CHOIRS WANTED

for the US premiere of David Greig’s *The Events*

at Festival 2014 in June

Seeking local performing choirs (college age and up)
Rehearsal June 23, performances June 24-28
Six choirs will be selected; a different choir performs each night

About This Opportunity
The Events is a unique theater production that requires the participation of a different choir for each performance. It will be performed at the International Festival of Arts & Ideas in New Haven, CT from June 24 to 28, 2014.

This is a new play by renowned Scottish writer David Greig, commissioned by Actors Touring Company and premiered at the Edinburgh Festival in August 2013. Dealing with issues of community, tolerance, and how to cope in the wake of traumatic events, this is a major new work. The play received numerous 4 out of 4 star reviews in the British press and has been nominated for Best New Play in the United Kingdom by the prestigious What’s On Stage awards; it was also selected as best production of the year by Lyn Gardner, theater critic for The Guardian. This will be the U.S. premiere of the production.

Why Participate?
We hope to make a special experience for your choir, with this opportunity to participate in an extraordinary theater event of major international acclaim. There will be an “all come” shared rehearsal experience with the production’s cast, and networking opportunities with the local community of choirs selected for the production (a different choir performs at each performance). Your choir will also be part of the International Festival of Arts & Ideas and will be publicized in Festival materials, including the website. You will perform at the Yale Repertory Theatre for new audiences and be part of the excitement of Arts & Ideas!

Participating choir members will receive one complimentary ticket to the performance at which they will be performing, and will have access to artist ticket discounts if additional tickets are desired. This is an experience that past choirs have said is deeply meaningful and a lot of fun.
About the Play
The Events tells the story of Claire – a progressive female priest who leads a choir in a community setting. Claire experiences something terrible – a young man with extremist political views turns a gun on those who ‘aren’t from here’ in an attempt to make his mark on society.

These terrible events are not dramatized. The play is not filled with violent acts. It takes place in the aftermath of the events, and it follows Claire’s attempt to understand how someone could do such an awful thing. The play focuses on the reaction of communities to acts of aggression and how hard it can be to move on. Ultimately, Claire finds her peace, and retakes her place in the community.

See below for Frequently Asked Questions about The Events

More about The Events (Actors Touring Company website)

Choirs
We are seeking interest from adult choirs (college age and up) that can provide a minimum of 17 people and a maximum of 30 people, to be engaged for a single performance during the run; a different choir will participate at each of the six performances. In addition, selected choirs must be available for a three hour “all come” choir rehearsal on Monday June 23, 2014, and will be called for a final rehearsal 2.5 hours prior to their scheduled performance. Performances are June 24 to 27 at 8 pm and June 28 at 3 and 8 pm.

A major element of the play is the community choir singing on stage during the performance. Part spectator, part performer, their role is to be the choir, the community and Claire’s conscience. They will sing a song that they have chosen themselves as well as material that the producers of The Events have asked them to prepare. A full score and pack is available for choirs to learn the music and we recommend around 6-8 weeks rehearsal to be prepared. The pack includes accompanist music, backing tracks and recordings of the songs. Choirs need to prepare the material in advance.

We hope to work with a broad range of choirs on this production: choirs do not have to have the best quality singers, we are just looking for enthusiastic, engaged singers who are willing to participate. It should be noted that this is a serious play, with dark themes being explored.
**How to Apply**

Please apply by March 4, 2014 with the following materials:

1) **Work sample materials**: Video footage of the choir in performance (2 to 5 minutes) as well as any relevant background material on the choir. We prefer YouTube, Vimeo, or other streaming video links, but we will accept DVDs as well.

2) **A short statement about your choir**: Who is the conductor? How many members? What kind of repertory? Where are you based? Where do you perform?

**SUBMIT YOUR MATERIALS**

Send materials to Lizzie Donius, Community Engagement Manager at ldonius@artidea.org, or by mail to the the Festival office, 195 Church Street, 12th floor, New Haven CT 06510, attn: Lizzie Donius.

**The deadline for the submission of materials is Friday March 4, 2014.**

Decisions about what choirs will be invited to participate in The Events will be made in consultation with the producers of The Events. Notification will be made by March 30, 2014. **Choirs submitting materials must be available from June 23 to 28, 2014.**

If you have questions or need more information, please contact Lizzie Donius at ldonius@artidea.org.

**Frequently Asked Questions about *The Events*, from Actors Touring Company**

The following questions and answers were prepared by Actors Touring Company in preparation for the production’s UK and European tour. We feel they are helpful for audiences and performers preparing to see *The Events* in New Haven.

1. **Is this that Anders Breivik musical? Isn’t that in bad taste?**

The show is not about Anders Breivik nor is it a musical. The play is the story of a left-leaning community worker, who experiences something terrible at her choir practice, and struggles to understand how someone could do something so awful to their own community. It is a play about community healing, the limits of empathy, and how to move on if you have been involved in something truly life changing.

The press previously reported that this was a musical about Anders Breivik and the massacre at Utoya Island in Norway. This is factually incorrect and each of those publications has retracted those articles. During the research and development phase, David Greig and director Ramin Gray visited Norway as a part of their on-going research into how communities deal with terrible acts of aggression.
2. I'm worried about watching graphic violence. How violent is the show?
The story starts with an act of violence but this is not represented realistically on stage and in fact is only shown towards the end of the play. This is not a piece of journalistic theatre, nor is it naturalistic in style. The majority of the play is about the healing process that the lead character goes through, having been involved in a terrible incident.

3. Does the play condone acts of violence against the community?
No, not at all. The play deals with the issues of why someone might attack their own community. It does present certain points of view from the perpetrators perspective. However, these are necessary to give the play a dramatic shape and to allow the audience to feel the confusion that the lead character feels. It does not support or condone acts of aggression against any community at all.

4. Why would David Greig want to write something about such a horrible event?
David is one of Scotland’s leading writers. He is inquisitive about the world around him and moved to write about it. He was very interested in how a community reacts to and survives after an act of violence—a theme we see regularly in our newspapers and media whether it is a high school shooting in the USA, a massacre of children in Norway, acts of civil war in the Middle East or a terrorist attack. The violent event is the catalyst for his exploration of how human beings respond and heal subsequently, rather than the act itself. Ultimately it is a story about people and their responses to something awful.

5. I don’t like musicals. Is this a musical?
No. This is not a musical. Whilst there is live music and singing, it is very much a play. The singing is integral to the play and very much ‘the choir’ of the story performing.

6. But doesn’t it have a choir in it?
Yes, there is a new community choir at each performance. They fulfill the role of the Choir in the narrative, represent the community in which the play takes place, and act as Greek Chorus.

7. Which choir will be performing on which performance?
Each venue is working to recruit local singers for the production, in line with their own audience development and outreach strategies. A schedule of which choirs will perform at which performance will be made available closer to the performance dates. We encourage the family and friends of choristers to book tickets in advance.

8. What is the running time?
It’s approximately 90 minutes.

9. Is there an age restriction?
We think that is isn’t suitable for young people under the age of 14 due to the themes of violence, and some bad language.