

LE CHÉILE 1 REPORT

29 JUNE 2020 (1.0)

ATTENDANCE

Seventeen people (including host) in attendance; three apologies.

OVERVIEW

Introduction to Creative Arts Practice Online (CAPO); recognising the necessary integration of digital resources in future practice; understanding that such methods *enhance* rather than *replace* current practice. That said, there is potential to investigate an all-online experience which could be useful in addressing accessibility issues, etc.

Digital integration is not a new phenomenon: WhatsApp groups, accessing sheet music online (IMSLP, CPDL, etc.), line tracks via Dropbox or Google Drive, advertising on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.), recording and streaming live on Youtube.

The two key questions for CAPO-I – which focuses primarily on community choirs and their conductors – is:

- 1) How can choirs sing together during times of lockdown and social distancing?
- 2) How can technology be used to enhance a choral conductor's practice, both off- and online?

Discussion of the issues raised in the Comhrá 1 Report.

Maintain communication post-C19: general desire for discussion forums to continue in the future.

Establish collective support alongside established healthy competition: a problem shared is a problem halved; important to keep in mind the bigger picture.

Establish and normalise standards for musical integrity and excellence in a C19 world: use collective support to strive for excellence and set benchmarks (in lieu of festivals, etc.).

Understand and utilise the multidisciplinary power of the collective: there are many skillsets and connections within the collective (conducting, vocal technique, musicianship, etc.); sometimes hearing the same thing from a different perspective can be more beneficial than repetition.

Establish common structures and routines: suggestion of interchoral nights, Big Sing events, sharing concerts; standard procedure as regards rehearsal etiquette (e.g. staying at home if feeling unwell but participating online).

Explore and normalise online delivery: recognising that online delivery has a cost involved; how to make a living from a virtual space.

Advocate mutual promotion: devising ways in which we can support one another and build a collective audience; help graduates and newcomers to the choral scene establish their base.

Identify and share common resources: creating a database of warmup ideas, music libraries, online musicianship tutorials, sight-reading exercises, etc.

Identify opportunities for peer-feedback and upskilling: organising pop-in sessions, joint rehearsals, joint masterclasses.

Minimise experimental risk and waste: understanding that this will be a time for trial and error; trying to mitigate individual members of the collective making the same mistakes; giving everyone a head start in an unfamiliar setting.

Safeguard singers, choirs and conductors for future practice: there is a huge social pressure on conductors at present to resume activities (in whatever shape or form!); advocate on- and off-times, standard methods of communication, etc.

Promote the social and health benefits of choral singing: choral singing enriches the lives and communities of those involved (cf. [RTÉ 'Unsung Heroes' with David Brophy](#)); help to rebuild social activity.

Delegate responsibility: identify ways in which conductors can delegate certain tasks to the collective, choir committees, members, etc.

Propose solutions for the digital divide: identify practical solutions to the current divide; assuming that not everyone has money or access to specialist equipment; centring approach around using a mobile phone.

Promote and sustain Irish-based music infrastructure: with travel restrictions, there is a need to support the local infrastructure (similar to mutual promotion); also the need to identify and examine the extent of arts practice in the city.

Advocate for a multifunctional community music space: most choirs have to adapt to their rehearsal location (community hall, primary school, church, etc.); investigate the possibility of an arts space in which local practitioners could utilise.

Three essential outputs were identified:

- 1) Creating a code of conduct for choirs that safeguards both conductors and singers;
- 2) Establishing an online project choir to ascertain best practice and disseminate findings;
- 3) Organise a schedule of online meetings for conductors to discuss, reflect and share information.

Participants and those interested in future developments with CAPO are directed to join the [Cork Choral Conductors Community](#) page on Facebook and [signup to the mailing list](#).