

TakeNote



The CSO Players' Newsletter

June 2020 www.CSOchestra.org

Welcome from the Chair

What strange and difficult times!

I hope you and your families are keeping safe (and sane) – this pandemic has affected us all in different ways, and it seems to me that how we come out of it is even harder than how we started the lock-down.

I know from the feedback from many of you (for which thanks) that there are many views about the risks and what we should/should not do, and when. Some of you are understandably very nervous about how and when we restart. Others are feeling that it has all gone on long enough and there is sufficient evidence to plan to recommence our programme and rehearsals.

I understand both perspectives, but I and the committee are erring on the side of caution – we want to ensure everyone is safe and we will not work outside (or stretch the interpretation) of government guidelines. There is, fortunately, growing evidence of what will be possible, and when. The Association of British Orchestras, and the Department of Culture Media and Sport for example are considering the position for music groups such as ours.

But it is early days, and we will need to consider carefully how the hospitality sector (and sporting events) deal with the post COVID-19 challenges, as well as the issues that are specific to us as musicians (and for our audiences, who are often older).

For now, we have little choice but to wait – there is nowhere to rehearse at present for a start, and Taunton's have no plans to open for external use in the foreseeable future.

I have suggested a number of 'draft checks' to our committee before we can restart. Passing the tests will be partly a matter of judgement, but it gives you an idea of the discussions we are having:

1. We should **ensure our members are safe**, or able to make a sensible judgement based on the risks and their personal circumstances to keep safe.
2. We should be **guided by our conductor and the views of our members** (and will ask them) to ensure we are in line with feelings and needs.
3. **We should not be the first** UK orchestra to 'test the waters' and we should learn from what the professional orchestras and groups similar to us are doing.
4. We must **always be inside the government advice** (if we were ever challenged).
5. We should have a **way of rehearsing** that is both practical and appropriate.

Do say what you think please (No.2 above), especially if you disagree or think there are more things we can be doing.

On a more positive note:

- We are still in dialogue with the Council regarding future events and Music in the City. They are planning to do something 'virtual' and we will play our bit.
- We are also thinking about ways of communicating better, maybe with an online social event.
- We are considering new models of staggered rehearsing and alternative locations.
- We are in touch with all our partners (such as the Romsey Choral Society, guest conductors and soloists) so we know their views and plans.
- We are in touch with Richard Taunton's College so we know if and when rehearsals there can restart.
- We have been in touch with the winner of the 'Young Musician of the Year' piano final, Thomas Luke, who lives on the Isle of Wight and is very keen to play with us.

Please do keep strong in these difficult times and contact me at any time on any topic – your views, ideas and worries matter.

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy Take Note No3! Thanks to all the contributors and to our editor for producing a fun read in difficult times.

Jos: Chair@CSOrchestra.org



Thomas Luke, winner of the BBC Young Musician 2020 keyboard category

Principal Conductor's Note

Dear CSO,

Very warmest wishes from sunny Highclere (on the edge of Newbury!).

What has lockdown been like for you?

I'm sure we are all missing ensemble music making – I certainly am! My last rehearsal, before lockdown, was with London based contemporary group CHROMA. We met on a sunny Friday afternoon in March at the 1901 Arts Club Waterloo. The rehearsal felt different to the normal routine, with awkward embraces at the start and end (should we shake hands, hug, elbow touch, etc.) and everyone keeping a watchful eye on email and news apps; We had heard moments before the rehearsal that there would be some impact on our events the following week, but told to rehearse as if it would all go ahead. Our focus was Na'ama Zisser's *Drowned in C* (2015) and a flurry of new compositions, all to be premiered in forthcoming events. The weekend rolled by – all was going ahead. The day before – all was going ahead. The day of the first event – cancelled...



This is a worrying chapter for music performance as we know it. These times will pass, but what shape the music industry (education therein) will be in remains to be seen. I have no doubt that we [musicians around the globe] will continue to make music together, but I, like so many, am keeping a watchful eye on the future. I am fortunate to have a portfolio that mixes conducting with composition and teaching. The impact on my larger workload, conducting, has been severe. But, for now, conservatoire/university work has continued online, with more commissions, and also music engraving, filling a small part of the gap (I used to do a lot of engraving for Ricordi, BBCSO, and some German opera houses). For so many freelance musicians, particularly those that didn't have teaching portfolios or means of working online, the outlook has been incredibly bleak – I'm sure they are all in our thoughts as we watch and wait for the next steps!

Three highs?

(i) Spending time with the family! While home-schooling is a whirlwind of fun (!), spending SO much time with Maria, Molly, Eve, and Pippa continues to be very special. I have a newfound love of Grade 5 bassoon and Grade 1 trumpet (and it won't be long until Pippa sees a French horn...!), and the weekly clap for the NHS featured many enjoyable musical offerings!

(ii) Composing. Over my career I have always been quite strict with myself, in terms of not letting composition – as an activity – take priority over professional portfolio, family, etc. As such I have, at times reluctantly, only written when there have been commissions to do so. Lockdown has enabled me to take on more of this type of work and I have already completed a small suite for string orchestra, a short anthem for a choir in Indianapolis, and am putting the finishing touches now on a short piece for Simon Desbruslais (piccolo trumpet) – he premiered my trumpet (doubling flugelhorn) concerto a few years ago.

(iii) Well done CSO cello section for *Ave Verum* adventures! – we watched this as a family (including Bernie the CSO Teddy!)

Two lows?

(i) The top of the list has to be not conducting – this has always been what makes me tick, musically speaking, and I can't wait to get back on the podium. It is a privilege to work with so many wonderful

people and musicians, and the absence of this type of interaction – as I'm sure it has been for all CSO members – is being felt far and wide.

(ii) Somewhere far lower down the list, but also significant, is not playing touch rugby once a week (this may surprise some of you!). I could say more, but would rather not burst the athletic image you might now be thinking of...

Looking forward to when we resume rehearsals, in whatever capacity this may be. Warmest wishes to all CSO players and particular thanks to the committee for looking after everything!

Very best wishes

John

COVID-19 Updates

Starting Back

We don't yet have any information about when and how we might be able to start rehearsing again, but please be assured that we are making enquiries and as soon as we have any further details we will share them with you. The committee is in contact with John Traill, Jonny Lo, Richard Taunton College and others.

We have been advised that the Music in the City event planned for September will NOT now be taking place. That organisation is looking to see if they can do a virtual event and as we hear more we will share that information with you.

November Concert

We are conscious that a decision will need to be made about this but at the moment the diary is emptying rather than filling so for the time being it is still pencilled in.

We will also be monitoring advice from organisations such as Making Music and the DCMS (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) as they now have a taskforce looking to advise on how the Arts more generally might start up again.

Part of the plans for starting back will need to involve dialogue / comments / questions from orchestra members so it would be really helpful if you could start thinking about that. There is no such thing as a stupid question, so please send your thoughts back to me and I will collate those for the committee and in due course I will hopefully be able to prepare a FAQ, that might have some answers too!

Committee Roles



As outlined in the spring newsletter we are still looking for volunteers to pick up the roles of SECRETARY and TREASURER. The secretary role is changing and is mainly keeping notes from meetings and AGM's. For the treasurer - and this doesn't have to be a playing member of the orchestra - we need someone with the knowledge and time to keep on top of the orchestra finances and work with the committee for reports and future plans. The current incumbents would happily explain in more detail if you would like to find out more.

Section Leaders Meeting

We plan to hold (an online) meeting on the evening of 7th July to get feedback from section leaders, so if you have comments please make sure that you have shared them prior to then.

AGM

A long way off, but we will hold this in some form in November, possibly online. Following on from the piece in the newsletter about orchestra etiquette, Jos would like to review the CSO constitution prior to November and adopt an updated version then. More details will follow on this.

Judith: Manager@CSOrchestra.org

Lockdown Diaries Part 1 - From The CSO Cello Section

Since the lock-down commenced, members of the cello section seem to have gotten to know each other rather better than before - at least we now know our individual culinary skills, preferences and favourite tipple! For example, who would have believed that Chris could make shepherd's pie Madras Club style, Katie loves to cook chicken chilli balti with sag aloo, Jenny just drools over the risotto which her husband cooks for her every night and Sam loves her Adnams copper house gin with slices of lemon and orange!

We meet on-line every Tuesday evening from 7.30 pm to about 8.15 pm and just chat about nothing and everything! Our WhatsApp chat group is called "CSO Cellos and Friends" and we have one or two non-cellist members who have ventured into our patch, but we have to keep them in check, particularly Ian! If you would like to join this group just send me your mobile tel number and I will add you in. Our latest venture is to do a multi-celli version of Mozart's Ave Verum Corpus, which we hope, when finished, we will be able to put onto You Tube and share with the rest of the orchestra. And of course, let's not forget Ilfra, and her husband Julian, who are doing sterling work with their "Tune a Day", although in this case Ilfra takes to the keys, and lets Julian do the hard stuff!

We are all missing getting together properly, of course, and meeting up and playing with the rest of the orchestra, but I hope when this is all over we can reconvene and help, once again, to make the CSO one of the best non-professional orchestras in the south of England!

Bernard Postlethwaite (Cello section)

Coronavirus and the new season

Firstly - I hope all members and their families have come through the last few months and weeks safe, well and largely unscathed. I hope also that many of you have been able to keep up the playing during lockdown. Some of us in the brass have been larking about recording quartets and quintets - socially distanced, of course - and Andrew (trumpet) has been putting together the combined audio and/or video. Needless to say we're not ready for any of our efforts to be made public but it has kept us playing and in touch.

As lockdown measures are slowly being relaxed and we start to come out of these strange times we will inevitably look towards our 2020/2021 season and wonder how we are going to manage to rehearse and perform whilst maintaining any requirements for social distancing that may remain in place.

I imagine there are many of you who will be nervous of sitting in a large group, in close proximity to brass and wind players who, by the very nature of their instruments, will be exhaling large amounts of air. Such fears are understandable. In the world of professional music this has been anticipated and studies have been carried out to determine what, if any, risks there are.

The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra has been involved in such a study in which the distance travelled by the exhaled air from players and instruments has been measured. It has been found that exhaled air travels a maximum of 80 cm (this from the flutes). So based on these findings it is recommended that players sit at least 1m apart. In most cases (violin desks, wind and brass sections etc) our normal

seating almost meets this requirement. Sitting a little further apart to achieve 1m should not cause too much disruption. The full report on the study can be found here:

[Vienna Philharmonic says no increased virus risk for orchestras](#) *Medical Xpress.com, 18.5.2020*

It is interesting to note, in Austria at least, the proposed relaxation of measures in regard to audience numbers and it would be hoped that the UK may start to follow this idea in the not too distant future, meaning that our new season ought to be able to start in September as planned.

To further reduce any residual risk the programming of chamber works might be a useful way to proceed. For example pieces such as we played for our end of season projects last year. The choice of such works would reduce the number of people at rehearsal or on stage thus lowering the risks. The Basque National Orchestra in Spain is already performing, albeit spaced apart and with smaller groups. The following may be of interest:



The Basque National Orchestra rehearsing whilst social distancing.

This image was published on Facebook by Francesca Carpos on 21.5.2020, [click here to view this post](#)

I must stress that the above is written without any medical knowledge and is intended to relate ideas that can be explored in order to facilitate resumption of our music making. Our committee, along with all members, will have to look at this, consider the government advice, the science and any other factors in order to decide when and how rehearsals resume.

I hope the above is of interest and I look forward to seeing you all at the first rehearsal in September.

Dave Kendall (Brass section)

Lockdown Diaries Part 2 - The CSO Cello Section Makes Music

The pandemic enforced lockdown has changed all our lives at the moment, and only now is there a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. We've all had our routines changed by the need to socially isolate, but why let that stop you from making music with each other? All you need is a flash of inspiration, bags of enthusiasm, some perseverance and someone "what knows how to do these things"!

Early on in the lockdown the CSO cello section decided to form its own WhatsApp chat group and we "meet" regularly every Tuesday evening from 7.30 pm for about three quarters of an hour (there is an open invitation if any non-cellists would like to join us – the only proviso is that you must be willing to share information on what you had or are cooking for supper that evening, and there is a lot of one-upmanship!) At one of these chat evenings, Ilfra (of Julian and Ilfra tune-a-day fame) suggested, in a flash of inspiration, that we might like to make a video of us virtually playing together. Bags of enthusiasm met this suggestion from the rest of the section and so the idea was formed and we got underway. The concept is easy – a backing track is first made that never appears on the final mix and, whilst listening to the backing track using earphones or headphones, we all play our individual parts from the comfort of our homes, whilst being videoed. The individual videos are then put together by "somewhat what knows" – in this case one of our cellists Trish Kiy offered to do this. Trish, who has been part of the cello section since the end of last year, has just finished her degree at Southampton University in Film and English so she was best placed for this, despite not having done any audio editing before. Trish told me "I'm looking forward to doing a Masters next year to delve deeper into documentary filmmaking, especially environmental films. Making the video with everyone in the cello section was a lot of fun and it was great to be able to play with everyone even during lockdown!"

It was decided we would play the famous Mozart version of Ave Verum Corpus as it was relatively straightforward and well known. Ilfra organised the music and took names out of a hat as to who would play each part. She then recorded a backing track on the piano and this was distributed to all concerned together with the music. With a bit of voice over from Ilfra, it was relatively straightforward to get individual videos that fitted together, and had a clean finish at the end. The biggest problem was probably each of us choosing an angle for the video that showed us up to the best, and for some of us (not me) keeping young children out of shot! With a bit of perseverance and encouragement from me, almost all the cellos managed to produce an individual video and send them to Trish to do her magic. We used "WeTransfer" for file transfer as even a two minute video produces quite a large file size. Trish used "Adobe Premiere Pro" for the video editing and "Adobe Audition" for the audio mix. I provided the words for the opening title page and the credits. The Youtube link to the finished version can be found on the CSO Facebook page and it will also be on the CSO website.

We have now agreed between us to have a go at a second video and we are looking at another version of Ave Verum Corpus this time by W Byrd (a brace of Corpora?) Hopefully this will keep us busy for the next few weeks. Watch this space.



The CSO Cello Section performing 'together' on YouTube

[Click here to watch this Youtube Video of 'Ave Verum Corpus'](#)

Bernard Postlethwaite (Cello section)

Folk Music During Lockdown

As an Orchestral member who also is heavily involved in the Folk Community, as well as an enjoyer of the Arts, I am experiencing new challenges during this Covid-19 Pandemic, as a Social Dancer, Display Dancer, Session Player, and Folk Dance Organiser.

Live Events Online

Steve and I have enjoyed quite a few online social dances so far. The Bands and Organisers involved readily accept that this type of interaction is not for everyone, that we all miss our musical interactions and that the opportunities that the latest model of computer, audio equipment and up-to-date software afford to some, are not available to all. If sitting and watching a screen, you frequently experience a delay between the lead musician and yourself, although there are techie 'folk' feverishly fiddling to fix these crazily complicated technical issues! This does apply unfortunately to real time orchestral playing too, as in it's really not practicable at the moment. I do hope that some type of live musical experience can return as soon as possible, but only when it is safe to do so!

Facebook Groups (a collection of like-minded people posting individually or as a co-operative)

There is a plethora of Facebook Groups out there to choose from, depending on your taste in music, discussion topic, or preferred level of interaction. The etiquette is that you search for the Group's title on Facebook, then request to join the Group. The Admin Team or Moderators of that Group will then make a decision as to whether to let you in – basically, are you a real person intent on not creating havoc, not a 'bot', and not trying to advertise anything not relevant to the Group.

Your request will in most cases be dealt with almost instantly for most people. Some Groups, which I have enjoyed and may be interesting to CSO Members, are listed in order of least to most interactivity:

1) **Storytelling**

[A Modern Decameron Online Story Festival: Ten Days, a Hundred Stories](#)

Featuring 'ex' FASH Members Adam and Jane Warren, and organised by Daisy Black

2) **The Arts in general**

[VirtuAI](#) (Arts & Culture) (Admin: Doug Schwab)

Experience Museums, Art Galleries, Theatre Performances virtually

[Quaranstream](#) (Admin: Doug Schwab) Live streamed Professional Folk Concerts, Classical Music and Theatre performances. If you watch a whole performance, consider donating a little or a lot, via the links provided in the posts, to support the Venues, Artists and Organisers and hope that they are still there when we come out of this.

3) **Folk Tunes**

[Tunesday Tuesdays](#) (Admin: Martin Clarke of Brown Boots)

It is here that I have watched others post Folk Tunes, provided supportive comments, and posted a few things myself and even collaborated with others around the UK!

4) **Teaching/Learning**

[Virtualteaching](#) Find teaching resources, a tutor or students here.

I hope this helps in providing information on some interesting things happening on the Internet from a Folk Music and Dance point of view. If you are interested, you may also like to check out my 'recording journey' on my new YouTube Channel: [Footcraft Music and Dance](#)



A Tale from the Decameron, by John William Waterhouse

Jacqui Longhurst (Violin)

A Tune-a-Day 2020

Do any of you remember this series of tutor-books, or even used them?! It gave my cellist husband Julian the title for a lock-down project of cello and piano.

We never thought we'd still be going 100 days later! Julian managed to buy a better microphone and camera a couple of days before lock-down, and we brought out our keyboard, which had been hibernating for ages. I much prefer the piano, of course, but piano tuners are also hibernating, with drastic consequences! So the "pornophone" it had to be. (My organ-builder brother-in-law's term for it!)

Then the idea came to show my paintings alongside the music. I found it really interesting to get out the art- work, some of which had also been.....hibernating! I tried to match up the visual with the aural, with mixed success. We record several tunes at each session, and Julian has the task of sending them out each day. All the videos are now on You-tube, www.youtube.com/julian_carlick.

An unexpected spin-off has been that we have been in closer contact with several friends who we don't see very often. They are in several countries in Europe, and in five different continents. So some people wake up to the tunes, while others have bed-time music. People tell us their reactions to the videos, often memories of when they first heard or played the piece, or where they were and so on. Some sartorial comments too! So it really has been a reciprocal experience.

We plan, when circumstances allow, to have a daytime concert-party in our garden in Winchester, to celebrate the easing of lock-down and the playing of 100 Tunes. We will give two short performances. Space is limited, so if you have not already been receiving the emails, please contact us at julian@tuneadaycello.com if you'd like to be on the invitation list.

We will be playing in the dry, but YOU are at the mercy of the weather! It will be in aid of Asthma UK/British Lung Foundation. Distant listeners are also welcome to make donations!

Ifra Carlick (Cello Section)

Puzzle answers

I sent everyone a lockdown music puzzle and I know that some of you have struggled with it a bit and now want the answers... if I give you the answers (see below) you can go back and see if you can match them up with the pictures!

Here are the answers:

Beethoven	Chopin	Haydn
Handel	Mozart	Adams
Glass	Neilson	Bach
Brahms	Faure	Bartok
Schumann	Pink Floyd – odd one out because not classical	

They are somewhat phonetic in some cases .. (sorry, that is how my brain works!)

If you want the original questions again, just email me direct.

Jos: Chair@CSOrchestra.org

Bernie's Adventures

Coffee Break with Bernie

Hi everyone, I hope you are all keeping safe!

I don't want to bore you with my antics over the last couple of months but I thought it would be fun for me to share with you some funny quotes I found on the internet.

See if you can guess which composer said what? (answers below)

1. "My music is best understood by children and animals"
2. "Competitions are for horses, not artists"
3. "It's easy to play any musical instrument: all you have to do is touch the right key at the right time and the instrument will play itself"
4. "I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I'm frightened of the old ones"
5. "To listen is an effort, and just to hear is no merit. A duck hears also"
6. "In order to compose, all you need to do is remember a tune that nobody else has thought of"
7. "To regret the past, to hope in the future, and never to be satisfied with the present: That is what I spend my whole life doing"
8. "Music is like a dream. One that I cannot hear"



Love Bernie x

Bernie: Teddy@CSOrchestra.org



If you would like to read about anything in a future **CSO TakeNote** newsletter do send in your ideas. Or perhaps you would like to promote a link to a website, or write a piece to put into a future edition, do send a note to ..

Editor@CSOrchestra.org

Bernie's Quiz Answers: 1. Igor Stravinsky/2. Bela Bartok/3. Johann Sebastian Bach/4. John Cage/5. Igor Stravinsky/6. Robert Schumann/7. Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky/8. Ludwig van Beethoven



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