

15/02/2008 Notices

ABC Class of 2010

Week 6 of 10

Hemiola? Can you get a cream for that? Well now you can add 'hemiola' (turning triple into duple time by means of brackets) to your list of fascinating musical terms. You'll never be asked to define one, but believe me, conductors DO use such terms, and it's nice to nod smugly in agreement rather than shrug the shoulders in ignorance. Just squirrel it away in the brain somewhere. In foreign language terms, passive understanding is sufficient. Be grateful.

On the home straight

I heard one of you mutter ruefully that Mondays seem to come round really quickly... they do indeed. There never seems enough time to practise between choral rehearsals, either. Anyway, you've done the hard yards, you are over the bulk of the theory, and now there will be more singing and sight-reading to do.

You have been champing at the bit to get on with more singing, but perhaps you realised when you tried to sing 'And the Glory of the Lord' that it wasn't quite so simple after all, and a bit of theory is good to fall back on!

BBC Radio Gloucester

We will indeed be featured again on Sunday 14th, Richard Atkins' show, but Vere can't tell me what time. Either listen live, or catch it on 'listen again'.

Taxi!

Can anyone from the Stroud area help, please: for weeks 8, 9, and 10 (March 1, 8, and 15) we will have the wonderful support of accompanist Julian Elloway so that Chris can have his hands free to whip you into shape from the podium. Julian has Monday night transport problems, so needs a lift from Stroud to Dursley and back. He lives near Waitrose, and is happy to wait around that neck of the woods to be picked up. Can anyone oblige, please? I can offer a modest contribution towards petrol for the diversion. Please see me if you can help.

March 8 – Road Closure

Fair warning - Sainsbury's is causing a road closure in the week of March 8. Castle Street (outside the Methodist Church) will be closed from 7.30pm each night from

the traffic lights to the Town Hall, so the swimming pool car park will not be available on that Monday.

Those coming from the Cam direction should park in the car park by the Old Spot Inn on May Lane and walk down via the pedestrian shopping zone to the Church. Those coming from the Uley direction should use Long Street car park.

In any event, I suggest you car pool (if you don't already) so that the problems are minimised.

Tips of the Week

Sing positively. Applying all the techniques you are being taught will help you with your tuning, clarity, and tone but only if you commit yourself (I'm not talking about sheer volume). Reedy-weedy, namby-pamby, half-hearted attempts will always fail. You can't produce something worth hearing with your head down in your lap, no air in your lungs, and mouth barely moving. Have courage! During the ABC you have carte blanche to make errors, so go for broke and have a bash. It's the only way to improve.

Don't be lazy: when other sections are being note-bashed, pay attention and work with them. It will help you if you have an appreciation of what other sections are singing, and the additional sight-singing practice is always beneficial.

Singing from the same hymn-sheet

Something I found out late to my cost: there are often multiple versions of a score. Particularly for pieces composed centuries ago, there is often no complete original definitive score available, or there may be multiple versions, so they have to be researched/ edited. Different publishing houses (Novello, Ricordi, Baerenreiter, Schott, OUP, and the rest) publish their own take on a piece, and sometimes just one publisher (like Novello) can have various editions of the same piece. For the Messiah, you will hear people refer to the 'Watkins Shaw' edition, or the 'Prout'. These are gentlemen who have researched the work and tweaked the arrangements, the text, etc. Sometimes we are grateful for the new light which these editions shine on the masterworks. Sometimes we may think it was only done so that our contemporaries can get their hands on royalties for dead men's work.

Whatever the case, always check what edition is being used before you rush out to buy a copy of a score. Otherwise you may find yourself singing something completely different, and wondering why your score has different page numbers, etc.

Such are the pitfalls!

Julia, Secretary