

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**For Immediate release**



**Leading musicians to celebrate visit of Tour de France with innovative Cycle of Songs project**

This year's visit of the Tour de France to Cambridge in July will be marked by an innovative and inspiring major new piece of work entitled **The Cycle of Songs**. Devised by the acclaimed Yorkshire theatre company Pilot Theatre with the Cambridge based Historyworks the project will feature new compositions performed by Cambridge's choirs by leading musicians, writers, poets and composers including Michael Berkeley, Karen Wilmhurst, Michael Rosen, Kirtsty Martin and Andrea Cockerton.

Commissioned by Cambridge City Council and funded by the Arts Council of England, **The Cycle of Songs** will be performed by local people, musicians and community choirs from Cambridge, inspired by iconic locations along the route of the race drawing on the city's rich choral traditions and history.

The works will tell largely untold hidden stories from Cambridge's history, and will be performed by choirs from the city in a series of live events and in a new geo-located app as part of the lead up to the celebrations for Stage 3 on the 7 July.

**The Cycle of Songs** project will also see the creation of a new app; a development that brings together Cambridge's rich cultural and cycling heritage with the technology that is so important to the City today. Available at the launch of the Big Weekend on the 5th of July, the geo-located app will allow people to listen to the Cycle of Songs as they follow the Tour's route through Cambridge.

All the stories have been researched and developed by Historyworks and presented to the project's writers, rappers and poets who include Michael Rosen, *Horrible Histories* composer Dave Cohen, rapper Inja and poet and spoken word artist Hollie McNish. Each writer has further developed a researched story and created the librettos that have been given to the project's composers and arrangers.

All of the nine songs featured in the project are based on stories inspired by iconic locations which the Tour de France will cycle past on the 7th July. These include the song *Freedom* which tells the story of Olaudah Equiano and Thomas Clarkson, two of the most prominent campaigners against the Transatlantic Slave Trade, who are both associated with St John's College; *Unsung Women* (which will be performed by the *Women of Note choir*), a song about the struggle for women to be accepted at Cambridge University in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century; and *Hooray for Hobson*,

the story of the Cambridge Philanthropist Thomas Hobson whose Horse rental policy inspired the phrase "Hobson's Choice".

The Composers are wide ranging both culturally and stylistically, including elders from the British tradition, such as Michael Berkeley, and young musicians exploring sound technologies, such as Peter Gregson; composers adept at creating community choir anthems such as Karen Wimhurst, Rowena Whitehead, and Kirsty Martin; and finally young artists from the Aldeburgh Young Musicians programme (AYM), such as Alex Cook who has composed for Hannah Brock, a fellow AYM, who will be performing the traditional Chinese instrument – a Guz-heng, a cross between a harp and a Zither, for which Alex Crook has underscored the vocals.

**The Cycle of Songs Choir events involve more than** 14 of the city's leading choirs, including a vibrant mix of community and school choirs, college and youth group choirs. These will include the 120 members strong *The Dowsing Sounding Collective*, who are renowned for performing Scandinavian soundscapes and club anthems; then a vibrant community choir who sing a cappella called *Re Sound*; *Chela*, a choral ensemble dedicated to the learning of the unique choral tradition of Georgia; *Milton Road Primary Choir*, which has over 100 primary voices who will be singing with the famous *King's College Choir* Choristers; and the youth choirs of *Ten Sing* and *Shout Aloud!* The project will also feature the specially formed Cycle of Songs choir which is made up of members of the public, who are rehearsing to sing to the public in public! Not all choirs involved in the events will feature on the app

Leading up to the visit of the Tour de France there will be a series of Cycle of Songs events around Cambridge including on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> June a Pop-up Choir event, where many of choirs that feature in the Cycle of Songs project, including the community formed Cycle of Songs choir, will be performing in the city's Guildhall, and on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> July 100's of singers, including the acclaimed The Dowsing Collective, will feature on the main stage at the city's Big Weekend event. The Cycle of Songs app will also be publicly launched at the event too, in a special marquee.

Cambridge is regarded as one of the UK's leading cities for cycling with an Incredible 43% of the city's population travelling to work by bike more than three times a week. The city boasts over 80 miles of cycle lanes & routes offering a quick & easy way to travel throughout the city, whilst cutting down on the population's carbon footprint.

For further information on Cycle of Songs visit [www.cycleofsongs.com](http://www.cycleofsongs.com)

**Ends**

**For further information please contact**

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NOTES TO EDITORS

IMAGES: Images are available at <http://www.cycleofsongs.com/resources/marketing/>

**For further information about Cycle of Songs please read the enclosed Media pack**

## CYCLE OF SONGS WEBSITE

To share our work and research, and make a successful community owned project there is a dedicated website, where you can use the regular NEWS updates from the public events and rehearsals, QUOTES from composers and members of the audiences, and PICTURES posted from the Cambridge locations and events, STORIES in the history section about the unique research that has informed the new pieces, so do use these to illustrate your features.

## CYCLE OF SONGS EVENTS 2014:

### **18th June: Open Rehearsal at Faculty of Music, University of Cambridge**

This rehearsal will be led by Rowena Whitehead, Cycle of Songs Choral Leader, and take place between 7-8:30pm on Wednesday 18th June 2014 at the Recital Room in the Faculty of Music, University of Cambridge, 11 W Rd, Cambridge CB3 9DP.

### **21st June: Pop-up Choir**

#### **11am - 1pm, Saturday 21st June 2014**

This event will happen between 11am and 1pm on Saturday 21st June at The Guildhall, Market Square, Cambridge CB2 3QJ.

All members of the **Cycle of Songs Choirs** and friends and families are invited to come together to join the Cycle of Songs Choir for a big community singing session at The Guildhall. There will be a free open-to-all one hour singing workshop in the Guildhall will be led by Rowena Whitehead, Cycle of Songs Choral Leader, and at 11.00am on Sat 21st June to practise an accessible Cycle of Songs anthem which we will sing as a massed Pop-Up Choir outside the Guildhall at midday.

This event will be filmed and recorded. Song scores and parts will be made available three weeks before the day for people who sign up in advance to do this. We hope lots of your choir members will be able to come along as the film footage from today will be interspersed with that made on 11th May to create a short film.

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### **5th July: Big Weekend**

#### **Parker's Piece, Big Weekend**

This event will happen between 3pm and 6pm on Saturday 5th July at The Main Stage Marquee, Parker's Piece, Cambridge, CB2 1AA.

Cycle of Songs is programmed on the Main Stage – all choirs participating in Cycle of Songs and friends are invited to sign up to be involved in a free open-to-all Cycle of Songs singing session led by Rowena Whitehead, Cycle of Songs Choral Leader, in the Main Stage Marquee from 3pm, which will sing as a Pop Up Choir to crowds in the park.

Then from 4pm, we will sing alongside the The Dowsing Sound Collective as they perform on the Main Stage singing our songs until 5pm. Then the Cycle of Songs compositions created for the app and walking trail will played in the Marquee until 6pm.

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### **5th July: Sing & Swim**

#### **Sing & Swim, Jesus Green Open Air Swimming Pool**

This event will happen between 6pm and 8:30pm on Saturday 5th July at the Jesus Green Open Air Swimming Pool, off Chesterton Road, Cambridge, CB4 3BD.

Cycle of Songs is partnering a fab event at the Lido in the early evening, and all Cycle of Songs singers are invited to participate at the 10th annual Talking in Tune 'Sing and Swim' for WaterAid at Jesus Green Open Air Swimming Pool – a very popular community event

involving swimming, music, song and picnic. The Cycle of Song Anthem will be a feature of the programme! Your choir is invited to come along and join the singing Poolside.

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### **7th July: Tour de France Day**

#### **Tour de France Day**

This event will happen between 10:15am - 12:30am on Monday 7th July at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Trumpington St, Cambridge CB2 1RB.

Cycle of Songs Choirs are invited to participate in one of two ways – by joining the primary school choirs at the Fitzwilliam Museum to sing the Cycle of Songs anthem together which will be led by Rowena Whitehead, Cycle of Songs Choral Leader, in our designated space 10.15am to 12.30am until the race departs Cambridge – or by organizing their own busking location to surprise and entertain the spectators. Only those who are signed up via the Cycle of Songs website as members of the rehearsal choir can have access to the Fitzwilliam Museum to sing on the day. We are limited to 120, so do sign up asap to be a member of the Cycle of Songs Choir, to avoid disappointment.

We have offers of designated spaces for the Cycle of Songs from the Round Church and from various Colleges on the route, so places can be facilitated closer to the time, if requested. However, for those at work on Monday 7th July, unable to join us, they can tune into the anthem sung on local radio stations in our pre-supplied packages, and know that the film shorts of our Cycle of Songs will be distributed to national and international news and sports outlets to showcase our Cycle of Songs.

#### **THE CHOIRS**

**The Cycle of Songs Choirs** will be performed by 14 of the city's leading choirs. These will include the 120 members strong *The Dowsing Sounding Collective*, who are renowned for performing Scandinavian soundscapes and club anthems; the cappella tones of *Re Sound*; *Chela*, a choral ensemble dedicated to the learning of the unique choral tradition of Georgia; *Cambridge Music Education Outreach choirs*, which is made of choirs specially made up of Children from the city's colleges and schools; and The Great St Mary's Church Choir. The project will also feature the specially formed Cycle of Songs choir which is made up of members of the public. Not all choirs will feature on the app