the Anteros Art Foundation,
Fye Bridge Street, Norwich

For more details contact diva13516@btinternet.com

Roderick Williams encompasses a wide repertoire, from baroque to contemporary music, in the opera house, on the concert platform and in recital.

He enjoys relationships with all the major UK opera houses and is particularly associated with the baritone roles of Mozart. He has also sung world premieres of operas by, among others, David Sawer, Sally Beamish, Michael van der Aa, Robert Saxton and Alexander Knaifel.

Roderick Williams has sung concert repertoire with all the BBC orchestras, and many other ensembles including the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Philharmonia, London Sinfonietta, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hallé, Britten Sinfonia, Bournemouth Symphony and Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Abroad he has worked with the Berlin Philharmonic, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Russian National Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome and Bach Collegium Japan amongst others. His many festival appearances include the BBC Proms (including the Last Night in 2014), Edinburgh, Cheltenham, Aldeburgh and Melbourne.

Recent opera engagements include **Oronte** in Charpentier's *Medée*, **Toby Kramer** in Van der Aa's *Sunken Garden* in the Netherlands and London, **Pollux** /*Castor and Pollux* for English National Opera and Van der Aa's *After Life* at Melbourne State Theatre. Future performances include Van der Aa's *Sunken Garden* at Opera de Lyon and the title role in *Billy Budd* for the Nationale Reisopera. Recent and future concert engagements include concerts with the Tonkünstler Orchester at the Musikverein, Cincinnati Symphony, Music of the Baroque Chicago and Virginia Arts Festival as well as many recitals and concerts in the UK and worldwide.

He is also an accomplished recital artist who can be heard at venues and festivals including Wigmore Hall, Kings Place, LSO St Luke's, the Perth Concert Hall, Oxford Lieder Festival, London Song Festival, the Musikverein, Vienna and on Radio 3, where he has participated on Iain Burnside's *Voices* programme.

His numerous recordings include Vaughan Williams, Berkeley and Britten operas for Chandos, Verdi's *Don Carlos* (conducted by Bernard Haitink) for Philips, and an extensive repertoire of English song with pianist Iain Burnside for Naxos.

Roderick Williams is also a composer and has had works premiered at the Wigmore and Barbican Halls, the Purcell Room and live on national radio. He will be Artistic Director of Leeds Lieder + in April 2016. We hope you can come to what is sure to be a memorable day.

PREVIOUS COMPETITIONS

The Catherine Lambert Junior Recital Prize Final 2015
Sunday November 22nd at 13:30 at The Purcell School, Bushey, Herts
Panel of judges: Jean Hornbuckle, Jane Roberson, Rachel Sherry

1st prize	£500	Ella Rainbird-Earley	accompanied by Joan Taylor
2nd prize	£300	Matilda Wale	accompanied by Patricia Williams
3rd prize	£100	Josie Hawthorn	accompanied by Joan Taylor

Spoken prize in memory of Marion Lines £200 Ella Rainbird-Earley

The AESS is most grateful to The Purcell School for allowing us to use the building and to Tom Marandola the Head of Singing.

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

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

There was a very high standard of singing and speaking from all the young competitors and we wish them every success in their future endeavours.