

All the information you need for taking part in LICF, London International Choral Festival





LICF: LONDON INTERNATIONAL CHORAL FESTIVAL

The sheer joy, exhilaration, and pride of achievement that I have seen in all of the young singers who have taken part in this Festival has been immensely uplifting and truly rewarding.

In creating the Festival, we have set out with the aim of making performance in the Festival ever more rewarding and accessible for the young singers who participate.

The opportunities that we give for choirs to sing are quite superb with each performance opportunity being tailored to the specific performance capabilities of the singers. We provide delightful venues and enthusiastic audiences for all of the festival's Concerts.

Our superb Choral director is Peter Holder and he will be introducing himself and talking about his musical philosophy over the following pages. We are tremendously impressed with Peter. His enthusiasm is infectious, his firm belief that every human being

is capable of song will inspire you, just as it has us. Perhaps most important though his incredible ability to connect brilliantly with all of the young people who come under his direction.

We know that if you come and participate in London's International Choral Festival you are going to have the experience of a lifetime. Not only will you have the opportunity of singing in places with a great choral tradition, but you will also be given the opportunity of singing in the great LICF Massed Choir Gala Finale Concert accompanied by the Young Musicians Symphony Orchestra.

A week in London enjoying all that London has to offer historically and culturally, singing in the Festival's Concerts in venues and then joining the Festival's Grand Finale, will give you memories and experiences that will last for the rest of your lives.

If given the opportunity might I urge you to join us in London for the London International Choral Festival.

Bob Bone, Director of the London International Choral Festival, tells you more:





DESTINATION EVENTS: ABOUT US







Take a look at the London International Choral Festival The founder, organiser, and owner of The London International Choral Festival is one of Europe's foremost event organisers – Destination Events Ltd.

Destination Events boasts a supremely accomplished, experienced and dedicated team of staff. They are expert not only in the production of world class events but also in the delivery of superb hospitality arrangements and educational touring experiences for performers in their events.

The Destination Events team have to be good – their prime sponsors are The City of Westminster, The Lord Lieutenancy of Greater London and the London Mayors' Association. The sponsors need their city to be shown with excellence. That's what Destination Events do.

Meet key team members by visiting our <u>Destination</u> <u>Events</u> website. Destination Events has found a worthy partner in the Youth Music of the World Organisation. With a dedicated team of experts and consultants, Youth Music source groups who are worthy to be considered for invitation to LICF.

Once a group has been accepted for invitation by Destination Events and the Parade's patrons and sponsors, Youth Music then develops a unique performance tour to make it possible for the group to participate in The London International Choral Festival.

Meet key members of the Youth Music team by visiting our **Youth Music** website.



SINGING AT THE LONDON INTERNATIONAL CHORAL FESTIVAL







The aim of the London International Choral Festival is to give young singers from overseas the finest singing experience of their school or university careers.

Individual choirs will be offered the opportunity to present their repertoire in two of our fabulous concert venues in London. It could be that you sing in the amazing historic space of Southwark Cathedral or the state of the art concert venue Cadogan Hall, or perhaps London's most charming music venue St. John's Smith Square. You will be given two opportunities to perform your own 20 minute repertoire to our enthusiastic and appreciative audiences.

Musical participation in London's International Choral Festival starts long before you travel to London. Choirs that participate in the Festival are offered the opportunity of performing in the Gala Finalé Concert given at Westminster Central Hall on the 2nd of January each year. 300 singers from all of the LICF choirs gather for this Gala performance, which is accompanied by a first class professional orchestra.

The production entails much enjoyable and educational preparation.

Every choir will be personally visited in the United States by the Festival's Choral Director Peter Holder, who will help them to come to terms with the music to be performed at the concert. We promise that your choir members will be thrilled by the charismatic instruction and motivation given by Peter. Whilst in London, Peter, and his team of professional singers, will conduct rehearsals and give coaching to all of the choirs as the final part of their preparation for the Gala Finalé Concert.

I think we can guarantee that the performance at the Gala Finalé Concert of the London International Choral Festival will be one of those occasions that everybody who participates will remember for the rest of their lives. It is a life changing and wonderful experience.

To give you some idea of the type of music that will be sung at the Gala Finalé Concert you will see below the 2019 selected repertoire.

I was gladThe Heavens are tellingO Hearken ThouHubert ParryJoseph HaydnEdward Elgar

How can I keep from singing? Robert Wadsworth Lowry

Tomorrow Shall be my John Gardner

dancing day

You'll Never Walk Alone/ Rodgers and Hammerstein

Climb Every Mountain (medley)

Pomp & Circumstance March Edward Elgar

LICF: PETER HOLDER



Born in Bewdley, Worcestershire, England, Peter Holder was a chorister at Worcester Cathedral prior to his study at London's Royal Academy of Music. He was appointed Sub-Organist of Westminster Abbey at the age of 26, and is the principal organist for daily services, concerts, recordings, and state occasions. He supports James O'Donnell in training the choristers and conducting the world-famous Abbey Choir.

Peter served as Sub-Organist of St Paul's Cathedral between 2014-17. He accompanied countless liturgies and worked alongside Simon Johnson in expanding the portfolio of organ events at the Cathedral, including staging two Grand Organ Galas, in which he appeared as soloist in concerti by Handel and Poulenc.

As an international recitalist, Peter performs in cathedrals and concert halls across the world. His first solo recording, produced at Neresheim Abbey, features the works of the Bach family, Mozart, and Rinck. He regularly broadcasts for BBC radio and television.

As an educator, Peter is an organ tutor at the Royal Academy of Music, where he undertook his undergraduate and postgraduate studies. He has given masterclasses across Europe and the USA. In 2016, Peter was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music. He continues his repertoire studies with David Titterington, and improvisation with Thierry Escaich.

Further information may be found at www.peterholdermusic.co.uk

A MESSAGE FROM PETER HOLDER, LICF CHORAL DIRECTOR







Take a look at the Gala Concert Series







I am passionate about choral singing, it having been a great part of my life for as long as I can remember. The ability to sing is a gift given to us all. Its benefits to our wellbeing are numerous – stimulation of the mind, development of stronger breathing techniques, even physical exercise - a most healthy hobby! Furthermore, through music, we unite in an international language.

My seven years as a chorister at Worcester Cathedral were especially formative. The rigour instilled in me at this early age, combined with constant exposure to professional music making, paved the way for a lifetime doing what I truly love. Whilst the litany of rehearsals, services and concerts at times took its toll, the rewards were always numerous – one of my most vivid and happy memories is that of touring the U.S. for a fortnight aged just ten.

Today, my principal work is at <u>Westminster Abbey</u>, London, playing and directing the daily round of services, training our talented young choristers and preparing for the many services of national significance that we host. Away from Westminster, I keep a full diary of teaching, workshop leading and recital playing, across Europe and further afield. I hope I can share with you something of my experience of and enthusiasm for collaborative music making, joining together to create a truly unique extravaganza at the turn of the year.

How fitting it is that this truly International Choral Festival should be hosted by one of the world's great cosmopolitan cities. Singers participate in a number of performances across the capital, tailored to the strengths of each individual choir. All of this can be considered a crescendo to our grand Gala concert, hosted by the Lord Mayor of Westminster, in which we team up with the Young Musicians Symphony Orchestra, with its wealth of instrumental talent. Musically, we explore an eclectic repertoire of choral masterpieces, whilst celebrating the best of British ceremonial, festival and light genres, culminating in Elgar's aptly named *Pomp and Circumstance March No 1*, raising the roof as we customarily do in A.C. Benson's text *Land of Hope and Glory!*

Each year, I have the pleasure of making two trips to the US. First, to meet prospective participants, and later in the year, to work with choirs that will be performing with us at New Year. I hope to meet you and your singers on one such visit soon! Mindful that every choir has its *raison d'être*, unique style and specific strengths, it is testament to the LICF that we continue to join forces in such a spectacular manner, a remarkable annual achievement, and one that we justly celebrate.



LICF: PASSPORTS & VISAS



Before embarking on an international flight to Europe you must have a valid passport. The passport should have an expiry date of at least six months after the date you return into the United States. If you need to secure a passport for the first time please ensure that you do so as soon as possible. Allow and absolute minimum of eight weeks to secure your passport.

Holders of full USA passports (American Citizens) do not need a visa to enter the United Kingdom.

Holders of non USA passports may need a visa to enter the United Kingdom. Full information of which passport holders do need visas to enter the UK are available on the UK Government Foreign Office website. The same website will tell you where and how to apply for your visa. Click here to visit the website.

On occasions to secure a visa you will need a letter from LNYDP to confirm that you are a member of a performing group in the event and that you will be entering and leaving the UK on specific dates and that accommodation is provided for you whilst you are here. LNYDP can supply such letter but need a minimum of 10 days notice that such a letter is required. Some Visa applications can take several months so, if you do not have or are not eligible to have a full US passport check if you need a visa and make your application as early as possible.

Non American Citizens staying in the USA on a Green Card should also check with the Department of Homeland Security to ensure that they will be able to reenter the USA without difficulty after their visit overseas. Click here to visit the website.

We are committed to help any group members who need assistance in the visa process



LICF: GETTING YOU TO LONDON

Youth Music's staff and consultants at Performance Travel (PTL) are experts in arranging air travel from the USA to London for groups invited to perform in LICF*.

It is a complicated business arranging air travel for what are often very large groups. PTL work tirelessly to secure the best blocks of seats with the best airlines and the most convenient schedules for performing groups.

Preferred carriers are British Airways, American Airlines, Delta Airlines, Virgin Atlantic and United.

Flights to London are always 'overnight' and range in length from just six hours if you are travelling from Boston to 11 hours if you are coming from southern California. We always try to book you on direct non stop services but of course not all cities in the USA have non stops to London. We do though always try to take you from your nearest major airport and get you to London with no more than one connection wherever you are coming from.

London is on GMT (Greenwich Mean Time) over the new year period. GMT is five hours ahead of Eastern Time, six ahead of Central, seven hours in front of Mountain Time and a whopping eight hours ahead of Pacific Standard Time. This means if you leave the East coast in the early evening you get in to London early in the morning on the following day. Flying from the West coast, if you depart late afternoon, it is close to lunchtime the next day when you land in London.

The service on all airlines in coach (economy) is much the same. You get a free main meal and free drinks soon after take off and maybe a small snack meal before landing. All flights booked by PTL allow you one item of checked luggage. (We deal with the transportation of instruments and musical equipment in a very special and super convenient way). You get a 'carry on' as well – the sizes and weights allowed vary airline to airline. All airlines booked by PTL offer a good range of in flight entertainment.

Check out our airlines:

British Airways

American Airlines

Delta Air Lines

Virgin Atlantic

United Airlines



LONDON

USA

^{*}Using the services of PTL to book your flights is not obligatory but is recommended

LICF: ACCOMMODATION







It is really important to LICF organisers that every performer in the event has a great place to stay.

The hotels used are very carefully selected and regularly checked by LICF staff to ensure that their standards are maintained.

All hotels used are categorised as superior first class. Standards of decor, furnishing and housekeeping are always high.

- Most participants accommodated two per room (two beds or 1 one Queen or King bed). Some hotels offer studio type rooms that can accommodate up to four people. Most hotels can offer limited numbers of three bedded rooms.
- All bedrooms have private bathrooms (some with tubs and showers and some with walk in showers only).
- All rooms have flat screen TV's, direct dial phones and hair dryers.
- All hotels offer complimentary WiFi.
- All rooms have mini fridges (minibars destocked).
- All hotels offer irons and ironing boards (mostly in every room).
- All hotels offer meeting room facilities to our groups and most offer rehearsal facilities.
- All hotels provide locked and secure rooms for the storage of musical instruments and equipment.

Take a look at our current hotel portfolio:

Doubletree by Hilton Hotel London, Westminster

Doubletree by Hilton Hotel London, Hyde Park

Park Plaza Westminster Bridge

Park Plaza Waterloo

Park Plaza Victoria

Park Plaza Riverbank

Holiday Inn Kensington High Street

Holiday Inn Kensington Forum



LICF: MEALS





The LICF programme makes sure that participants don't go hungry.

Breakfast is included every day*. A special buffet breakfast is offered to all groups in their hotel. Juices, fresh fruit, yogurts, bread and pastries, ham and cold meats, cheeses, plus always at least two hot items – eggs and either bacon or sausage. Hot drinks will include coffee, hot chocolate and hot teas.

Dinner is included every day. For some days this is a prearranged buffet or plated meal served in a banqueting room at the hotel. On other days we provide a special dine around option where the card or vouchers we provide are usable at over 4,000 restaurants throughout London. With London now widely acknowledged as the culinary capital of the world, with more ethnic dining opportunities available than in any other City, the 'Edenred LV' dining system is perfect for LICF participants.

A much appreciated addition to the food offering is a special sack lunch provided in the Parade assembly area for all who take part in the Parade on New Year's Day. This lunch consists of a gourmet sandwich, a dessert, 'Babybel' cheese, fresh fruit and bottled water.

The only meal we don't provide is lunch but smart participants calculate that they can use part of their generous 'LV' dine around allowance on the days they are using the scheme to secure a sandwich lunch – on other days a good 'fast food' lunch can be purchased for around £4.00 - £5.50 (\$5.50 - \$7.00).

^{*} Breakfast is not included in the hotel on the day of arrival. There will have been an offering of a very light breakfast or snack on the plane before it lands. Breakfast is included at the hotel on the day of departure.

LICF: SEEING LONDON & ENGLAND







It is very important to us and to our Patrons, Sponsors and Supporters that all LICF participants get a fantastic impression of London and England during the time they are in Britain to perform.

We start by securing great hotels, sourcing quality meals and, of course, providing the greatest stages in the world on which to perform.

Then our brilliant team of vastly experienced itinerary planners and hosts come into play to create and deliver a stunning collection of tours, visits and opportunities that give, in a short time, a terrific overview and introduction to our long history, our rich culture and our diverse and welcoming population.

There are a wonderful array of motor coach tours with the best and most interesting guides in any city in the world. Our coaches are all 'state of the art' modern touring (never call them buses – at least in the drivers' earshot!) with panoramic windows. Our coach operator carries \$15 million of liability insurance so you are always safe and protected whilst you are on board.

Meet our chief guide, Stuart Cannon, who will tell you a little about his special Blue Badge qualification and about some of the tours that we provide for you.



A half day panoramic sightseeing tour of the West End and the City of London. The ideal introduction to our great City. See the Houses of Parliament with the Clock Tower that holds the bell of Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey, Whitehall, Downing Street, Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly Circus and 'Theatreland' along Shaftesbury Avenue. Look in to Chinatown and Soho, see St. Paul's Cathedral, The Bank of England, Mansion House and The Tower of London. All the time you will be entertained and informed by one of our specially selected guides.

A half day to The Tower of London and the Crown Jewels. The Tower has served as a royal palace, fortress, prison, place of execution, mint, menagerie and jewel house during its 900 year history. Attractions in the Tower include the Bloody Tower, Traitors Gate, the Chapel of St. John and the Jewel House where the Crown Jewels of England are on show.



LICF: SEEING LONDON & ENGLAND. CONTINUED







A half day tour to Greenwich. The great River Thames that flows through the centre of London is the reason Britain's capital city lies where it does. The Thames is a truly fascinating river and on this excursion to Greenwich you will travel by boat in one direction between Westminster and Greenwich. The history of the river will entrance you and the very special views of London's South and North Banks from your river boat will be spectacular and awe inspiring. In Greenwich you will visit The Royal Observatory with the Prime Meridian – the base line of all time around the globe. You will also visit the National Maritime Museum. Being an island nation, Britain's Maritime History is long and deeply impressive. The Royal Borough of Greenwich has a great and picturesque market and also has it's modern side with the impressive O2 Arena and entertainment complex - one of the finest in Europe.

A half day tour of <u>Windsor</u> and <u>Windsor Castle</u>. Twenty five miles to the west of London lies Windsor, whose 11th century castle is the seat and primary home of the British Royal family. Visit the castle with its State Apartments and Royal Chapel – the burial place of many of our monarchs. Spend time in the delightful town and look out at the vista of Britain's most famous public (private) school, Eton College – alma mater to so many British Prime Ministers and Royal Princes.

A half day in Oxford. Oxford is home to the oldest University in the English speaking world. On this tour you will visit Christ Church College one of the historic colleges that make up the University of Oxford. The buildings that house the colleges are simply superb and full of history. The City is an interesting mix of 'town and gown' with the academics and scholars of the University representing 'gown' and the thousands of skilled workers associated with the BMW Mini plant representing much of the 'town'. It is always great fun in Oxford to look out for the sites and scenes used in the famous British TV series 'Morse', which was all set in and around Oxford.

A half day at Hampton Court Palace. This superb Tudor Palace located on the banks of the Thames in the London Borough of Richmond was originally built by Henry VIII's Chancellor, Cardinal Thomas Wolsey. Wolsey fell from favour – not least because he had built himself a Palace better than the king's and so Henry requisitioned it and it became a Royal Palace which it remains to this day. A visit to the Palace includes entrance to the State Apartments with their magnificent art collections, a tour of the splendidly restored Tudor kitchens (Henry and his court were notorious for their gluttony), a look at the earliest Real (Royal) Tennis Court and the chance to lose yourselves in the famous Maze.

LNYDP: SEEING LONDON & ENGLAND, CONTINUED



Every programme includes five out of these six special tours/visits. London Panoramic, The Tower, Greenwich, and Windsor we think are best included for all. Then you should choose between Oxford and Hampton Court for your fifth visit.

For those who have taken part previously in LICF and have been offered a subsequent invitation we have alternative tours/visits to offer. Remember though that whilst it might be a director's second or third time around (or maybe more) it should always be borne in mind that usually group members just get one bite of the cherry. Thus we recommend choosing from the above.





LICF: EXCLUSIVE AUDIO GUIDED WALKS



Listen to Tyler Butterworth tell you about these wonderful walks.





London is one of the greatest 'walking' cities in the world. At the heart of London, in the City of Westminster, in the 'Square Mile' City of London and in the historic boroughs of Southwark, Greenwich, Tower Hamlets and Lambeth there is something unique, arresting and fascinating around just about every corner, in every nook and cranny and in every historic narrow alley way and mews.

LICF thinks it really important to show its very special visitors to London the very best that London has to offer and to give a perspective of London than can really only be achieved on foot.

So we commissioned the very best. We asked the famous radio actor and historian Tyler Butterworth if he would write and perform for us a series of unique walks showing the very best and most interesting parts of London to our performers and visitors.

All Tyler's walks, produced exclusively for LICF, are presented on easy to use 'credit card' MP3 players equipped with headphones, a charger (and adaptor) and accompanied by printed materials to help the tours keep on track. These 'keep and take home' players are a fabulous educational tool and should make the LICF programme worthy of a history credit!

We have a set of concert walks. When you come to London we will offer you a package of four of walks to be on your credit card player.

To make it easy to get from walk to walk and to help you get around in your unstructured time, we provide you with the ultimate ticket to London's extensive and very sophisticated public transit system – operated by Transport for London or TfL.

Get a taste of each walk by clicking on the links below:

London Performance Venues – take a look at the venues you may be performing in

Covent Garden to Leicester Square – a short and enjoyable walk to take in a beautiful area of London.

Princes Palaces Power – walk shoulder to shoulder through Westminster with 1,000 years of Royalty.

Harry Potter's London – see for real all of the London sites that are so evocatively written about in J K Rowling's Harry Potter Series.



LICF: VISITOR OYSTER CARD





This is your passport to London. A terrific prepaid travel card for all of London's excellent public transport systems.

The card can be used on:

- The London Underground (Tube)
- London Buses all those famous red double deckers and more besides
- The London 'Overground 'Railway System (within certain limits)
- The Docklands Light Railway
- The Emirates Air Line Cable Car.

It's so easy to use your Oyster. Touch on and off at tube, DLR and overground station barriers. Touch in when you get on a bus – no need when you get off.

We have put an amount of value on your card that will cover all of your itinerary activities. If you look like you are running out of value simply top up your card at any station – quick easy and simple.

Find out all about the **Oyster Card**.



LICF: NEW YEAR'S EVE





It's time to party – but not till too late as you'll be taking part in the greatest show on earth the following day – and there may well be an early morning call for performers in LICF!

But we do throw a great party to welcome in the New Year.

- A private room is reserved at the hotel for you and all the other groups of performers staying in your hotel.
- The room will be prepared for the party by the hotel's tour assistants you are always welcome to help out.
- We provide glow bands, balloons and party poppers to help the evening go with a bang!
- A top rated disco and light show will be provided with a terrific playlist of just about anything you can think of – give your tour assistant advance notice and your favourite tracks can be ready to go – or you can request on the evening.
- We provide pizza and sodas to boost the calories you shed with the dancing.
- All parties are 100% secure, free of alcohol, and exclusive to LICF performers.

Check out London's New Year's Eve Fireworks display that takes place every year at midnight.

Add photos of pizza and balloons.



LICF: UNIQUE SERVICE







We have been doing this a long time and have developed what we consider to be the very best team of professionals to ensure that your programme in the UK to take part in LICF is as good as it can possibly be.

A little earlier we looked at the great DEL team who organise LICF and your London hospitality arrangements. If you want to refresh your memory just click here.

Likewise you are in really good hands with the Youth Music/Performance Travel teams in the USA and UK. Again if you want a reminder of who they all are just click here.

So you have great people taking care of you but what else makes our service so special?

- Our Group Organiser's Guide. An absolutely invaluable manual detailing out every step of the way how we need you to prepare for your group's participation in LICF. This guide is delivered to you electronically in the early part of the year that you travel. Regular updates are sent as modifications and improvements are made.
- Summer site inspection. It is imperative that every group is represented by its leader/s on a fixed date Summer site inspection programme in London. On this site inspection there are a series of seminars, meetings, venue tours, Parade route walks and hotel tours that prepare you for leading your group at the end of the year.
- Virtual site inspection. After site section we provide you with a copy of a digital presentation covering everything that has been discussed and shown to you in London, but in a way that can be presented to your group.
- The ace up our sleeve is our team of **Tour Assistants**. Each group will be allocated one. Your Tour Assistant will have been carefully trained and will be an ever present resource of organisation information and friendship whilst you are in London – '24/7', from the moment you arrive until the time you leave. During site inspection we will secure from you the profile of the type of person you want and then we will make our staff allocation in November. We will have your allocated Tour Assistant contact you in December to introduce him or herself and see what they can do to help you in your last minute preparations. Our Tour Assistants are terrific people, none less than 21 and none more than 29 years of age. All University educated and all with a deep knowledge and passion for London and LICF.



LICF: IMPORTANT EXTRAS







For performers:

- All performers in LICF are presented with a specially struck medal to acknowledge their contribution to the greatest event in the greatest city in the world. You can only receive a medal if you take part – they are highly sought after.
- Every performer will receive a digital version of the group photo taken at a gala concert.
- LICF truly welcomes family members, friends, alumni and supporters of all performing groups and offers them the same arrangements as for performers. So we are delighted to offer the following to all categories of non-performer in every group as a little extra.
- A complimentary concert ticket to each and every concert that their group performs in, including the gala.
- There will also be a unique access code for the LICF gala finale concert at Westminster Central Hall free download.



LICF: SECURITY & PEACE OF MIND







A comprehensive travel insurance policy is included for everyone on the performance tour programme to LICF.

Coverage includes:

- cancellation
- medical and emergency expenses
- personal accident
- baggage
- delayed baggage

This protects the vast majority of the performance tour cost should you be forced to cancel for a significant number of reasons.



COMPREHENSIVE TRAVEL INSURANCE POLICY





















LICF: WHERE DO YOU GO FROM HERE?







Youth Music's (YM) Directors of International Participation, along with their consultants, are constantly scouring the Americas for groups we would like to invite to take part in LICF.

If you are contacted by a member of the YM team and are interested in going a step further, then Youth Music will ask LICF to put your name before the steering committee for approval. If you secure this approval LICF, will write to tell you that you have been accepted for invitation.

You will then enter into negotiations with YM who will produce for you a document entitled 'Offer of Performance Tour'. This encapsulates your discussion with YM, listing out the dates that you would travel and the gateway you would travel from, the number of places we can offer you, an exact listing of performance, hospitality and educational touring features, a cost and a payment schedule. The final page of this document requests that you secure signatures from all relevant parties that you may accept the offer.

Once accepted, the Offer Document is returned to Youth Music/Performance Travel who then create a contract based on the contents of the Offer. Once you have signed and returned the contract you will then be contacted by LICF to set up a date for the presentation of the official invitation. This will be undertaken during a visit to your group in the USA by one of the Senior or Principal Patrons of LICF. You are not deemed invited and the contract is invalidated, if you do not receive the official invitational visit.







