



**75 YEARS OF SUPPORTING
AND CHAMPIONING
VOLUNTARY MUSIC**

Case Study

No. 56

Portsmouth New Music Orchestra

One of Making Music's five areas of activity is working with and for young people. Through Making Music's Young People's Programme a substantial library of youth project case studies has been developed. These case studies are designed to highlight and share best practice from the experiences of Making Music member societies undertaking youth projects. Many of the case studies arise from Making Music's two national youth programmes *tuned in* (2001-2002) funded by Youth Music and The Carnegie UK Trust and RESOUND (2003-2005) funded by Youth Music, Scottish Arts Council, The Carnegie UK Trust and Headley Trust.

1. Project Description

Project Aims

To prepare young people as creators, performers and listeners by involving them in the creation and production of new and established music.

To interest parents in their children's musical activities with the added benefit of increasing audiences for live performances.

To increase knowledge, understanding and appreciation of serious contemporary music amongst young people, and to enrich the pool of cultural resources with new talent.

Project Description

School Concerts

The PNMO is the performing arm of the Portsmouth New Music Society, a registered charity. The orchestra brings living composers and their music into the community, provides a forum for lesser known twentieth century music, and provides playing opportunities for professional and amateur musicians. PNMO actually consists of several ensembles. The Concert Orchestra is made up of fully professional musicians, the Workshop Orchestra is made up of a core of professionals and non-professional players of grade 8 level and above. The PNMO/COMA Ensemble presents "NEW MUSIC BASHES" in which anyone, regardless of performance ability, may play or sing.

Since its founding in 1995 PNMO has produced several concerts involving the PNMO and three local schools. The music was composed especially for the event in each case. In most cases this was the first time that the children had performed in public with local musicians. The children's ages ranged from 6-17. The children performed a variety of skills including percussion playing, singing, acting and dancing.

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In some cases the children wrote text which was set to music. In each case the children rehearsed for several weeks before the concert under the direction of their teachers. The PNMO Music Director usually attended the last one or two rehearsals.

In 1999 PNMO presented two schools concerts and one with Portsmouth Youth Orchestra.

95% of PNMO programming consists of twentieth century music. Since 1995 PNMO has premièred 29 works, of which five included children singing. A further three world premières involving children are planned for 1999. Programming policy calls for at least one well-known established work on each programme and at least one world première. PNMO programmes aim to provide an alternative avenue of exploration to the popular trends exploited by entertainment and advertising interests.

Each concert involves several meetings between PNMO and the school. Schools are involved as much as possible with parents participating in preparatory workshops and ticket sales. Concessionary tickets are always available for school families. At least two teachers are present whenever the children appear outside of school. Parents and teachers provide refreshments for the children. Usually the children are well behaved and always take a keen interest in the entire programme as well as their own contribution.

Legacy

Children and teachers are asked to fill out a questionnaire after concerts. No negative responses have (as yet) been received. Most children wish to repeat the experience and most enjoy even the most avant-garde of works.

The hardest lesson to learn has been in attracting parents to concerts. Parents will not travel. 1999 concerts are therefore to be performed in or close to each school involved.

PNMO sponsors seem generally satisfied with PNMO performance with the exception of audience development. This is a ubiquitous problem with contemporary music and applies to all new music groups. PNMO is attempting to solve this problem by approachable programming, attractive ticket prices and opportunities to become involved.

Improvements

Improvements for next time include incorporating study material for the entire concert for classroom work. This has not been possible yet because of lack of funds.

Involvement in PNMO New Music Bashes (composition/improvisation workshops) where children can play and compose is now possible since the creation of the PNMO/COMA Ensemble in the Autumn of 1998.

2. Project Details

General Details

Nature of Youth Project
Number of Young People involved **0**
Age Range of Young People
Type of Young People involvement

Recruitment of Young People
Level of LEA involvement
Project budget **£1,000 - £2,000**

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Sources of funding	Concerts sales(parents), regular society sponsors inc.Portsmouth Council, Southern Arts, PRS
Video available	False
Audio available	False
Photographs available	True
Programme available	True
Publicity leaflets/posters	True

Society Details

Name of society	Portsmouth New Music Orchestra
Type of Society	
Size of Society	0
Age profile	
Under 19s in society	0
Under 19s from project	0
Repertoire	
Typical concert budget	
Typical performance	
Number of performances	
Willing to be contacted	False

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This information sheet can be made available in large print and other formats on request. Please telephone 020 7422 8280.

We hope you find this Making Music document useful - it is intended to give a reasonable summary of the position at the time of writing. If you are aware of any changes to the situation described or have suggestions for further information to be included please contact the Membership Services Team at Making Music 020 7422 8280 or info@makingmusic.org.uk. Please note that no responsibility for loss occasioned to any person or group acting or refraining from action as a result of any of the contents of this information sheet can be accepted by any of the authors or by Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies.

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