



WNO Associate Artist

(Paid Traineeship)

Fixed Term August 2022 – July 2023

(start date can be flexible but before the end of August 2022)

Welsh National Opera is offering the opportunity for 2 singers to join its ranks as 'WNO Associate Artist'. This is a full-time, year-long traineeship between August 2022 and July 2023.

We are proud of our steps towards better inclusivity and now have one of the most diverse Boards in the British opera industry. However, opera is still viewed as elitist and we know that significantly more diversity in our work force is required to start to break down this conception, and to make sure that all people see WNO as an open and accessible option for a career in the arts.

The WNO Associate Artist programme encourages singers from all backgrounds to apply. The programme is not seeking any specific voice types. This would be an ideal opportunity for current students and recent graduates who have specialised in any strand of performance or vocal studies and are looking to develop their performance skills and career within an opera company.

The appointment will be made on merit but we are particularly keen to hear from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, disabled candidates, and those from a low socio-economic background. If you have experienced social and/or economic barriers to employment in opera, we want to hear from you, so please do feel free to share this with us in your covering letter.

WNO is grateful for the generous support of the Shirley & Rolf Olsen Bursary, Bateman Family Charitable Trust, Kirby Laing Foundation, WNO Sir John Moores Award, The Fidelio Charitable Trust, Joseph Strong Frazer Trust & Chris Ball Bursary towards our WNO Associate Artist Scheme.

About the Person

Could this be the job for you?

- Are you aged between 18 and 32?
- Do you have a minimum of 1 year's vocal training at HE, College or Conservatoire level?
- Do you have relevant opera performance experience as a Chorister or Principal at College and / or professional level?
- Are you a UK resident and/or have the right to work within the UK?
- Have you encountered barriers to employment in opera?
- Would you benefit from a year of performance, covering, singing lessons, coaching and language lessons, within a national opera Company?

About the Company

Who is WNO?

Welsh National Opera is based in Cardiff, at the iconic Wales Millennium Centre (WMC) in the bustling area of Cardiff Bay. We are residents of Wales Millennium Centre, sharing facilities with eight other thriving and diverse arts organisations, detailed [here](#)



We believe in the power of opera to transform lives. Our mission is to bring the power, drama and raw emotion of opera to as wide an audience as possible.



WNO *Tosca* Mary Elizabeth Williams. Photo by Robert Workman



WNO *Carmen* Giorgio Caoduro. Photo by Richard Hubert Smith



WNO *Can Sing*. Photo by Kirsten McTernan

As a national opera company with international status, we sit at the heart of music-making in Wales and play a valuable role in the communities we serve in England. We work with our partners to discover and nurture young operatic talent, and provide the springboard for international careers.



WNO *Les vêpres siciliennes*. Photo by Johan Persson

Touring is our lifeblood and we strive to present the highest quality work across our artistic programme, entertaining and inspiring audiences at our operas and concerts and providing transformative experiences through our youth and community work.

Building on our 75-year history and our roots in the communities of South Wales, we aim to demonstrate to future generations that opera is a rewarding, relevant and universal art form.

More than any other company, WNO opens up the world of opera to everyone. We are seeking two Associate Artists who will work to help us achieve this.

You can hear from our previous WNO Associate Artists [here](#)



WNO Youth Opera, Birmingham. Photo by Simon Hadley

About the role

What will a WNO Associate Artists do?

The traineeship will provide a structured learning and professional development programme alongside the opportunity to perform small roles and covers within WNO.

Regular vocal and language coaching, singing lessons and workshops with industry professionals will be scheduled to ensure that trainees are given access to the highest level of industry performance, and professional development, opportunities.

The main aims of the programme are as follows:

- To give young Artists the opportunity to perform on a national platform (within WNO's mainstage and touring productions)
- The opportunity to learn and study larger roles, supported by coaching from WNO's music staff, as part of a cover cast
- To provide young Artists with a wealth of additional performance opportunities, to expand their experience on all performance platforms, including:
 - Involvement in WNO's Youth and Community projects to hone performance craft in different contexts; as part of workshops / as amateurs, school visits, digital projects etc.
 - Involvement in large-scale concerts (including St David's Hall concerts and full symphonic concerts)
 - Involvement in Development concerts, Marketing and Press Events

- To provide a structured training and professional development programme to run alongside the role and cover opportunities including, but not limited to:
 - Regular language coaching – sessions in Italian, French and German on a monthly basis
 - A fortnightly coaching session with a member of WNO's Music Staff
 - Singing lessons, with a teacher mutually agreed between the Artist and WNO staff, on a monthly basis
 - Coaching from visiting Artists and industry professionals on specific roles
 - Stagecraft workshops from visiting Directors and Choreographers
 - Audition preparation coaching from WNO's casting committee
 - Professional development training (how to 'market' yourself etc. as an Artist)

World-renowned Welsh soprano Rebecca Evans is the programme's Ambassador and the programme will be monitored and supported by WNO Head of Artistic Management and WNO Head of Music and Casting Advisor. At the beginning of the programme, each young singer will devise a development plan in consultation with these staff members. These development plans will be monitored throughout the year, updated and amended as necessary. At the end of the year, a thorough evaluation and debrief of the goals achieved and training / learning objectives met will be carried out.

About all the rest

Key information and important dates

- **Job title:** WNO Associate Artist
- **Reporting to:** Kathryn Joyce, Head of Artistic Management
- **Location:** Cardiff, and on tour around England and Wales as required.
- **Salary:** £19,000 to £22,000 pro rata, per annum (depending on experience and the content of traineeship contract to be offered). Payable monthly by credit transfer to bank.
- **Contract type:** Full-time, fixed term of 12 months.
- The offer of an appointment is subject to receipt of two references that are satisfactory to the company.
- The appointment is subject to a probationary period of three months.
- Termination of engagement during the probationary period is by one months' notice on either side. Termination thereafter is by three months' notice on either side.
- Working hours will be in-line with the UK Theatre / Equity Agreement for Guest Artists. Rehearsals, lessons and coaching sessions can be scheduled from Monday to Saturday with a maximum of 11 sessions scheduled per week (other than in an emergency or at the Artist's discretion). Sunday working may be required if a performance, in which the trainee is scheduled to perform, takes place on a Sunday.
- Holiday entitlement is 25 days holiday during each full holiday year (including all public holidays in England and Wales).
- Sickness benefit during the internship is at the statutory minimum.
- The Company offers a contributory pension scheme.

Application deadline:
9am on Friday 8 October 2021

Auditions and Informal Interviews:
First Round Auditions:

Successful candidates will be invited to a first round audition in a choice of four cities around the UK. You will automatically be allocated to the city closest to your home base.

- The audition will last 10-15 minutes including an informal chat with the panel.
- The panel will consist of WNO Director of Artistic Administration and / or WNO Head of Artistic Management, WNO Head of Music and Casting Advisor and / or Assistant Head of Music and a past WNO Associate Artist now working on the professional opera stage.
- An accompanist will be provided.

When attending a first round audition you will need to bring at least three contrasting arias / songs with you. You will be asked to sing two of these, one of your own choice and one the choice of the panel. As the auditions will only last 10 minutes, please choose arias / songs of an appropriate length.

First Round Audition Dates:

Cardiff 8 & 9 November 2021

London 16 & 17 November 2021

Manchester 22 & 23 November 2021

Birmingham (Dates TBC)

Second Round Auditions:

Artists who are selected from the first round of auditions will be invited to return for a second round audition.

- Second round auditions will take place in WNO's home, Wales Millennium Centre, in Cardiff in January / February 2022.
- The second round audition panel will be as per the first round but will also be joined by WNO General Director, Aidan Lang, and WNO Associate Artist Ambassador, Soprano Rebecca Evans.
- An accompanist will be provided.
- WNO will reimburse the cost of travel to all applicants selected for second round auditions.

Please note:

Candidates must make themselves available for each audition round, alternative dates will not be offered.

If Covid restrictions / guidelines force us to cancel any auditions during the first or second round, we will ask that you WeTransfer a video recording in lieu of your audition. This recording will only be requested if you have been shortlisted for the first or second round auditions.

To apply:

- Please provide a CV, which details all your relevant performance training, any professional or non-professional performance experience and current / previous employment.
- Please also include a covering letter explaining what you feel you would gain from being a WNO Associate Artist, and why and how the scheme and its associated professional training programme would benefit your future career path into the performing industry. Please do feel free to discuss your background and any barriers you have encountered to a performing career in opera in this letter. If you would feel more comfortable providing this statement via audio or visual files, these must be either in MP4 format or shared via WeTransfer and be no longer than 5 minutes in length.
- Please also download and complete a WNO data monitoring form **wno.org.uk/associate-artists**
- Submit your CV, covering letter and data monitoring form electronically to **recruitment@wno.org.uk**