



EVENTS AT CANONGATE KIRK, EDINBURGH



Information for Users

The Kirk

Canongate Kirk has a lovely resonating 'cathedral' acoustic which is perfect for choral singing and instrumental chamber music. The acoustic suits small to medium ensembles but is not suitable for large bands or orchestras or electronic amplification of instruments.

The interior of the kirk is light and spacious with clear glass windows and an open, curved apse at the north (liturgical east) end. The church cannot be darkened.

Performers usually stand or sit in the crossing and/or the apse. The centre of the apse, on the front step, is the acoustical centre of the building. There is space for a maximum of 50 players, but this can be rather many for the acoustic. The communion table may be moved back to maximise the performance space, but should be replaced with care at the end of each rehearsal/performance.

In the gallery, the space on either side of the organ may be used by performers, for example in small vocal or instrumental ensembles where the Frobenius pipe organ is also in use, or for an "off-stage" or antiphonal effect.

In compiling a programme, which may be sacred or secular, users are asked to select the items of Music, Dance or Drama to be used sensitively, bearing in mind that the building's primary function is as a place of Christian worship.

From June to September the church is open to the public during the day (known as 'Open Kirk') and is staffed by the Kirk's stewards. At these times performers will be asked to agree to the admission of the public to sit quietly and listen during rehearsals. This can actually be beneficial to the performers, as it provides an opportunity to recruit more audience. If the user requires exclusive use of the building, this can be arranged but would be reflected in a higher fee to compensate for loss of income from the Open Kirk.

Recordings are permitted in the Kirk by arrangement with the Events Administrator.

Piano

There is a grand piano (Yamaha 1989) on the crossing. It may be moved on the level provided 3 people move it with care, and it may not be lifted up on to the step in the apse. It must be returned precisely to its original place after use.

Organ

The pipe organ (Frobenius 1998) is situated in the gallery and is available for use, for a nominal fee, by a named musician. It has two manuals and pedals, tracker action and 20 stops. Where there is a capable organist, this organ can be used successfully to accompany performance from the apse. Inexperienced performers, or those new to the building, are advised against this, as co-ordination of organ with performers at the other end of the building takes some practice.

The Kirk's instruments are tuned regularly. See 'Conditions of Use' regarding additional tuning.

Audience

Audience seating is in long, fixed, wooden pews and can accommodate up to 400 people – 150 in the central area, 125 in the King David Aisle (East side) and 125 on the West side (both forward and inward facing). If some of the performers sit in the audience during any part of the concert, this obviously will reduce the total number of seats available for the audience and should be taken into account when selling tickets. Seats are not numbered and are therefore non-reservable. Some seats in the side aisles do have restricted views due to pillars etc. In the interests of health and safety, no chairs are to be added on to pew ends to accommodate a larger audience. There are no seats in the gallery, which is out of bounds to the general public.

Speaking

In this building, music carries much better than speech. Speech should be clearly enunciated and projected at a low pitch and very slowly.

There is a sound system with a series of microphones and speakers. Users wishing to make use of the sound system should make an arrangement with the Events Administrator for an operator to control the system from the gallery. A fee will be charged for this service.

There is an induction loop to assist the hard of hearing. For this purpose it is a policy of the church that anyone speaking should use a microphone.

Facilities

There are plastic stacking chairs, which may be moved for use by performers. There is a strong, expanding conductor's stand, suitable for portrait or landscape scores. The Kirk does not provide music stands. There are 2 wooden risers in the gallery which users may carry down to the ground floor, provided that these are returned to the gallery after use.

The gallery is the gathering and unisex changing space for all artistes. Instruments and personal possessions may be left there during the performance as the public is not admitted to this space, but users should be aware that this area is not locked during events. The Upper Session House room at the far end of the gallery, and the Vestry, are *not* available to users. As the gallery is open to the main body of the Kirk, performers often warm up on the wide stairs going up to the gallery from the kitchen.

There are 3 unisex toilets, 2 off the kitchen, below the gallery, and one at the north-west end of the building.

There are no catering facilities during concerts (other than water). There is a kitchen where users may make tea/coffee during rehearsals provided that they clear up meticulously. No food may be consumed inside the sanctuary. There are several tea-rooms, public houses and cafes nearby.

For catering after a concert the Harry Younger Hall, (150 yards down the hill in Little Lochend Close), may be hired at a moderate charge, by arrangement with the Event Administrator. There are no hall facilities available during the Edinburgh Festival/Fringe.

Disabled access

Canongate Kirk is fully accessible (through the east front door) and throughout the interior. There is a fully compliant disabled toilet, and also an induction loop system to assist the hard of hearing.

Publicity & Ticket Sales

Publicity and advance ticket sales are the user's responsibility and Canongate Kirk cannot offer a box office facility. However, we do publicise concerts: users should email a JPEG version of their flyer to the office so we can advertise on our website, Twitter and Facebook page. Canongate Kirk can also display up to two posters, one A3 size and one A4 and users may also supply small fliers to be distributed at prior events. If the group/event is registered with the Fringe, the Festival Fringe office will advertise the event. Users should be aware that during the Fringe/Festival period there are dozens of shows on at any one time and competition for audiences is fierce.

At the event itself, Canongate Kirk supplies one steward. Users must supply their own ticket and programme sellers, and also supply and look after the float. Users must also supply one steward to remain in the entrance hall during the event to admit latecomers, man the front door and to assist the Kirk's steward in the case of an emergency.

Security & Insurance

The building and items belonging to Canongate Kirk are insured by Canongate Kirk, but personal possessions, instruments etc are the responsibility of their owners to insure.

Every possible care should be taken by the Users to safeguard their own property inside the Kirk. As the Kirk is right on the busy Royal Mile, access for anyone with ill intent is all too easy. Personal possessions may be left in the gallery during performances, or at other times, so long as the building is locked. On *no* account should goods be left lying about on the ground floor of the church during rehearsals, as the church may be open to the public at the same time and, sadly, we have had incidences of theft of items left in pews during a rehearsal.

Access to the Kirk is by arrangement with the Events Administrator at the "Entry time" specified by the User on the application form. It is the User's responsibility to contact the Events Administrator if they wish to change this access time.

Booking & Charges

Bookings and enquiries may be made by contacting Imogen Gibson, Events Administrator (contact details below).

A deposit of £50, together with a completed application form, is required to secure a booking.

Charges are agreed by negotiation with the Events Administrations and cover one performance, one rehearsal and any Performing Right Society fee applicable. Additional charges will be made for extra rehearsals, the use of the pipe organ. Canongate Kirk pays the relevant PRS fees and the users' charge will cover this.

Users are requested to inform the Events Administrator of any cancellations in good time to enable the date to be used by others.

Canongate Kirk's Events Administrator:

Imogen Gibson
Canongate Kirk Office
95 Canongate
Edinburgh EH8 8BR

Email: canongatekirk@btinternet.com

T: 0131 556 3515

Twitter@CanongateKirk

facebook.com/canongate.kirk

Scottish Charity SC 015251