London Performance Studios

The Golden Vanity

* Choir boys in their costumes for The Golden Vanity playing in Blythburgh churchyard, 1969

Project

The Golden Vanity
A Stage Adaptation for Youth Choirs

London Performance Studios invites three youth choirs (mixed voices) to join us for an exciting new stage adaptation of Benjamin Britten's The Golden Vanity, to be performed in March 2026 at LPS.

What We Are Looking For

- Three youth choirs (amateur, semi-professional, or professional)
- Age of singers: 8–15 years (piece scored for treble and alto voices)
- Choir size: Minimum 18 voices; ideally around 22 voices (flexible)
- Musical ability: Good ear for complex but accessible music (not contemporary classical)
- Location: Within a two-hour train ride of London

Important Notes:

- 2026 marks the 50th anniversary of Benjamin Britten's death, giving this project special prestige.
- Choirs featuring female or older voices are welcome after consultation with conductors.
- Memorisation is not required, choirs may refer to their scores during the performance.

Timeline

- Sep–Oct 2025: Initial meeting at LPS with Artist & Producer
- Mid-Feb 2026 onwards: Stage rehearsals at LPS or home base
- Late Mar 2026: Public performances at London Performance Studios

Performance Dates

- Three public performances at LPS in late March 2026
- Dates to be confirmed in coordination with the participating choirs

* from advert for 1969 Decca recording, Children's Crusade The Golden Vanity

Details

Music Rehearsals

- Choirs rehearse the vocal score independently.
- A newly commissioned choral piece by Louis d'Heudieres will be included.

Stage Rehearsals

- At least 15 hours of staged rehearsals are required within the six weeks prior to opening.
- Scheduling is flexible (e.g. 5 sessions of 3 hours each or full-project weekends / "project week" intensives)
- Rehearsals may take place at London Performance Studios or at your choir's home base.

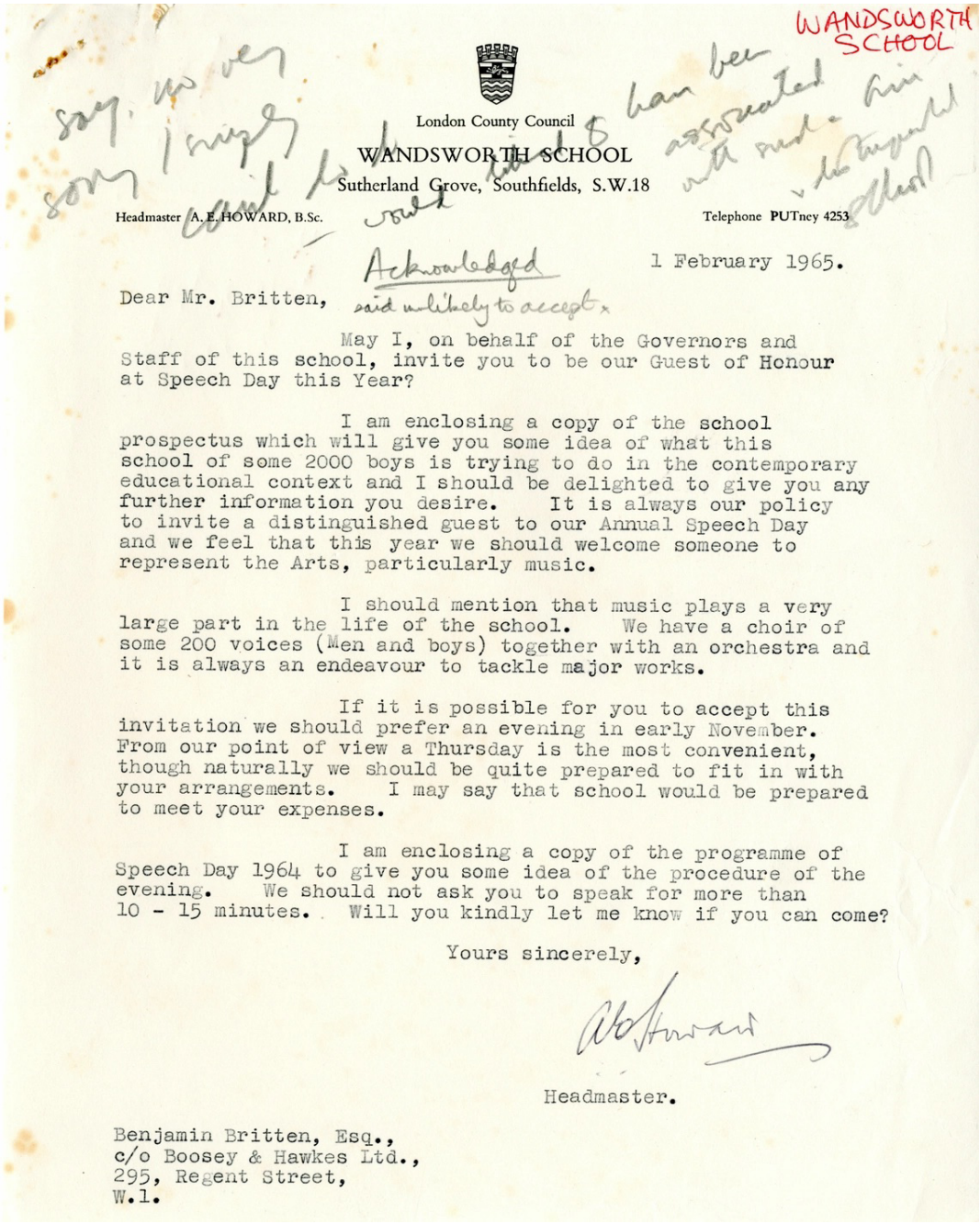
Props, Costumes & Set Design

- Professional set designer provided
- All scenery, costumes, and props will be created for the production
- Choirs are welcome (but not required) to collaborate on creative elements once selected

How to Apply

Please reply to this email with:

1. A brief introduction to your choir (number of singers, experience level)
2. Confirmation of your ability to meet the rehearsal schedule
3. Any questions or special requirements



London County Council
WANDSWORTH SCHOOL
Sutherland Grove, Southfields, S.W.18

Headmaster A. E. HOWARD, B.Sc. Telephone PUTney 4253

1 February 1965.

Dear Mr. Britten,

May I, on behalf of the Governors and Staff of this school, invite you to be our Guest of Honour at Speech Day this Year?

I am enclosing a copy of the school prospectus which will give you some idea of what this school of some 2000 boys is trying to do in the contemporary educational context and I should be delighted to give you any further information you desire. It is always our policy to invite a distinguished guest to our Annual Speech Day and we feel that this year we should welcome someone to represent the Arts, particularly music.

I should mention that music plays a very large part in the life of the school. We have a choir of some 200 voices (Men and boys) together with an orchestra and it is always an endeavour to tackle major works.

If it is possible for you to accept this invitation we should prefer an evening in early November. From our point of view a Thursday is the most convenient, though naturally we should be quite prepared to fit in with your arrangements. I may say that school would be prepared to meet your expenses.

I am enclosing a copy of the programme of Speech Day 1964 to give you some idea of the procedure of the evening. We should not ask you to speak for more than 10 - 15 minutes. Will you kindly let me know if you can come?

Yours sincerely,

Headmaster.

Benjamin Britten, Esq.,
c/o Boosey & Hawkes Ltd.,
295, Regent Street,
W.1.

* Letter from Wandsworth School to Britten, 1965

Alexander Fahima

Alexander Fahima is a German-Iranian artist. In his experimental performance practice, he creates operas, theatre plays, exhibitions, films and publications.

He has presented his performance work around the world, including the Salzburg Festival, the Philharmonie de Paris, the Berlin Philharmonic, and the University of Applied Arts Vienna.

About

London Performance Studios (LPS) is an arts organisation based in The Penarth Centre in South Bermondsey that focuses on visual arts and theatre.

We champion boundary-pushing performance by commissioning ambitious projects by underrepresented artists and theatre-makers, with focus on queer and
LGBT practices.

The Associate Artists Programme 2024–2025 is a series of commissions, inviting 10 artists to research and develop new performance work at London Performance Studios. Each commission invites artists to test, explore and engage in-depth with new material that will be shared through public programmes of performances, workshops and discursive events at LPS.

Lead artists in the 2024 programme are Alastair Curtis, Alexander Fahima, Bod Mellor, Harilay Rabenjamina, Jiminy Luke Doe, Lily McMenamy, Living Pictures, Raphel Famotibe, Sam Cottington and Unfinished Histories.

London Performance Studios
Penarth Centre, Penarth Street
London SE15 1TR

Next Steps

If you are interested in taking this conversation further, we would love to hear from you.

→ **info@londonperformancestudios.com**

And do not hesitate to get back with any questions.