

## “Sing in Harmony” – *A short course in harmony singing*

### About the course

This short course of six sessions aims to help you improve your singing voice and use that voice to sing as part of a group that sings 4-part harmony. We hope that you enjoy the experience and want to continue harmony singing after the course ends.

The course will operate along the lines of a workshop. We will learn by doing. So for quite a bit of each session you will be standing up. You will be joined by some of the members of our Chorus in this course; experienced singers from our Music Team who will assist the course presenter.

### How it will work

The course will run every ..... night from 6.30 - 8.30 pm from ..... to .....

Over the period of the course we will be learning two songs. We will use these songs to put our knowledge into practice and we will sing them as part of a mini concert on the final evening of the course. We will be singing “*a cappella*” which means “unaccompanied”. The music has been arranged in what is technically referred to as the “barbershop style”. There are four parts and, of course, someone has to sing the melody while the other three parts harmonise with the melody. In this style of music, the lead sings the melody, the bass sings a harmony note below the lead, the tenor sings a harmony note above the lead, and the baritone puts in a fourth harmony note that is sometimes below and sometimes above the note that lead is singing.

On the first evening you will take part in a quick group voice test. This is just to determine which voice part is your natural range. We don’t want to damage anyone’s voice by putting him in the wrong part. Tenor suits a man who has a very light voice and a good falsetto range. Bass suits a man who can sing the low notes and stay tuneful. Lead is the melody line and suits the average singer. Baritone also suits the average singer but is a more difficult line to sing and usually attracts those with some background in music.

Each week except week 6 will follow a similar pattern:

- A short physical and vocal warm-up – this helps us to relax and get into a good singing posture and get the voice working in singing mode ready for the craft session. In the later sessions we will also use the warm-up to review material covered earlier in the course.
- A craft session – Each week we will address a different aspect of singing and harmonising. You will be given a hand-out each week to remind you of what we have been doing. There will be more information in the hand-out than was covered in the session for those who want a little more.
- A section rehearsal – we split into four voice parts and spend 15- 20 mins learning notes to the new song.
- Group session - everyone gets back together to rehearse the song and to try out some of our craft.
- Homework: If you only sing once each week you will not get as much from the course as you should. So we will provide you with some homework – exercises to practise, songs to learn, etc. We will give you a CD to help you with the homework tasks.

On the final week we will have a mini-concert. Encourage your family and friends to come along to witness the results of your hard work. We will do a slightly shortened class (last rehearsal!) and then stage a mini-concert where Vocal Evolution and some quartets will also sing a few songs and you will perform the new songs that you have learnt.

## **Course structure**

**Week 1:** Voice test to allocate men to parts; posture; breathing for singing and a little anatomy of the voice. Believe it or not, most men find it difficult to breathe the way singers have to. We will show you how it's done. Home practice techniques. Begin song #1.

**Week 2:** Improving resonance to produce a quality sound; combining your good breathing technique with good singing technique. Continue song #1.

**Week 3:** Vowels and diphthongs and how to sing them; the need for agreed vowel pronunciation in harmony singing; blending the voices and balancing the notes in a chord. Begin song #2

**Week 4:** Voiced/singable and voiceless consonants; singing smoothly. More song #2

**Week 5:** Presentation; how to make the delivery of the song believable and entertaining.

**Week 6:** Review. How to be a better tenor / bass / baritone / lead. Mini concert followed by afterglow (supper and a sing)

## **And afterwards...**

What you do with your new found skills is of course up to you. We just hope that you enjoy our course and don't let the time you spent with us go to waste. Find somewhere to express yourself in song!

If you think that you may like to join Vocal Evolution at any time during the course or after the course has finished, just ask one of our members.