

EDUCATION MANAGERS MEETING

WEDNESDAY 23 APRIL 2008, 11am – 3.30pm
CBSO CENTRE, BIRMINGHAM



Chaired by **Keith Stubbs**, *Education and Projects Manager, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra*

R E P O R T

Keith Stubbs, *Education and Projects Manager, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra* welcomed every one to Birmingham for this Education meeting and then introduced **Stuart Bruce**, *Partnership Manager, Orchestras Live* who gave a presentation on 'Flights of Fancy' the successful project implemented in Lowestoft, Haverhill and Rendlesham in Suffolk between October 2006 and July 2007. This project followed on the successful implementation of the Early Years work with 5-6 yr olds in May-July 2003, where one of the outcomes of the post-project findings was that four sessions was too little.

Two of the main aims of 'Flights of Fancy' were to reinforce the establishment of Children's Centres as focal points for music and arts activity with young children and families and to develop the skills, and increase the number, of specialist musicians living and working in Suffolk, possibly leading to a new network.

In each of the three areas one Children's Centre and two nurseries were partnered with one music leader, one/two trainee animateurs and three professional orchestral musicians (from RPO, City of London Sinfonia and Philharmonia Orchestra). In addition to this team, a local textile artist was commissioned to create a 'magic carpet' for each area. Artistic activity in these 10 x 30 minute workshops was a mixture of directed and child-led activity and included singing, percussion, listening, movement, story telling, puppetry and ideas drawn from the magic carpets. More information on this particular project can be found at <http://www.orchestraslive.org.uk/default.asp?id=86> or follow the links from resources to case studies.

Current Projects

Keith Stubbs invited everyone to introduce themselves and give a brief description of one of the education projects they are/have been working at their respective organisations.

Philip Flood, *London Symphony Orchestra*: Partnerships are becoming increasingly important in a strategic way e.g. the partnership with 10 east London schools using LSO St Luke's as a hub; the project 'LSO On Track'; and creating a more meaningful partnership between the Barbican and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Louise Braithwaite, *Orchestra of the Swan*: A 4 year partnership with a special needs school in Stratford, where they are not confined to the curriculum and it is integrated into the orchestral staff training.

Lisa Mallet, *City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra*: The CBSO's 7 year relationship with the Aston Performing Arts Academy which has developed instrumental lessons in Aston.

Sophie Dunn, *Britten Sinfonia*: Challenges faced by leaders and musicians in their Garage Band music technology sessions held the Pupil Referral Unit.

Steve Pickett, *Hallé*: A 'wider opportunities' programme which gives whole classes the chance to

learn to play instruments thereby connecting the orchestra with schools in Manchester, Nottingham and Sheffield.

Eileen Barnett, *Birmingham Contemporary Music Group*: The Resonance project which brought together scientists from the University of Birmingham, young string players, BCMG musicians and saw the commissioning of three string quartets.

Ben Sandbrook, *ABRSM*: Their online resource 'Sound Junction' which allows the public to listen, explore and create music with the help of videos of musicians from the Britten Sinfonia, BCMG and CBSO.

Jan Ford, *Orchestras Live*: their work is driven by partners and promoters looking at hard to reach people and areas and in preparing audiences. She also mentioned that from July 2008 Henry Little would be their new CEO.

Lyn Underwood, *RSNO*: the RSNO's most recent "naked classics" led by Paul Rissmann who used visuals, lighting, interviews and musical extracts to introduce works which were then performed by the orchestra in the second half. Their community work incorporates a scheme offering first free ticket and £4 thereafter. They have held school proms concerts for the last 12 years and every year do an Outreach Week in a different rural region in Scotland.

Claire Lewis, *Royal Philharmonic Orchestra*: Their regional residencies reflect the partnership with Orchestras Live; their education work with Key Stage 2 in Primary Schools, handing over to the teacher at the end; and their connection with the Ismani community in London.

Lucy Perry, *Scottish Chamber Orchestra*: Their remit is to work with all areas of Scotland and their current Laboratory Music Project is using Indian music specialist David Murray, cellist David Barley and sarod player Amjad Ali Khan to take music away from the music stand and focus on improvisation.

Alexandra Jackman, *Wigmore Hall*: The 'Music for Life' project they are running in partnership with Westminster Social Services which is training musicians to work with people suffering from dementia.

Caroline Smith, *BBC Philharmonic Orchestra*: The orchestra's upcoming work in Salford, where they will be working and performing in many schools. They have a pilot school project this year which they will expand to more schools next year.

Hannah Elder, *Royal Opera House*: outlined the week of family events they are planning with approximately 30 musicians. They are creating a CPD programme combining chorus and orchestral musicians and piloting 'Open Rehearsal' with Hester Cockcroft.

May Wong, *sinfonia ViVA*, spoke about their Transitions project in Derby in March which combined music and dance and a large project in June to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the death of Bess of Hardwick, which would involve 180 young people from Derby and Derbyshire in the performance of a new commission led by James Redwood.

David Marcou, *National Association of Youth Orchestras*, is a consultant with the NAYO which is in a renewal process.

Mark Pemberton, *Association of British Orchestras*: recent changes of staff at the ABO office; they are carrying out a review of the format of SMMs and the ABO is exploring the possibility of continuing and expanding beyond the England 8 symphony orchestras the pledge to provide every school child with the opportunity of experiencing an orchestral performance.

Fiona Harvey, *Association of British Orchestras*: the Early Years Cluster evaluation would take place in Birmingham the following Monday; the NAME conference in September would be about partnerships and collaboration, on the topic of which she had just written an article for the next NAME book. She also mentioned the Awards for Young Musicians (AYM) which helps financially disadvantaged 5 -18 yr olds. She encouraged more orchestras to become involved in AYM's orchestral mentoring scheme.

Discussion on topics from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation event on Friday 7 March

Following an introduction by Mark Pemberton, outlining the challenge posed by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to current orchestral education provision, attendees were divided up into four groups to discuss 1) innovation 2) collaboration 3) taking risks 4) sustainability.

1. Innovation ...from whose perspective? If the tried and tested model works should this not be pursued and built on instead of abandoned? Is this problem rooted in our inability to communicate what we do to funders / the public? Having better relations with partners and institutions helps us be more innovative, however high profile multi-platform projects are innovative and reflect the 21st century concept of an orchestra – not just a group giving concerts, but also doing education work, touring, recording etc. and of course its role with technology. Innovation should be about quality.
2. The orchestral sector is a competitive sector, as orchestras compete for funding. Chamber orchestras are often better able to collaborate than symphony orchestras due to timetabling. Orchestras are also linked to specific geographical locations. Collaboration with other art forms would be of interest.
3. This is linked to establishing partnerships and also taking risks in repertoire. Risk involves a change in culture and requires inspirational leadership
4. Long term sustainability leads to developed opportunities in the community, with partners and improved practice. There is a direct link between risk taking and innovation. The reason sustainability isn't achieved within education projects is often related to funders' need for innovation, a lack of trust on their part and decreased media coverage. Funders need to recognize that sustainability has benefits for them too and we should therefore explore and develop evaluation techniques and training as well as exploiting the hard evidence gained by measuring quality and impact. We need to realise that we can't be everything to everybody and invest more in planning and evaluation.

Demos Paper: Culture and Learning

Mark Pemberton reminded delegates that the deadline for responses was Wednesday 30th April. The ABO would be submitting a response, taking account of the outcomes of the break-out session.