

Fulham Camerata – Appointment of Musical Director

About Us

Fulham Camerata (London SW6) is seeking a new conductor from September 2018. Fulham Camerata is a distinctive, well-respected and financially viable amateur chamber choir which sings to a high standard. Founded in 2007 with a remit to the development of both amateur and professional singing in the local community, Fulham Camerata works with professional singers, soloists and chamber orchestras, typically in the early stages of their careers, giving young musicians valuable experience of delivering high quality performances under time pressure.

We currently employ an accompanist and 3 choral scholars. The scholars boost the sections and give confidence to the singers, have solo performance opportunities during our concerts, and can, on occasion, lead sectionals during rehearsal when required. Ralph Allwood, our patron, gives valuable support and advice, not least in the recruitment of our Musical Directors. Our current Composer in Residence, who succeeded Alexander Campkin in 2015, is Ben Rowarth. Ben gives private singing lessons to individuals before and during rehearsals, and gives a voice-coaching session to the choir once a term.

Fulham Camerata does not ask would-be members to audition; rather, we welcome and support new members. Over the years, we have found that 'self-selection' works – and people feel confident enough to stretch themselves;

We explore varied repertoire. Back in time to John Wilbye, Vivaldi, J S Bach and Handel; tackling challenging pieces (Britten's *Hymn to Saint Cecilia* and Esenvalds' *Passion and Resurrection* for example) and more approachable works (such as Copland's settings of *Simple Gifts* and *At the River*); performing contemporary composers (including works by Cecilia McDowall, Howard Goodall, Eric Whitacre and Alexander Campkin); not being afraid to programme virtually unknown pieces, such as the Finnish composer Jaako Mantyjärvi's setting of lines from *Macbeth*. And favourites by Bruckner and Barber, in Latin, French, English and Italian; we aim to continue along this diverse path. We also sing Carol services for local churches and have joined forces with other Fulham musical groups on occasion, for example the Nutcracker performed by Fulham Symphony Orchestra at St John's Smith Square in December 2016, and previously FHCS and the Fulham Children's choir.

James Day, our Musical Director since January 2015, will retire at the end of the summer term. Fulham Camerata has flourished under his direction, growing in size and confidence. We have been invited to sing at Barnes Festival for the third year running, and continue our association with Paul's Cancer and Fulham Palace (all three of these are paid performances). Our recent Messiah by candlelight with orchestra attracted an audience of 400.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR: Description and Responsibilities

We are now looking for a Musical Director to start in September, to lead and develop Fulham Camerata in the spirit in which it was set up. The candidate must be enthusiastic about working with and encouraging keen amateurs, to help them develop their singing skills with confidence and achieve their best. The candidate should be able to inspire the choir, be approachable, have a sense of joy and fun but also have clarity and authority. They should also have the patience and skills required to deal with mixed abilities, helping develop the less experienced while maintaining the interest of the more accomplished.

The candidate must have experience in training choirs and working with soloists and have a good knowledge of classical choral repertoire. They should be reliable and organized, and able to plan suitable programmes, and have a wish to work with the choir for several years. A willingness to participate in fundraising and social events would be appreciated; pub socials are organised on a regular basis.

Job Specification It is expected that the successful candidate will:

- lead rehearsals every Tuesday evening during term time (approximately 30 rehearsals per year) in preparation for at least one concert per term with additional Christmas carol concerts or services in the Autumn term. When attendance is not possible, the MD to arrange cover by a sufficiently qualified deputy
- Propose appropriate programmes to the committee for the choir to perform in concerts, with planning starting a year in advance
- Aim to maintain the size and balance of the choir
- Manage the accompanist and choral scholars
- Identify and source, with the assistance of the committee, suitable sheet music for the choir, ad orchestra/soloists
- Contribute to publicity materials, write programme notes
- Be engaged with the life of the choir and be willing to work closely with the committee
- Be committed to developing the musical skills and repertoire of the choir
- Be committed to promoting members' enjoyment of rehearsals and pleasure in performance
- Be committed to the choir's sustainability and financial success

The Ideal candidate will:

- Be an enthusiastic singer with experience of conducting a small choir to a high standard
- Have sound knowledge of Classical repertoire from the Renaissance to the contemporary
- Have experience of selecting and conducting professional orchestras and soloists

Practicalities:

Rehearsals are held at Holy Cross Church, Parsons Green, Fulham SW6 on Tuesday evenings from 7.30 – 9.30pm. The first rehearsal for the appointee will be 4th September 2018

Our main concerts are usually timetabled on Saturday evenings in mid-March, late June and late November, each with afternoon rehearsal. In addition, we sing Carol concerts in December: our Fulham Camerata concert on a Sunday evening in early-mid December, Paul's Cancer Charity concert and Fulham Palace concert, each with afternoon rehearsal. Concerts are held in or adjoining Fulham, typically at Holy Cross Church, St Mary's Putney amongst others. Remuneration is on a per-rehearsal and per-concert basis. Rehearsals are remunerated at £80 and concerts vary according to repertoire and orchestral involvement.

Application process - deadline 19th February: Please send your current CV and covering letter by 19th February to Judith Nugée (Chair, Fulham Camerata Committee) at judithnugee@gmail.com. Your covering letter and CV should include the following:

- Personal information: Name, address, Tel nos and Email.
 - Relevant appointments and present role.
 - Referees (please give at least one professional referee; references only taken up in case of interview).
- Please also include how you heard of the vacancy, why you wish to become Musical Director of Fulham Camerata and what skills and talents you would bring. Please also prepare a sample programme of music for the Autumn term of 2018.

Interviews - Saturday 10th March: Short-listed applicants will be interviewed on Saturday 10th March. Our patron Ralph Allwood will join us on the interview panel.

Auditions: Tuesday 20th March 7.30-9.30pm: Selected candidates will be invited to audition at our rehearsal on Tuesday 20th March.

For further information, please look at our website www.fulhamcamerata.com and other social media presence.