



Ageing
Voices

SING
IRELAND

CREATIVE AGING
INTERNATIONAL
We Celebrate Aging

Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme
2017–2022





Choral workshop 2021

Health and wellbeing

Healthcare

Workplace choral singing

Carol O'Neill_27th Jan 2021

Resources for Community group leaders

- Shared musical resources
- Access to live accompaniment
- Part funding for Conducting Course
fantastic week of learning, sharing ...
- Support network – advice

Singing for healthcare workers

- Stress Relief
- Bonding on an alternative level
- Physical relief
- Time to themselves before going home
- Pride in the workplace “Team”

Nuts and Bolts

- Personnel – In house lead people
- Musical Input – select a choral musical leader
- Finance – Workplace Initiate ,self funded, part funded
- Space – to sing and gather NB
- Whats app administrator

Physical Benefits

- Breathing Exercises
- Confidence
- Personal Self care
- Uniform – part of ..belonging
- Posture – so important and a constant reminder
- Relaxation

Performances

- From very early on I find that choirs get invited to perform ...whether they are ready or not !
- It is important to sing in places where members are respected and the sound is conducive to singing and music
- I try to avoid “wallpaper” invitations where people are trying to sing while audience are moving , drinking, talking...its demoralising for a choir and one would need a huge repertoire so I am very precious where I let the choir sing and this in itself brings a respect and worth.

Finance

- In house from department such as Health and Well being
- Outside Sponsor
- Self funded by small weekly fee – 5 weeks 20 euro
- Part funded weekly fee and workplace funding
- Note: - a weekly small fee is a good idea as a choir group like to have the power to send mass cards, thank you gifts.
- Money ALWAYS goes back into the choir and can be used at the end of season to treat the choir
- Part funding of workshops

Choir set up costs examined

- Space Hire
- Musical Director - Sing Ireland guide
- Accompanist – Sing Ireland guide
- Sheet Music – sometimes requires bulk
- Printing
- Insurance
- Backing tracks
- Tailored backing tracks

Choir Identity

- Again funding can be used to augment organising a “uniform” or identity for each individual choir which brings a great sense of belonging - team !!
- Funding means everyone gets to partake with no great financial pressure
- Funding may help with the hiring of part time accompaniest if necessary

Growth of choir

- Performances
- Fundraising Events
- Work placement events
- Promotional events
- Media attention
- Pride in workplace and choir
- New perspective of colleagues
- Local pride of place

Healthy Harmony Choir



Carol O'Neill_27th Jan 2021

Choir Expectations at start up !

- Singing circle
- Non-performance/performance
- Unison unaccompanied singing
- Backing track modern sing along
- Tailored music for choir singing
- Genres ?
- Performance styles and Options

Workshops

- Invite outside musicians to expose the group to other musical experiences
- Few hours concentrating on learning perhaps a difficult piece for performance
- Perhaps a workshop with a well know MD or singer to give a different perspective
- Drumming/ Rhythm workshop
- Musical workshops

Musical Choices

- MD teaches so MD chooses fundamentally.
- Selecting songs can be a challenge
- Choral Arrangement
- Key suitable to mixed voices and abilities
- Sight singing not an option
- Recording lines is best option but very time consuming
- NB – choose backing track suitable for choir and stick to that arrangement

Teaching Methods

- Sheet Music
- Teach by ear
- Record Lines
- Buy line recordings

Positive Mental Health attribute

- Sense of Belonging
- Team
- Pride in workplace
- Unified identity – Ennis Hospital choir
- Surrender rank and file and decision to MD
- Step into unknown territory
- Social outing travel, food, rehearsals etc..
- Showbiz .. A new stage for most



Carol O'Neill_27th Jan 2021



Carol O'Neill_27th Jan 2021

Choosing music for Choir

- Mixed voices
- Mixed abilities
- Unison singing very important
- Simple harmonies
- Chorus – very positive boost
- Sources – Limited but Unlimited
- Choice sometimes depends on particular performance – theme, fundraiser ,

Music Sources

- MD may have a cache to choose from
- Very important to trawl net for similar choir groups and go to source for musical arrangements
- Listen..listen listen
- Careful not to try to sing popular songs that are gorgeous when digitally enhanced but fall flat with “ordinary” voices and no enhancement – eg ---
- Key changes often required which needs arrangements to change

Accompanist

- I think a good accompanist is gold to a choir
- Ideally an MD may also play piano but in my experience with a community choir they need MD standing in front with a separate accompanist
- Accompanist versus backing track for performance is vital as they do what their name suggest accompany. Follow ..compensate
- Backing Tracks are usually subject to WiFi, technology etc. and if it goes wrong with a choir that lacks experience it can be like a runaway train
.....
- I am happy to discuss this as sometimes tracks sound more rewarding for the singers ..
- I'm a traditionalist and prefer to hear the singers in performance

Choral training for a new choir

- Easy, simple Melodies
- Canons...Rounds...so vocally rewarding and excellent for training...
- An MD quickly finds leaders, experience, good ear through melodic canons and its an excellent way for people to relax and learn the art of singing together
- BREATHING IS KEY
- Invites relaxation and unification which can be carried into the lives of the singer and of course improves the quality of singing

Music

- For a new amateur choir I find this is a great opportunity to introduce the members to so many different genres of music they may not have had experienced before
- It is important to sing a mix of styles to keep everyone interested
- Remember a community choir may be their first venture into this whole wonderful choral world
- I encourage group trips to concerts and performance and post different music on our WhatsApp group

Carol O'Neill_27th Jan 2021

Positive effect of music

Briefly

- Music soothes even a crying babe
- Music can create great nostalgia and pride eg: at a match or event
- Rhythm can immediately get a reaction of movement, enjoyment,
- Music can be attached to a memory
- Every person has a favourite song/artist and should be explored and respected



CHORAL WORKSHOP ~2 2021

Health and wellbeing

Healthcare

Workplace choral singing

Carol O'Neill_3RD February 2021

Singing for healthcare workers

- Stress Relief
- Bonding Physical relief
- Social aspect
- Pride in the workplace “Team”

Growth of choir

- Performances
- Fundraising Events
- Work placement events
- Promotional events
- Media attention
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- New perspective of colleagues
- Local pride of place

Healthy Harmony Choir





PAULA  NOLAN

PHOTOGRAPHY

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Musical Choices

- MD teaches so MD needs to be familiar
- Selecting songs can be a challenge
- Choral Arrangement If at all possible
- Key suitable to mixed voices and abilities
- Sight singing not an option for everyone
- Recording lines is best option but very time consuming
- NB – choose backing track suitable for choir and stick to that arrangement so that a year later with new members joining we are all sure which arrangement we used !

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- BREATHING IS KEY
- TUNING IS MANDATORY !!
- Invites relaxation and unification which can be carried into the lives of the singer and of course **improves the quality of singing**

Musicality

- For a new amateur choir I find this is a great opportunity to introduce the members to so many different genres of music they may not have had experienced before
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REHEARSAL

- Welcome circle
- Background Music
- Warm
- Judge the Mood
 - Quiet gently start -
 - Boom – Loud, Interactive Jolt
 - Information chat before last song so they leave literally with a song on their lips.

Rehearsal Programme

- Welcome Music – varied cache
- Breathing..Stretching ..Unwinding..re focus
- Warm up exercises to music
- Projection
- Dynamics
- Tuning
- Canon –Rounds
- Projection Excercises - Hey me ,Hey you..
- Old Favourite
- New Piece
- Familiar - Repetition Courageous



Canons

- Bella Mama
- Senwa de dende
- Alleluia
- Now I walk in Beauty
- My Paddle
- Row Row your Boat
- I wanna Sing / When the saints / sing low
- Google rounds for new ideas ...

Encourage Expression

- ▣ Happy Birthday
- ▣ Smiling, encouragement, praise

Surprise re focus ...

- I put my hands up in the air sometimes
Dynamite -- -
Singing Ya ya

SMILES - EXPRESSION

- Reflection of your facial expressions in your choir
- Feedback
- Humour
- Emotion is ok and will happen ...let it be

RESOURCES – wishlist !!

- SHARED MUSIC FORUM
 - INSPIRATION for each other
- ACCOMPANIEST LISTS IN VARIOUS AREAS
- Conducting course in IWMS – Sing Ireland
- Workshops /Webinars – Organise or attend or both
- Constant research – listen
- Be confident in your own strengths and abilities as a choir
- Never doubt or stress
- TUNING – TUNING TUNING

RETURNING TO CHOIR AFTER COVID – OR START UP CHOIR

- Standard Risk assessment
- Venue/Space
- Welcome registration evening
- Tea/Coffee
- Videos or photos of past performances
- Time to talk - very important to all.
- Acknowledge the difficult year past
- Mixture of songs , familiar and new fast and slow

Returning continued

- Invite outside musicians to expose the group to other musical experiences
- Few hours concentrating on learning perhaps a difficult piece for performance
- Perhaps a workshop with a well know MD or singer to give a different perspective
- Drumming/ Rhythm workshop
- Musical workshops
- Incorporate mindfulness into rehearsals



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