



ENO Community Choir

Other Voices - Autumn Term Project 2014

Legendary director Peter Sellars is directing two productions in the ENO's coming season - John Adams' new work *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* and Purcell's *The Indian Queen*. Both productions retell history through multiple voices, often through the voice of women and other typically unheard voices. Both productions interweave original and contemporary material. For more information on the productions: <http://www.eno.org/gospel> and <http://www.eno.org/indianqueen>

Overview

Other Voices is an intergenerational community project developed in response to Peter Sellars' residency at ENO. The first phase of the project runs in parallel with *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* at ENO (October – December 2014) and celebrates the power of the human voice. Responding to themes at the heart of the production, it seeks to retell personal and shared history through multiple perspectives.

As part of this first phase of the project, the ENO Community Choir will collaborate with three other choirs from across London - The B.I.G. Choir, an ensemble from Streetwise Opera and a choir from St Martin in the Fields school. The choirs will work independently during the term, working with their own choir leader to learn and rehearse material, then come together in late November for a musical exchange and to rehearse for two pop-up outdoor performances, one in Brixton's Windrush Square on 30 November, and one on streets near the London Coliseum on 4 or 5 December.

The project will be led by ENO Associate Artists, Stevie Higgins as Music Director/Conductor, and a Choreographer/Director. The team will join the choir for some weekly sessions during the term and will direct rehearsals in late November. Peter Sellars will also join rehearsals where feasible around his schedule. Rachel Dawson will lead the ENO Community Choir during the term, supported by an ENO pianist. ENO Opera Works singers and members of the ENO Chorus will join the performances to sing alongside the community choirs. As part of the project choir members will have the opportunity to attend the Dress Rehearsal of *The Gospel* on 19 November, meet with Peter Sellars, and work with ENO Associate Artists.

This is part of a wider Other Voices community programme, including creative writing workshops with several community groups in Brixton in Autumn 2014 and a youth music and theatre devising project in Spring 2015.

Repertoire

Over the term the participating choirs will work on a range of music inspired by the themes at the heart of *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* and John Adams' music which references Bach and other musical genres. The ENO Community Choir will learn some chorus music from Bach's *St John's Passion* as well as related music from other genres. **Please note the choir will not be learning any music from *The Gospel According to the Other Mary*.** Choir members will be required to learn their music by heart for the performance, but will be supported with online/downloadable audio recordings to help them learn their music outside of rehearsals. Stevie Higgins and the

Choreographer/Director will join the choir for 2-3 sessions during the term to develop their musical performance and simple gestural movement inspired by Peter Sellars' chorus movement style.

Performances

All the choirs will come together for 3 days of workshops in Brixton to sing together, share their music and rehearse towards the outdoor performances. The choirs will be joined by members of the ENO Chorus and other ENO singers for the rehearsals and performance. Please note wet weather provision will be made for the outdoor performances and we welcome the choir's cooperation to make this feasible.

Autumn Term Rehearsal Schedule

- Weekly choir rehearsals **Thurs 2 Oct – Thurs 27 Nov, 6.30-8.30pm**
(includes a half term break – no choir on Thurs 30 Oct). ENO Community Choir rehearsals at Rudolf Steiner House 6.30-8.30pm, apart from Thurs 23 Oct which will be at 6 Somerleyton Road, Brixton London SW9 8ND
- **Wed 19 Nov** morning (10am-1.30pm)
The Gospel According to the Other Mary Dress Rehearsal at the London Coliseum (tickets subject to availability)
- **Sat 22 Nov** 11am-6pm (Brixton venue tbc)
The participating choirs come together for a day of singing and musical exchange in Brixton with Stevie Higgins, the the Choreographer/Director and their choir leaders
- **Sat 29 and Sun 30 Nov** 11am-6pm (Brixton venue tbc)
The choirs work with Stevie Higgins, the Choreographer/Director and their choir leaders over an intensive weekend workshop to create and rehearse a choreographed performance incorporating repertoire from each of the choirs. The performance will take place on the early evening of Sunday 30 November as a pop up outdoor performance in central Brixton, involving members of the ENO Chorus and Opera Works singers performing alongside the choirs.
- **Thurs 4 Dec tbc** (early evening) additional outdoor performance near the London Coliseum in lieu of the usual Christmas carol concert. **Please note there may also be an additional rehearsal on Wed 3 Dec to prepare for this final performance.** Exact date and location tbc

Cost

Including all additional days of rehearsals, the fee for the term is **£50**. We are able to offer a concessionary rate to anyone unable to pay the full fee. Please contact bhankey@eno.org for a friendly, confidential conversation to discuss.

We hope you are excited about taking part in this project next term. The project will give choir members the chance to work on an exciting collaboration with other choirs, learn new material, work with ENO associate artists, and be involved in a unique celebratory performance.

The ENO Community Choir is generously supported by Shaftesbury PLC.