

IMS Prussia Cove

Inspiring Young Musicians

5th – 8th January 2018

An education project in collaboration with South West Music School, MusicAbility CIC and Cornwall Music Education Hub

Supported by Art Mentor Foundation Lucerne



Overview

IMS Prussia Cove is a charitable organisation dedicated to music-making at the highest level, fostering new generations of talented musicians from across the world, supporting musical idealism and enabling international collaboration. We have become one of classical music's most respected institutions, bringing musicians of the highest calibre to study, rehearse and perform together in Cornwall. This collaborative project offered talented young students from South West Music School the opportunity to work with IMS Prussia Cove musicians during a residential weekend in Cornwall, followed by a public concert at CAST in Helston and a series of concerts in primary and secondary schools in the local area.

An extremely busy weekend was characterised by energy and enthusiasm from all involved, creating an inspirational environment dedicated to musical development. The structure of the project enabled both in-depth study with a selected group of talented students and the opportunity to reach large numbers of young people in an area often neglected by cultural provision. A public concert allowed students to gain valuable performance experience, and the opportunity to hear their coaches perform, as well as bringing our work to a wider audience. Preparation for an ambitious series of schools concerts gave students training in leadership and presentation skills, as well as deeper insight into both the works studied and the art of performance.

Feedback from teachers, students, IMS musicians and partner organisations has been extraordinarily positive, and we are delighted with the success of this pilot outreach project. It has been especially rewarding to observe so many different strands and levels of musical learning within one project, and to see the collaborative spirit of IMS Prussia Cove passed on to younger players, inspiring new generations of musicians.



Facts and Figures

- Hours of coaching: 20
- Number of works studied: 15
- Number of concerts: 11 (1 in-house, 1 public, 9 in schools)
- IMS Prussia Cove musicians: 4
- South West Music School students: 21
- Student age range: 12 – 19 years old
- Geographical reach: students from Somerset, Devon and Cornwall
- Number of schools visited: 9
- School locations: across West Cornwall
- Students reached in primary and secondary schools: 900
- Ages range: 3 – 11 years old (primary school), 14 – 18 years old (GCSE and A-level students)
- Public audience: 60



What Happened

The residential weekend

Students from South West Music School arrived at Prussia Cove in Cornwall on Friday 5th January. Over the next three days, they engaged in advanced coaching sessions with four IMS musicians, studying a wide range of works in small chamber groups. During the weekend they developed musical and technical skills, both as individual players and as a chamber musician. In-depth musical exploration and rehearsal techniques were combined with tuition in performance skills. Each group prepared and rehearsed for their schools concerts.

The venue

This project took place in the same buildings where our biannual seminars are held, creating a sense of continuity with our ideals of musical exploration. The inspiration of the Cornish landscape and the sense of isolation, so central to our work, contributed to an environment dedicated to musical development.

The in-house concert

On Saturday 6th January an open mic night gave students the opportunity to perform in front of their peers and tutors. Selected students gave impressive performances of solo works from memory, followed by short performances of Bach and Ysaÿe given by IMS musicians Amarins, Maria and Matthew.

The public concert

On Sunday 7th January students and tutors travelled to the newly-developing arts space CAST, in Helston, for a sold-out public performance. The first half of the concert was dedicated to student performances of works by Rossini, Beethoven, Mozart and Dvorak, followed by a performance of Ravel's String Quartet in F major by the IMS musicians.

The schools concerts

On Monday 8th January the students were divided into four groups, each led by an IMS musician. Each group performed two concerts in different local primary schools, reaching 8 schools in total. These were: St Hilary's, Leedstown, Mousehole, Newlyn, St Mary's CE, St Mary's Catholic, Pendeen and St Madderns. These interactive concerts introduced the primary school students to the instruments and the music, demonstrating techniques and giving them the opportunity to join in with clapping and dancing, while both the tutors and the SWMS students spoke about their experiences as musicians.

In the afternoon, the groups came together to perform in Helston Community College, a local secondary school. After a few performances by the SWMS students, the IMS musicians introduced the Ravel Quartet with an in-depth musical analysis, demonstrating some of the harmonic and rhythmic techniques studied as part of the GCSE and A-level syllabuses.



Benefits

For the schools

These free performances took place in the schools themselves, enabling whole schools to attend without the disruption and expense of travelling to an alternative venue. Moreover, the interactive and accessible nature of the performances created an inspiring environment in which music was demonstrably fun.

Primary-school children were given inventive and imaginative introductions to both the instruments and the music itself, many for the first time, encouraging take-up of instrumental lessons in an area where this is much needed at a time of notable decline. The secondary school students were able to experience live performance in an educational setting, bringing their studies to life with inspirational playing.

The youth of the South West Music School students gave the school-children recognisable role-models, while the expertise of the IMS musicians ensured a valuable experience, and performances of world-class quality. The scope of the project was able to reward schools who do engage with music, building on previous experiences, but also develop relationships with those who have failed to engage in the past to ensure a legacy for the project.

For the South West Music School students

These talented young students were given an opportunity to study with and learn from world-class musicians in an environment dedicated to their artistic development. Advance training was provided for young musicians in a position to really benefit from the musical ideals and high standards of IMS Prussia Cove. They were not only given individual and chamber music coaching, but the opportunity to perform in public, in front of their peers, and to their tutors.

Students were introduced to the presentation skills necessary for the schools concerts, giving them valuable leadership experience, and moreover finding new ways into both the music and their performance through their efforts to enthuse younger audiences. The project gave them the opportunity to hear the IMS musicians perform, raising aspirations through close contact with relatively young but established performers. The energy, enthusiasm and inspiration of the IMS musicians made a deep impact on young people at a crucial point in their development, as well as opening their eyes to the opportunities provided at IMS Prussia Cove.

For the public

The local community were able to experience world-class performance in an area which is sometimes isolated from cultural provision. Moreover, the intimate setting provided a unique and powerful insight into the music. The audience enjoyed the student performances, and were given an understanding of the project, as well as the opportunity to engage with our work and receive information about future concerts in the area.

For the IMS musicians

The IMS musicians attended our Open Chamber Music seminar in September 2017 for a week's intensive rehearsal on the Ravel Quartet, which provided excellent preparation for this project. The residential weekend allowed the three younger musicians to develop their teaching skills, working as a coaching team led by Tim Boulton. They gained experience in planning and leading schools concerts, working with their students to devise engaging presentations. Through teaching, they were able to reconsider their own playing, and the enthusiasm of the students created a renewed appreciation both of the music and their daily involvement its creation. They were given performance opportunities, and enjoyed passing on the spirit of IMS Prussia Cove to younger performers.

For the partner organisations

This project has enabled strong relationships to develop between like-minded arts and educational organisations, creating the opportunity for future collaborations. Financial and organisational input from all partners enabled the success of an ambitious project, drawing on pooled expertise to develop valuable experiences for a wide range of young people. The involvement of Cornwall Music Education Hub enabled the project to form part of a wider offer to primary schools, while the South West Music School students were able to prepare some of their pieces in previous courses, enabling more in-depth work.



Feedback

Simon Pitt, Chief Executive Officer, South West Music School

'I wanted to say a huge thank you on behalf of the students and myself for the work put in by the IMS tutors at Prussia Cove. A really lovely and uber talented group of players who worked their socks off for the young people. We really couldn't have asked for any more [...] It was a very rewarding experience for the young musicians. I cannot stress enough how good I thought the tutors were [...] It goes without saying that they are all high-quality players and the ensemble performances on the Sunday night and later demonstrated to the A-level group on the Monday afternoon were outstanding'

Christine Judge, Cornwall Music Education Hub

'Having spoken to three of the schools since the visits I wanted to let you know that the response has been fabulous. The schools really enjoyed the visit and were so impressed with the whole experience'

Charlotte Sweet, Pendeen Primary School

'The children absolutely loved Monday, so thank you! As assistant head, I would like to say well done to your musicians who were brilliant, not only in terms of their performance, but also their interactions with the children. The confident and fun delivery was perfectly pitched and paced. We would welcome a return visit'

Ella Collinson, CAST

'Thank you for a great evening, how special to see such talented (and young!) musicians in such a (super-)cosy setting [...] we had lots of wonderful feedback as people were leaving, some were quite bowled over'

Maria Włoszczowska, IMS musician

'I thought the project was incredible, challenging, unusual, and as a result inspired everyone involved - the students, as well as ourselves [...] It was truly heart-warming to see the spark in their eyes, and to give them a sense of how enjoyable working with wonderful musicians can be [...] I loved the idea of actually playing with the students - it was a sure way to inspire them, make them believe that they can rise above what they might have thought they were capable of [...] The school workshops were incredible fun, and we had the chance to get through to so many children. The primary school kids were extremely responsive. I think the students in my groups learned a lot from that experience, and it was heartening to see them engage with the younger kids, and make an effort to present themselves clearly in public, as well as feel that they are now the ones responsible for representing their passion for music, and inspiring others'

Amarins Wierdsma, IMS musician

'Very interesting to deal with children of a variety of levels and characters, and to think about teaching methods, as well as taking responsibility and making sure everybody felt comfortable and supported'

Matthew Huber, IMS musician

'The project was hugely enjoyable and rewarding for me, and I think for the students too [...] the idea to take these students outside of their comfort zones [presenting the schools concerts] and empower them by means of teaching is incredible. They all rose to the challenge and everybody participated and delivered, even those who needed special care and attention or who were shy came out of their shells. I'm sure for many of them it was the first time they had to stand up and say something in public [...] The open mic session was mind-blowing. I still can't believe the ease with which the kids performed with no inhibitions - I would have loved to hear more!'

South West Music School students

- 'An amazing opportunity which I feel incredibly privileged to be a part of'
- 'My chamber playing has greatly improved as has my musical knowledge'
- 'Staff are incredible to work with, such a wealth of experience among them and a great way to learn by example'
- 'Quite inspiring watching the quartet practising and in concert'
- 'Playing in a chamber group is fun and I like the teamwork'
- 'I liked the school concerts a lot and found them very rewarding'
- 'The mentors were awesome, I really enjoyed hearing about their lives as musicians'
- 'Amazing to be around such incredible, inspirational players who gave useful information to make our performance as good as it could be'
- 'I enjoyed exploring new repertoire'

- 'I had a very fun experience performing at the schools with others. This was the first time I am performing at primary schools'
- 'I really like the location and the concise nature of the course, it felt like it all had real purpose. And I've got lots of things to think about from now on about breathing while playing'
- 'I really like the Ravel string quartet, its very challenging and very different to everything else I'm doing'
- 'We've focussed on intonation, rhythm and just being more precise than we normally are, we've tried to work out what the character is of each piece'
- 'The amount of space to practice individually and as a group is brilliant'
- 'I've not done a course quite like this one before, it's got more serious concerts at the end'
- 'We're trying to make the music exciting for the primary schools concerts, we've been making up a story for the piece to make it more interesting and easier to understand'
- 'It's inspiring to have young tutors, they're not too far from us, you think you could take a similar path'
- 'The selection of pieces has been really good. There's lots of interesting stuff I've never come across before'
- 'You have a lot of input, you can't just sit back and stay quiet, you have to offer something'
- 'You can understand other instruments better and how to fit the sound with each other'



Biographies

Maria Włoszczowska (violin)

As First Prize winner of the Elsky International Violin Competition, Minsk, and finalist of the XV International Henryk Wieniawski Violin Competition in 2016, Maria is in demand as a soloist and chamber musician worldwide. She regularly collaborates with artists including Maxim Vengerov, Robert Levin, Philippe Graffin, Alasdair Beatson, Nobuko Imai, Roger Chase and the Doric String Quartet. In 2014, she was selected as the recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society Emily Anderson Prize, performed at the Wigmore Hall for the final of Young Classical Artist Trust (YCAT), and became an RPS Young Artist. Her debut recording of Mozart's complete Church Sonatas with Maxim Vengerov was recently featured on BBC Radio 3's 'In Tune'.

Amarins Wierdsma (violin)

Born in Utrecht in 1991 to a musical family, Amarins studied with Coosje Wijzenbeek at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague and with Vera Beths at the Conservatory of Amsterdam. In 2013, she moved to London to study with David Takeno at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, completing her Masters and Artist Diploma with distinction. She is currently on the Fellowship scheme. Amarins is first violinist of the Barbican quartet with whom she will study in Madrid with Günter Pichler this year. Upcoming concerts include Stravinsky Violin concerto in the Netherlands and a tour to China.

Tim Boulton (viola)

Tim was based in London until 2003, performing internationally with chamber ensembles and chamber orchestras. He taught at Guildhall School of Music & Drama from 1988-2005 with responsibilities that gave him oversight of the string teaching programme from Junior Guildhall to postgraduate level. Tim is now committed to music education and performance in the South West of England while still engaging with music-making elsewhere, performing as a guest with string quartets and chamber music groups. He is Director of Cornwall Youth Orchestra, is closely involved with Cornwall Music Education Hub and South West Music School and is coordinator of several Music For Youth activities in the region.

Matthew Huber (cello)

Matthew performs as a chamber musician and soloist in the UK and abroad. As a Fellow of the Royal Schools of Music, he has lectured on historical technical practices and the evolution of cello pedagogy, and has given masterclasses in 18th-century performance practice. He has performed with artists such as Robert Levin, Philippe Graffin and Alasdair Beatson and his teachers include Steven Doane, Ralph Kirshbaum and Gary Hoffman. Matthew has appeared at the Kronberg, Schiermonnikoog, Zagreb "Virtuosi", Salisbury, Boston and Utrecht Early Music festivals, the North York Moors, Ryedale and St. Nazaire Festivals.



Partners

South West Music School is a Centre of Advanced Training and a music charity working with talented young instrumentalists, singers and composers aged 8 – 18 years in the South West of England.

The Cornwall Music Education Hub is a partnership of music and arts organisations who work together to support quality musical learning for all children and young people in Cornwall. The partnership is led by Cornwall Council and funded by the Department for Education through Arts Council England.

MusicAbility CIC embraces the unique potential of music to stimulate a broad spectrum of educational, creative and health benefits within the community, through quality pre-professional training, education through music, promoting health through music therapy, promoting good teaching practice and public education.

CAST The Cornubian Arts and Science Trust is an educational charity which aims to promote participation, appreciation and learning in the visual arts and to encourage interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration across the arts and sciences. CAST is dedicated to enriching cultural life in Cornwall and the South West and encouraging national and international connection and exchange.



IMS Prussia Cove

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