

Funding Proposal: The Gingerbread Project



OPERA HOLLOWAY

Registered Charity Number: 1151205

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The Gingerbread Project

Who are Opera Holloway?

Opera Holloway is a registered charity. We are a group of young music professionals that initially formed in 2009 at Royal Holloway University. Our core team is comprised of four individuals who are each able to offer their own distinctive and valuable skills and experience to all of Opera Holloway's projects. The team members are:¹

- Christopher Moon-Little – Artistic Director, Translator.
- Lewis Gaston – Musical Director.
- Caroline Swarbrick – Producer, Singer.
- Laurie O'Brien – Producer, Repetiteur.

Our aims are:

- To offer singers at the start of their careers the opportunity to perform in fully staged opera productions which are dramatically and musically challenging but which are vocally safe and suitable.
- To introduce children to opera through our school workshop initiative, allowing them to engage with opera in an exciting, fun and educational way.
- To bring opera to a larger public audience through relevant and contemporary productions performed in our own new English translations.

Past productions:

- *The Marriage of Figaro*, Mozart (June 2011, Royal Holloway University of London).
- *Hansel and Gretel*, Humperdinck (December 2011, Royal Holloway University of London).
- *Samson*, Handel. In collaboration with Larkhill Choral Society. (March 2012, Royal Holloway University of London).
- *Cinderella*, Massenet (June 2012, Royal Holloway University of London).
- Triple Bill of; *The Bear*, Walton; *A Hand of Bridge*, Barber; *The Telephone*, Menotti (Summer 2012, Touring Production).

¹ For complete profiles of our team members please see the Supporting Materials section.

Past school workshops:

- Farlington School, Sussex, 2011.
- Englefield Green Infant School, Surrey, 2011.
- The Marist School Ascot (as part of 2011 *Hansel and Gretel* production), 2011.
- Englefield Green Easter Workshop, Surrey, 2012.
- Music'all, Parsons Green, London, 2012.
- Brentwood School, Essex, 2012.
- Fressingfield, Suffolk, 2012.

Awards and other events:

- Masterclass with Rosalind Plowright OBE, 2011.
- Royal Holloway Entrepreneur Mini Grant Award presented by Sir Alec Reed, 2011.
- Waitrose Music Matters Grant, 2011.
- Masterclass with Janis Kelly, 2011.
- Masterclass with Dame Felicity Lott, 2012.
- Royal Holloway Music Department Initiative Award created specifically for Opera Holloway, 2012.

What is The Gingerbread Project?

The Gingerbread Project is Opera Holloway's largest-scale and most challenging project to date. It is one which fulfils all three of our aims and one that we are incredibly passionate about. The project will deliver a first class interpretation of Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* whilst also leading children on a musical journey where they are introduced to operatic material, attending rehearsals and performing in front of a live audience to experience the process of creating a successful production. Furthermore, the project will offer valuable performance opportunities to young singers and musicians at their start of their professional careers. The production will present Humperdinck's fairy-tale opera in our own English translation and in a production which will appeal to an audience of all ages and backgrounds and attract both seasoned opera goers and those new to the genre.

The Gingerbread Project can be broken down into three distinguishable phases.

Phase 1: Workshop

Our team will offer a three day workshop at a London location to children of school ages Years 8-10 during the first week of the school summer holidays. The workshop, led by our trained workshop leader Caroline Swarbrick, will focus on material from *Hansel and Gretel*, specifically the extract involving the children's chorus in Act III. This will encourage musical and dramatic engagement with the careful selection of operatic material which is safe, suitable and exciting for children.

Funding permitted, the workshop will be offered free of charge to students of inner city schools.



Phase 2: Performances of Production



Following the workshop sessions, we will stage two full performances of the opera at a London theatre with a cast of auditioned, singers, incorporating the children who participated in the workshop into the production. We will audition singers between the ages of 18 and 30 in March 2013 and double cast the roles of Hansel, Gretel, the

Witch and the Mother in order to offer as many performance opportunities as possible for young performers. The performances will offer all those involved, including the audience, a positive insight into the world of opera as well as acting as a platform to showcase young musical and dramatic talent.

Phase 3: Production at Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2013

We will proceed to take our production of *Hansel and Gretel* to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2013 for a 12 night run with the double cast roles performing on alternate days. These performances will not include the children's chorus, but will allow for maximum exposure for the performers, our group, and our sponsors.

Summary

Our team are extremely passionate about The Gingerbread Project since it will offer an accessible form of opera to a wide demographic, presenting it as a popular and exciting art form to people of all ages. Furthermore, we will be able to performance opportunities to young music professional who need to gain experience in order to progress in their careers free of charge.

Phase 1 Workshop

Dates: 30th July 2013 – 1st August 2013, 10am- 5pm each day.

Location: Toyntee Studios, 28 Commercial Street, London, E1 6AB.

Details: A non-residential three day opera workshop on material from Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* for a maximum of 25 school children Years 8-10 from schools in and around London. All participants will receive their own copy of the music. A fee of £115 will be charged per child. We hope to be able to subsidise a number of places on the workshop.

Team: Caroline Swarbrick (Workshop Leader), Christopher Moon-Little (Director), Lewis Gaston (Musical Director), Laurie O'Brien (Accompanist). All team members are CRB checked.

Budget

EXPENSES

Item	Description	Cost
Workshop Space	For three days 10am-5pm and two performances.	1440
Publicity Materials	Flyers and Printing Costs	75
Extra Costs	Music Printing (12 pages of music for 25 children @ 20p per page)	60
Fees	For workshop leaders and accompanist	1500
Insurance	Public Liability Insurance	150
Total		3225

INCOME

Workshop Fees	Based on a fee of £115 per child for 25 children	2875
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Phase 2 Performances of Production

Dates: August 2nd – August 3rd 2013, 7pm.

Location: Toynbee Studios, 28 Commercial Street, London, E1 6AB.

Details: A two night run of the full *Hansel and Gretel* production featuring the participants of Phase 1 in both performances as well as a cast of auditioned principals between the ages of 18 and 30. The performances will be accompanied by a small ensemble. Volunteer chaperones will supervise the children during the run. The capacity of the auditorium is 280.

Budget

EXPENSES

Item	Description	Cost
Rehearsal Space	For main cast	900
Venue	Included in workshop costs.	0
Extra Production Costs	Lighting, piano hire etc.	882
Marketing	Flyers, Programmes, etc.	150
Musician's Expenses	Expenses and small fee for 4 musicians	200
SUBTOTAL		2132
Contingency	10%	213
TOTAL		2345

INCOME

Programmes	Based on selling 50 programmes at 2 performances at £1.50 per programme	150
Ticket Sales	Based on 30% of tickets sold at £14	2352
Net Income	Programmes and Tickets	2502
Ticket Sales	Based on 50% of tickets sold at £14	3920
Net Income	Programmes and Tickets	4070
Ticket Sales	Based on 75% of tickets sold at £14	5880
Net Income	Programmes and Tickets	6030

Phase 3 *Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2013*

Dates: 12th August – 24th August 2013, 6pm-8pm.

Location: The Space @ Surgeon's Hall (www.thespaceuk.com/edinburgh/thespaces-surgeons-hall-v53/)

Details: A ten night run over two weeks of our *Hansel and Gretel* production featuring a double cast. The performance time (4pm) has been chosen to ensure that our production appeals to people of all ages. Our budget includes the accommodation and travel expenses for a cast and crew of 17 individuals (a cast of 11, one director, one musical director and four musicians). The capacity of the auditorium is 150.

Budget

EXPENSES

Item	Description	Cost
Venue	For 12 performances (including VAT)	6000
Fringe Society	Registration	295
Accommodation and travel	For a cast and crew of 17	7200
Marketing	Flyers, Posters, Stickers, etc.	300
Living Costs	Basic supplies for 2 weeks	100
SUBTOTAL		13895
Contingency	10%	1390
TOTAL		15285

INCOME

Programmes	Based on selling 50 programmes at 10 performances at £1.50 per programme	750
Ticket Sales	Based on 30% of tickets sold at £12.50	6750
Box Office Charge	10p per ticket sold payable to venue	5
Net Ticket Sales		6745
Total Net Income	Programmes and Ticket Sales	7495
Ticket Sales	Based on 50% of tickets sold at £12.50	11250
Box Office Charge	10p per ticket sold payable to venue	8
Net Ticket Sales		11242
Total Net Income	Programmes and Ticket Sales	11992
Ticket Sales	Based on 75% of tickets sold at £12.50	16875
Box Office Charge	10p per ticket sold payable to Venue	11
Net Ticket Sales		16864
Total Net Income	Programmes and Ticket Sales	17614

Summary of Costs and Funding Target

Item	Cost
Production Costs (including props/set/costume)	2000
Workshop	3225
London	2345
Fringe	15285
TOTAL	22855

Funding Target: £22,855

We are a not-for-profit organisation and any surplus from this project will be invested into our funds to be used on future projects.

Opera Holloway are extremely passionate about this project and are dedicated to seeking out the funding that is essential to enable it. Funding our project will enable:

- The introduction of children to opera through interactive workshops and performances as well as the musical and dramatic development of the participating children.
- Performance opportunities to young music professionals, both singers and instrumentalists, in need of experience which will enable musical and dramatic development and career progression.
- New and wider audiences to engage with opera.

We aim to offer bursary places onto our workshop. The cost for one child to participate in the workshop is £115. If you or your company would like to sponsor a bursary place for a child or a group of children on our workshop, please e-mail operaholloway@gmail.com or call 07792240698.

Timeline

<p><i>November- December 2012</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book venues for Phases 1, 2 and 3 ensuring all contracts are signed. (Complete). 	<p><i>January 2013</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure funding. • Begin contacting schools with details of summer workshops. • Decide on artwork and materials that will be used to publicise the workshop and performances. • Advertise auditions for principals using social media and e-mails.
<p><i>February 2013</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auditions for principals at a central London location. • Confirm principal cast list. • Distribute copies of our libretto translation to the principals. 	<p><i>March 2013</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals learn music. • Launch advertising campaign for workshops, sending out flyers and make calls to local schools and advertising online and in newspapers.
<p><i>April 2013</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue advertising workshops. • Print posters and flyers. • Open booking for places on the workshops. 	<p><i>May 2013</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin rehearsals with principals. • Submit details of all events to websites and publicise events using social media sites. • Begin distributing flyers.
<p><i>June 2013</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue rehearsing principals. • Rehearsals with small instrumental ensemble. • Send out press releases to London and Edinburgh press. 	<p><i>July 2013</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy publicity for London performances. • Final rehearsals with instrumental ensemble and cast. • Carry out workshops.
<p><i>August 2013</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performances of production in London. • Heavy publicity for Edinburgh Fringe. • Performances at Edinburgh Fringe Festival. 	<p><i>September 2013</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of project.

Supporting Materials: Profiles

Christopher Moon-Little *Artistic Director/Director/Translator*



Christopher Moon-Little originally trained as a singer and majored in performance at university as well as philosophy and opera studies. He trained as a baritone at the Junior Royal Academy of Music and performed in their opera tours of *Trial By Jury* (The Judge) and *The Marriage of Figaro* (Figaro). He was also a member of City Opera and featured in their performances of *The Coronation of Poppea* (various), *Die Fledermaus* (Dr Blind) and *Gianni Schicchi* (Doctor and Notary). He toured with Inner Sound in Scottish Highlands in *The Mikado* (The Mikado), *Iolanthe* (Strephon) and *The Gondoliers* (Marco). With RHUL Savoy Opera Society Chris performed in *Princess Ida* (Florian), *The Sorcerer* (Alexis), *Orpheus in the Underworld* (Jupiter) and *Candide* (Maximillian). With *Happy Go Lucky* he has performed at Buxton

Gilbert and Sullivan Festival and the Edinburgh Fringe in *The Mikado* (Koko). He has been directing opera for three years. Credits include Director and Translator of *A Night at the Opera*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Hansel and Gretel* and *Cinderella* (Massenet) for OH; also Director of their Triple Bill UK tour and assistant director for John Ramster on a selection of Opera Scenes at The Royal Academy of Music. Future plans include *Rigoletto* with Brent Opera, a new opera about bumblebees for RHULs Science Fair and the Royal Institute, *Hansel and Gretel* with OH at the Edinburgh Fringe and a double bill of *Pagliacci* and *Gianni Schicchi*.

Lewis Gaston *Musical Director*

In addition to being a BMus graduate of Royal Holloway, Lewis has studied with many well know conductors such as George Hurst. He currently studies conducting at Blackheath Conservatoire with Denise Ham. For Opera Holloway he has conducted Humperdinck, Mozart, Massenet, Handel, Verdi, Puccini, Britten, Walton, Menotti and Barber. He has also conducted Offenbach and was Chorus Master to Bernstein's *Candide* with Savoy Opera. Lewis is the Music Director of Genesis Chorale and will be assuming the role of MD for 'The Producers' to run at Epsom Playhouse in May 2013. Lewis is Assistant Conductor to Larkhill Choral Society and Andover Choral Society whilst undertaking freelance work, most recently with Enfield Chamber Orchestra. Lewis is hugely looking forward to the 2013 Opera Holloway season.



Laurie O'Brien *Repetiteur/ Producer*



Laurie had a musical childhood growing up in South Wales, competing in Eisteddfodau from the age of 5 and beginning piano lessons at the same age with Darya Brill-Williams. In 1999, at the age of 11, she joined the Junior Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama where she received vocal tuition under Marilyn Rees. She soon began accompanying her fellow students for recitals, examinations and concerts, and at the age of 16 became the rehearsal pianist for local amateur dramatic society Showcase, as well as local Welsh medium choir, Cor Y Ganolfan. During her years as an undergraduate studying French and Music at Royal Holloway University of London, she received piano tuition under Matthew Stanley and continued to specialise in accompaniment, working alongside friends and fellow students in recitals and concerts as well as acting as repetiteur for the Royal Holloway Savoy Opera Society. In 2009, she co-founded Opera Holloway, with whom she currently holds the role of repetiteur. With Opera Holloway, Laurie has accompanied vocal masterclasses given by Dame Rosalind Plowright, Janis Kelly and Dame Felicity Lott and performed in a variety of venues around the UK, including Upstairs at the Gatehouse, London, and the Pavillion Theatre at Buxton Opera House. Laurie passed her postgraduate music studies with distinction in September 2012 and now works as a freelance accompanist, repetiteur and teacher in London and Surrey. For more information see www.laurieobrien.co.uk.

Caroline Swarbrick *Workshop Co-ordinator/Producer/Performer*

Callie is currently studying with Theresa Goble at Guildhall School of Music and Drama, having received con a First Class Honours degree in Music and Drama at Royal Holloway. After graduating she spent a year singing at Birkbeck College, and organising Opera Education workshops in schools for Opera Holloway and Merry Opera Company. She is co-producer for Opera Holloway and made her debut with the group as Miss Wordsworth in Albert Herring during Opera Holloway's Opera Scenes production in 2010. Most recently she performed Lucy from The Telephone and Geraldine in a Hand of Bridge on tour with the company. She enjoys a busy solo schedule of freelance work alongside choral work with the National Youth Choir of Great Britain. Whilst at University Callie also directed two productions for the Savoy Opera Society. She works extensively with children, running drama clubs and school workshops as a producer for Perform and teaches music/dance/drama in nurseries for Lucy Sparkles. <http://www.callie-swarbrick.co.uk/>



Supporting Materials: Financial History for November 2011-November 2012

	Income	Costs	Balance
<i>Starting Balance</i>			<i>4,545.90</i>
Nov-11	1,205.40	1,937.64	3,813.66
Dec-11	2,366.46	1,244.20	4,935.92
Jan-12	424.00	699.15	4,660.77
Feb-12	246.65	334.89	4,572.53
Mar-12	1,400.56	861.93	5,111.16
Apr-12	439.00	617.10	4,933.06
May-12	968.28	1,789.81	4,111.53
Jun-12	3,493.77	2,471.11	5,134.19
Jul-12	1,617.49	2,267.25	4,484.43
Aug-12	357.99	5.50	4,836.92
Sep-12	-	16.45	4,820.47
Oct-12	-	5.50	4,814.97
<i>End Balance</i>			<i>4,814.97</i>

Total Income	12,519.60
Total Costs	12,250.53
Surplus	269.07

Supporting Materials: Testimonials and Reviews

REVIEW FROM OPERA HOLLOWAY'S PERFORMANCE AT BUXTON OPERA HOUSE STUDIO:

Arguably the shortest opera ever written – it lasts nine minutes – Samuel Barber's *Hand of Bridge* is the centrepiece in Opera Holloway's entertaining triple bill, along with Walton's *The Bear* and Menotti's *The Telephone*.

This is the first touring project for six enterprising young professionals, recent graduates of Royal Holloway in London, who have commendably taken it into their own hands to find work.

With minimal props and piano accompaniment, they sing with quality and act energetically. In *Hand of Bridge*, two couples play on-line, but between the bidding allow their minds to wander. Sally's thoughts are on a new peacock-feathered hat she's seen, whilst husband Bill wonders where his mistress is. Geraldine regrets her loveless marriage, whilst husband David dreams of a Bacchanalian fantasy.

Four singers – Christopher Moon-Little (who also directs), Callie Swarbrick, Elspeth Morrow and Nicholas Moodie – share the roles in the three operas. It's a demanding, if fun-filled, programme, but they acquit themselves with distinction.

In *The Bear*, based on the Chekhov play of the same name, Mme Popova, newly widowed, mourns her husband's passing, but gets a visit from Smirnov, a landowner to whom her late husband is apparently deeply in debt. Moon-Little and Morrow spark off each other beautifully, building up to a duel that turns into a love affair.

The show ends with the comic highlight of *The Telephone*. Lucy, vivaciously played by Swarbrick, is so besotted by her phone that boyfriend Ben (Moon-Little) can't get his proposal in. He decides that the only way to do it is to hide under the table – and phone her. That does the trick. Good fun.

Laurie O'Brien, co-founder of Opera Holloway with Music Director Lewis Gaston, impresses on the piano, especially with the technically difficult Walton. It was refreshing and uplifting to see these youngsters setting out on a mission to take opera to new audiences, including workshops in schools.

Reviewer: Philip Radcliffe

Funding Proposal: The Gingerbread Project

Opera Holloway organized a workshop at Music'all on Bizet's *Carmen* in June 2012. Students had previously learnt in their choir sessions some extracts from *Carmen*: Opera Holloway came for a day workshop to stage them. Thanks to the energy and the skills of the Opera Holloway team, all the students (6-14 years old) enjoyed the day and experiencing what it is like to take part in a real opera! It was an unforgettable experience for them and an important moment of their music education. The result was amazing: families and friends enjoyed it at our successful end of year concert and many children asked to stage another opera this year.

Elena Esper, Principal of Music'all

Before Opera Holloway, I had virtually no opera experience, the idea of even being involved in one seemed so remote as a mere 18 year old. Fast forward 9 months, I was performing a lead role in a Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* to hundreds of people! I'm eternally grateful to the team at OH for the opportunities they gave me, from fundraising concerts as far afield as Sussex to masterclasses with Rosalind Plowright and Felicity Lott. Many of those singers involved with the group have gone onto further study at conservatoire, which I'm sure was in some way part to the challenging yet rewarding repertoire that OH chose to stage.

James Proctor, 22, Singer.

Opera Holloway gave me the platform to perform significant roles in a variety of operas covering numerous genres as well as putting modern spin on the translation and staging. This enhanced my confidence in my own performing skills and prepared me for other operatic performances to come. The passion that Lewis Gaston has for the music really impressed me. He would focus on every singer and instrumentalist no matter how big or small their part was. Chris Moon-Little's staging and directing showed me the possibilities of stretching boundaries in opera. Overall, there was a lot of laughter and fun but also hard work put into each and every rehearsal and everyone worked as a team.

Elsbeth Marrow, 21, Singer

Opera Holloway gave me the chance to sing my first leading operatic role, in an enjoyable and well-received production. I am grateful to them for offering me the experience, which has proven valuable as I continue in my development as a singer.

Jake Gill, 22, Singer

Opera Holloway has given me a vast amount of opportunities. It allowed me the chance to sing my first large roles in opera, and also showed me the workings of a production and the varieties of preparation involved. Cast members are given the option of learning through masterclasses with some of the most outstanding singers and coaches in the business and so I felt that I had been given a good amount of experience before I started my postgraduate course at a conservatoire. Added to that, it is of course a great group of people to work with!

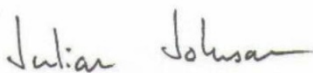
Katie Coventry, 21, Singer

I am very happy to write a recommendation for Opera Holloway. This group was formed in 2009 while its key members were all students at Royal Holloway, University of London. The creative energy and vision of those founding members was immediately infectious, drawing fellow students into their productions, generating full-house audiences and quickly attracting the notice of the University which recognised the group in 2011 with the top award in the College's high profile Entrepreneurs Competition. The following year they were granted a Faculty Initiative Award to help support the move to independent status after leaving Royal Holloway.

The list of their productions over two years is impressive by any standard and all the more so given that these were mounted from scratch while members studied for their degrees at the same time. An Opera Scenes Gala Concert in March 2010 was followed by productions of Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*, (June 2011) Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* (December 2011) Handel's *Samson* (March 2012) and Massenet's *Cinderella* (June 2012). The professionalism and maturity of the group's leading lights was evident from the start and recognised by no less than Dame Felicity Lott and Rosalind Plowright who both gave up their time to offer masterclass coaching. These productions often involved making new translations of the libretto, commissioning arrangements of the score for reduced instrumental forces, working without the facilities of a proper theatre, and yet they achieved performances that were musically highly polished and wonderfully fresh in their approach.

The group's commitment to a broader audience, evident in the make-up of the audiences for their performances at Royal Holloway, is underlined by their investment in school workshops and concerts and their touring work – taking three short operas (Walton's *The Bear*, Menotti's *The Telephone* and Barber's *A Hand of Bridge*) on tour in the summer of 2012). There is much talk of the need for new approaches and building new audiences in opera today – this is a group that delivers this through a mixture of creative talent, enthusiasm and sheer hard work. I recommend them in the highest terms.

Yours sincerely



Professor Julian Johnson

Head of Department