

Caroline Slade



Caroline Slade (previously Challis) trained as a singer with teachers including Lynne Dawson and Cathy Pope, before being awarded the inaugural Sing for Pleasure Young Conductor Scholarship in 2013. Since then, she has trained in conducting through short courses and masterclasses with Sing for Pleasure, Association of British Choral Directors, the Royal Academy of Music, and most recently through the Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme (formerly the Royal Philharmonic Society Women Conductors Scheme). In 2018, Caroline was selected as one of 24 women to join the first *Conducting for Opera* short course at the National Opera Studio, receiving tuition from Sian Edwards, Jane Glover, Claire Gibault, Alice Farnham, Jessica Cottis, Natalie Murray-Beale, Mark Shanahan and Richard Hetherington.

As a singer, Caroline has performed as the soprano soloist in Handel's *Messiah*, Mendelssohn's *St Paul*, Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, and Oliver Tarney's *Magnificat*. She collaborated with composer Eve Harrison to premiere roles in *Hera's List* (Terpsichore) for the Tête à Tête Festival and *Opera Bingo* (Sandra), which was shortlisted for the Opera Up Close *Flourish* competition. Caroline also performed at the 2015 BBC Proms in the chorus of Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, with the Vienna Philharmonic and Sir Simon Rattle. She has sung with the Vigala Singers, including a residency at the Kodály Institute in Kecskemét, Hungary; with Sérafine Chamber Choir, who recorded Tarney's *Magnificat* for Convivium Records; and with the Exonian Choir.

As a conductor, Caroline has worked with the English National Opera Community Chorus, the Opera North Youth Company and Children's Chorus, and both Leeds and Bradford Cathedrals. She has assisted Eamonn Dougann for Ryedale Festival Opera at Chiltern Arts Festival, and was Assistant Chorus Master at Opéra de Baugé for the 2014 season, where she was awarded the Gil-Rodrigues Prize. Caroline was previously Musical Director of the Greater Manchester Police Male Voice Choir, and has founded a number of ensembles including Marlow Gospel Choir, Chiltern Community Choir, and Bradford Friendship Choir - a group for refugees and asylum seekers. As a conductor for the John Lewis Partnership Music Society, her regional choir won second place in the society's national *PartnerSing* competition in 2018. At the 2014 World Choir Games in Riga, she assisted the Bradford Catholic Girls Choir in winning three bronze medals. She also appeared in Sandi Toksvig's show *Mirth Control* at the Royal Festival Hall in 2018, as a guest conductor of the Women of the World Orchestra.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, Caroline developed online work including a series of Early Years classes, performances for dementia care groups, and online teaching and workshops for individual students and choirs across the UK. With Marlow Gospel Choir, she produced a digital summer concert and a live-streamed Christmas concert as well as hosting 'Come and Sing' workshops online. Recent highlights have included conducting Mahogany Opera's 'Year of Snappy Operas' in the Leicestershire region and guest conducting for choirs around the UK including the award-winning Abbeydale Singers.

Caroline is also an experienced workshop leader and amateur, and has devised and led projects for Opera North Education, The Voices Foundation, Artis Education, and Aldeburgh Music amongst others. She was Musical Director for Mahogany Opera's 'Snappy Operas' Festival at Nevill Holt Opera in 2018, which brought together five primary schools to perform newly composed short operas. Caroline has led a series of communication workshops for the NHS Management Academy in Leeds, and has lectured in Music at the University of Leeds and the University of Reading, as well as being a Guest Tutor at Morley College. Caroline also has extensive experience in company and artistic management, having held post as Artistic Manager of Young Opera Venture from 2014-15, Assistant Artist Manager at Hazard Chase from 2016-17, Head of Artist Management at Polyphony Arts from 2021-22, and National Programme Manager for Music in the Round from 2022-24.

This biography was updated in February 2024. For the most recent version, please contact cjmc.slade@gmail.com