

# Orchestras and Music Education: A European Approach

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*Image on cover: Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra Very Young Composers project.*

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A thank you also goes to Association of British Orchestras and the British Council for enabling this journey to continue and be deepened by a further experience in Brazil.

I'd also like to thank my two employers at the time of the project, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, who both supported this personal and professional development opportunity at various points.

A huge thank you to all the organisations and individuals who supported me throughout this trip. In particular, a huge thank you to the teacher training and junior departments of Sibelius Academy, Academie der Kunste in Berlin, University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna and Royal Conservatoire The Hague, the education and outreach departments of Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Vienna Symphoniker, Amsterdam Sinfonia, Het Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and Nederlands Dans Theater, and all expressive arts staff at The International School of The Hague and East Helsinki Music School. A special thank you to everyone, adults, children and young people, who took time to speak and share with me their experiences of arts education in both formal and informal settings.

## **Biography**

Jenn Adams qualified as a music teacher from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (now Royal Conservatoire of Scotland) in 2005 and spent the almost four years teaching in secondary, primary and nursery schools in Scotland. Feeling frustrated by the constraints of the formal education system and the diminishing position that arts were being given in the curriculum, Jenn moved into the informal sector, working with Perth and Kinross Council as Music Development Coordinator and then to Horsecross Arts (Perth Concert Hall and Theatre) as Head of Creative Learning. Both roles saw her work on large community engagement projects, with a particular focus on engaging young people in the arts and connecting communities with professional artists in music, drama, dance, production, film and new media. In 2012 she moved to Glasgow and took up the role of Director of Learning and Engagement with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. Here she worked across Scotland to inspire and engage communities in orchestral music. In February 2016 she moved to become Head of Junior Conservatoire at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) and latterly in September 2017 took on the additional remit of the Lifelong Learning Department. In February 2018, Jenn left the RCS to pursue her passion of providing transformative arts learning experiences for all ages in a freelance capacity to communities around Scotland.

Jenn lives in the suburbs of Glasgow with her husband, Daniel, and her two border terriers, Maggie May and MacDuff.

## **Executive summary**

In the last 20-30 years, orchestras in the UK and abroad have vastly widened the work that they do in the realm of music education and community engagement/outreach and most have education activities now built in as a funding requirement of any grant/s they receive.

A common thread found in all countries visited was that music and arts education in state funded schools is decreasing. This is particularly true in the UK where the latest figures released by the Department of Education<sup>1</sup> show that since 2010 there has been a 28% reduction in young people choosing creative subjects at GCSE. There has also been a fall in the number of arts teachers by 16% and the number of art teaching hours has fallen by 17%. With pressure and emphasis being put on the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects, the arts are being sidelined. Orchestras and other classical music organisations cannot rely on the next generation of audiences from school education, and therefore must diversify and find new ways to engage the younger generation in the classical arts.

The Fellowship focussed on the following:

1. Exploring the educational activities of orchestras in four European countries aimed at children and young people, specifically aged 0-18 years.
2. Finding best practice to bring back and disseminate to the UK.
3. Identifying trends emerging in orchestral music education and outreach work.

Through my visits, I found three common themes of activity that orchestras around the world are doing to continue to nurture a passion for classical music in children and young people:

- Education and family concerts
- School workshops and projects
- Engagement of early years children (ages 0-5 years)

Through my observations, it became clear that the strongest impact and most powerful engagements came where classroom teachers were engaged in the arts themselves, and where musicians were trained in facilitation skills for working with children and young people.

The most successful engagements utilised not only classical music, but were multi-disciplinary in their approach. For most, this meant collaborating with either theatre or dance companies, however some also partnered with filmmakers.

As well as in school, the wider arts sector is currently facing severe funding cuts in the UK. This is especially true in Scotland where we have seen strong arts companies for children and young people, international youth festivals and classical ensembles funding ceased, putting their very existence into threat. Looking at new ways to engage with funders and to collaborate is therefore key to the continued survival of the arts for children and young people.

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<sup>1</sup> DfE School workforce statistics, [www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-school-workforce](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-school-workforce)

Following my research, I put forward the following recommendations:

- That UK orchestras actively seek to co-produce their concerts for children and young people alongside other artform organisations.
- All orchestral musicians leading workshops undergo comprehensive facilitation skills training.
- That facilitation and teaching skills become part of any performing arts undergraduate degree.
- That primary school teachers are given enhanced arts training during their postgraduate and undergraduate studies.
- That orchestras utilise multi-disciplinary activities in their workshops and projects by working with professionals in that field.
- That orchestras look at more ways to engage the youngest of children and their families in their work.



*Image above: Berlin Philharmonic's Vokal Helden (Vocal Heroes) project*

## **Background to the Fellowship**

I started my Fellowship in 2015 with support of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and Finzi Charitable Trust. At the time I was working as Director of Learning and Engagement at the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. A month after my first visit, I was offered the opportunity by the Association of British Orchestras (ABO) and the British Council, to participate in a trip to São Paulo in Brazil to explore more orchestral education projects. In February 2016, I moved roles to become Head of Junior Conservatoire at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Although my role was less orchestral focussed, with the decline in music education I was keen to continue with this research and in 2017 was offered the opportunity to visit Rostov-On-Don in Russia to see examples of their orchestral education programmes. I completed my visits in December 2017. Having started in 2015 with four countries, the project ended up with six countries being visited and added depth and interest to the project. As this project in Europe focussed, I therefore referred briefly to the additional two countries in this report, although the situation internationally compares to Europe is very different and orchestras are a decade behind their European counterparts in terms of this work.

Since I started this project, music education in the UK has declined quickly, with a heavily reduced number of schools in England offering A-Level music, and the reduction of instrumental music services in Scotland, including Edinburgh City Council now being the only free provider of instrumental lessons. With music becoming a rare breed, there is a genuine worry that music starts to once again return to a subject for those affluent families who can afford private tuition. And as we not only reduce the number of those participating in music, there is a fear that a new generation of classical audiences are not being educated in the artform. Research undertaken by The Audience Agency from 2014 – 2016 on classical music audiences in England, showed that 42% of the audience and likely to be aged 41-60 and 37% aged over 61. Just 7% are likely to be aged under 31.<sup>2</sup>

It's important to stress that this report is based on my findings and opinions. I am aware that there are a wide range of views on the role of classical music education and the role of the orchestra within this. I hope you'll find that I've tried to present a balanced debate and have come to my own personal opinions based on observations made and through discussions with a number of professionals in academic and arts sectors across Europe.

### **Why music education?**

Research on the effects of music education has proved time and time again the positive impact it has on children and young people and their social and educational development. Dr Susan Hallam's research paper<sup>3</sup> outlines a vast amount of evidence for the power of music in an educational context.

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<sup>2</sup> Full report at [www.theaudienceagency.org/asset/1303](http://www.theaudienceagency.org/asset/1303)

<sup>3</sup> Full paper at [journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0255761410370658](http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0255761410370658)

## **Aims and objectives**

The overall objective was to develop an understanding of differing educational practices across orchestras in Europe, and bring back best practice to the UK.

This broke down into the following aims:

1. To explore the educational activities of orchestras in four European countries.
2. To find best practice and bring this back to the UK.
3. To look at the impact of orchestras in Europe and how this compares to the UK.
4. Identify trends emerging in orchestral music education and outreach work.

## **The Approach**

Over the course of two years, I visited four European countries and two international countries and spent a week with an orchestra in each city.

As someone who has trained as a practitioner, I was keen to observe as many face to face learning experiences as possible as well as conduct interviews before and after events with participants, teachers/lecturers, workshop facilitators, musicians and parents/carers.

I spread my time between observing the work of the administration, attending school workshops and activities, attending orchestra educational concerts aimed at children, young people and families and visiting local schools to understand the music education in that country. A full itinerary can be found in Appendix 1.

Each country was chosen for its unique place in either the education or music system in Europe.

1. Helsinki, Finland – chosen specifically for its renowned school education system.
2. Berlin, Germany – chosen specifically for its renowned orchestra.
3. The Hague and Amsterdam, The Netherlands – chosen for national remit of its orchestras.
4. Vienna, Austria – chosen for its renowned orchestra and music conservatory.

## Findings

### **Orchestra education and family concerts**

Orchestral education and family concerts are the first step in every orchestra's toolbox worldwide to engaging with a younger demographic than the traditional orchestra attender. In the UK, education concerts have been the bread and butter of most orchestras for many years and traditionally follow the same format – a presenter who presents a narrative whilst the orchestra plays excerpts from various classical pieces thought suitably enticing for young ears. Its typical to hear an excerpt from Harry Potter, something from a well-known ballet (Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet or Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake) or something a bit more classical in nature from Mozart or Haydn, which ties into the A-Level (England and Wales) or Higher (Scotland) music curriculum. Presenters are generally musicians or have some formal training in music. This is a tried and tested formula repeated again and again, and whilst the argument is that it continues to be an exciting, new experience because it is played to a different audience every year (due to schools generally bringing one-year group per visit per year), I was keen to see if there was another approach which brought a new, fresh take on this.

During my trip, I visited and observed a number of family and schools' concerts in all European countries - not in Brazil as this wasn't happening there at that time, although it now does.

Rostov-on-Don, Helsinki and Vienna very much followed the traditional suit of presenter and orchestra, whilst Rostov-on-Don had a member of the education team present the concert, I was pleasantly surprised to discover that both Vienna and Helsinki utilised actors to present the concerts. When questioned why actors and not musicians in Vienna, I was laughed at and the question turned directly back on me; 'Why would we use musicians? They don't talk for a living, actors do.' The argument often given for using musicians to present is that they understand the music and how to dissect it, however here in Vienna, they were using musicians to write the narration but for the actors to present it. This has always been my personal preference and in both cities, I saw it working very well, with the children engaged in the actor on stage and the musical content not diluted to suit the presenter.



*Image above: Schools' concert at the Musikverein, Vienna*

In Berlin and Amsterdam, it was a different story. Both concerts I saw here I felt really took orchestral concert engagement to the next level and brought that fresh outlook that I had been searching for. What they did differently here was to not just see the concert as an introduction to the instruments of the orchestra, but as a full theatrical experience utilising storytelling and dance. In both organisations performances, all the performers, including the musicians, had been directed by theatre directors. In the case of the Berlin Philharmonic, it was very clear that a substantial amount of funding had been put aside from the orchestra's education budget to make this happen (it was later confirmed by the team that DeutscheBank is their exceptionally generous and incredibly supportive funder). In the case of Amsterdam Sinfonietta, they had

joined forces with a theatre company and the concert hall to collaborate. This meant they all put a small amount of their core funding to the project to make it happen. A very simple idea, yet one which does not seem to be used enough by orchestras. Family and schools' concerts are generally quite expensive to put on, and orchestras in the UK tend to go it alone with any additional funding coming from sponsors (aka Berlin model).

In my discussions with the education team at Amsterdam Het Concertgebouw, they explained how their programme is all based on co-productions. This is an idea which has existed and worked exceptionally well in the theatre world for decades, however isn't really utilised in the classical music field as much. Through co-producing all their concerts, their funding goes further and they're able to service a much wider range and number of audiences and participants.

In the UK, a big issue with attracting schools to attend concerts is cost. Schools must find money to pay for transport and usually for tickets.

For concerts aimed at primary school children, there is generally an element of professional development (CPD/CLD) which comes alongside any concert in order to support the up-skilling of teachers.

From discussions with my European counterparts, I discover that attracting schools to attend is still an issue in these countries, however for most the issue is not transport (which tends to be free for school children as they all use the excellent public transport systems rather than coaches) nor is it cost of tickets as the four concerts I saw for schools are all fully funded. The issue is time and value: a trip to a classical concert is seen as taking too much time away from school and academic subjects. In essence, the value of these concerts is not seen as high as an hour of subjects such as STEM. The only country where I didn't witness this was Finland. Here, the schools I met and saw were all exceptionally happy to participate and in fact see it as part of their duty as educators to let their pupils have a variety of arts experiences and engagement.

## Case Study 1: Family concert, Berlin

The family concert I observed at the Berlin Philharmonic was entitled *Toy Box* and was an arrangement of Debussy's *La boîte à joujoux* (Toy box). The piece was written as a ballet for children, and it's that theme that the orchestra's education team have taken and run with, creating a piece of exciting children's theatre.

The music has been specially arranged for 15 players, plus conductor, and features two contemporary dancers and an actor. The story follows Debussy's original narrative of two boy lovers who fall out when a new toy soldier comes on the scene.

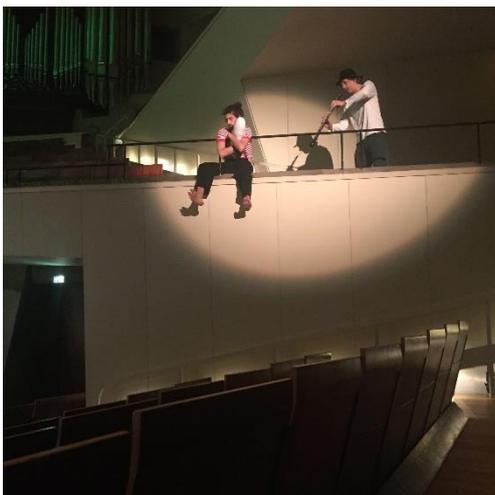


*Image above: The set of Toy Box*

This concert was performed in the main concert hall at the Berlin Philharmonic.

It's not your average UK orchestral family concert; there are 11 technicians on the stage nailing, hammering and drilling set pieces together. The set is quite something else – it's not something I've seen in an orchestral concert and the larger than life pieces look like something you'd find in a theatre rather than a concert hall. I am told the set has been designed by a theatre designer, the presenters are actors and dancers, and the whole concert has been directed by a professional theatrical director.

The beauty and uniqueness of this interpretation and orchestral concert is the fact that all on stage are involved in the acting. The musicians on stage are thoroughly engaged, reacting to the story around them, and the conductor, Raphael Haegar, has a leading role alongside the toy soldier (lead actor).



*Image above: Taken during rehearsals, performers in the audience*

The show also comes off the stage into the audience, with a cor anglais player and dancer appearing in the middle of the auditorium. Whilst this is not a unique feature of positioning musicians around the venue, the level of excellence in how this is executed is not something I've experienced before.

The show is a clever and subtle introduction to classical music and orchestral instruments for young children through a fun, enjoyable theatrical experience. It feels like a breath of fresh air to the traditional orchestral concert for children with presenter plus orchestra.

## Case Study 2: Ensemble concert, Amsterdam

This concert is presented by Amsterdam Sinfonietta and lasts for around an hour. It's repeated three times each day for one week to an audience of 100 children plus parents/carers/school teachers. Although it's held in the smallest hall in the Het Concertgebouw, the chandeliers dangling create a feeling similar to the rest of the building – one of an impressive and formal venue – yet is intimate enough to not intimidate the young children (aged 5-6 years) attending. The show is performed on the flat (no stage) and children sit on cushions whilst adults sit on benches behind them, creating a more relaxed and informal feel.

The musicians are sans music stands and each play a character. The show is through-composed (all original music played in a classical style) and features 3 violins, a viola, a cello and a double bass. These musicians have been working together on children's productions for eight years, and it shows. The performance is highly tuned with the musicians bouncing off each other. The children are thoroughly engaged throughout the entire production. It's been made interactive by asking questions, getting the children up on stage to support the acting and having two short songs (newly composed for the performance).



*Image above: Audience members at Amsterdam Ensemble performance*

Adding sing-a-long sections are traditionally part of an Orchestras young education concert. Usually they're taught by high cost CPD sessions for teachers, or school workshops. Those who can't afford the cost of the CPD or workshop, or those who aren't on the orchestra's target engagement list, miss out. Understanding these issues, the team here have created short films, introducing the characters and teaching the songs. These have been hosted on the Het Concertgebouw and Sinfonietta's websites, the link for which was sent to all schools and individuals once booked.

The staging is simple yet effective. An intriguing machine takes centre stage and coloured lighting sets the rest of the scene. The actors are in matching costumes and are akin to something found on a children's tv show.

The children are engaged from the very beginning. The musicians take turns to lead the story, using both speech and music to tell the tale. Those with larger instruments (double bass and cello) seem to move effortlessly around the stage. Both musical content and storytelling are of high quality and take the audience on a journey of emotions as a teddy bear is parted from his owner but reunited by the end of the performance.

## Engagement of early years

There is a wealth of research around the experiences in early childhood and how these affect a person throughout their lives. The Scottish Government has particularly begun taking action on these findings by investing in free school meals for every child until Primary 3 (age 6/7) and with the introduction of the baby box, first established in Finland.

Suzanne Zeedyk is leading research in this field on babies development and states that ‘the best time for shaping core emotional pathways in the brain is during the early years, before the age of 3 years.’<sup>4</sup> There have been many research studies<sup>5</sup> undertaken on the connection between music and emotion and in recent years arts organisations have begun to hone in on this to engage the very youngest of children in music and the arts.

In my role at Royal Scottish National Orchestra, I carried on a project my predecessor had begun which was to give every child born in Scotland a CD of orchestral music, called Astar<sup>6</sup>. This was handed out by both registrars and health visitors. It was to be used by parents/carers to support daily tasks such as feeding time, bedtime and playtime. However, I always felt we



*Image above: Hup production by Starcatchers*

could go further than this and create more than just a passive listening experience for children. We did work with Starcatchers<sup>7</sup>, a theatre producing company specialising in under 5s productions, to create a non-verbal piece of interactive theatre for 0-24 month olds. It continues to thrive to this day and in March 2018 toured New York City. However, I really feel this is just the tip of the iceberg to what can be achieved through early years musical experiences and interactions to support baby development.

In my travels I discovered that orchestras are beginning to look at how they engage their earliest audience members. Berlin were doing this through early years concerts by small chamber music groups performed to parents/carers and their babies in informal settings, where crying, feeding and exploring are all encouraged. Children can discover the music on their own terms and parents/carers can feel relaxed and enjoy a concert-going experience together with their child.

Amsterdam and The Hague had similar programmes to Berlin for the very young but again very much concert based as a passive listener, rather than anything interactive. The orchestras and concert halls I met with in Vienna were yet to establish such programmes although did seem interested and keen in exploring work with babies.

As expected due to the countries rounded approach to the development of its youngest citizens, the Finnish programme went much deeper than I saw or experienced anywhere else (see Case Study 3). The programme is still very young and so the impact will be measured much later however the qualitative feedback from parents and carers to date speaks volumes about how we interact with orchestras.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.suzannezeedyk.com/brain-development-suzanne-zeedyk/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.02044/full>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.rsno.org.uk/astar/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.starcatchers.org.uk/events/hup/>

### Case Study 3: Godchildren project, Helsinki

The Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra runs a programme called *Kummilapset* in Finnish, or *The Godchild/Godchildren Project* in English.

Thanks to funding from the Government, the project is offered for free to the participants. It engages with all children born in a particular year from birth until the age of 7. The project originally launched in 2000 and ran as a soft pilot, however in 2012 it was re-launched for a new group of children and has been making waves in the city.

To date, almost 3,500 families have signed up to participate in the programme, which represents over half of the entire age group.

The aims of the project as stated by the orchestra are both to enhance the outcomes for the child and family, but also for the orchestra and venue:

- Awaken a love of music and playing music
- Offer families a shared experience
- Support the development of musical and motor skills in children
- Lower the threshold for families to visit the Helsinki Music Centre.

Helsinki Philharmonic worked closely with the local health service and child welfare clinics to spread the word about the project. All those who registered in 2012 were sent a CD featuring music performed by the Helsinki Philharmonic. They then were invited to attend two concerts (one in Spring and one in Autumn) to hear the music performed live. Alongside the concerts, regular workshops in music making and singing were offered for the babies and families. The interactions and regularity of engagement increased as the children grew older, with every interaction tailored to the age and stage of the child. Methodologies used here are Kodaly inspired<sup>8</sup>, similar to how many UK music organisations deliver their music educational materials.



Image above: *Teddy Buttons, The Godchild project mascot.*

The project will culminate in 2019 with an opportunity for the children who have been participating in workshops to perform alongside the orchestra in a final celebratory concert. At this stage, the children move into primary school and will be able to continue to access the orchestra's engagement programme through their school activities.

The project engages children and their families from the very beginning so that music is just part of life and a way of being. However, the one criticism of the project is what happens to the children born in 2013, 2014, 2015 etc? This

is something that the orchestra are very aware of however, with limited funding and time (the orchestra has a remit for the whole population and not just this age range), they feel they serve as best as they can.

For videos on the Godchildren project, please see here:

<http://helsinginkaupunginorkesteri.fi/en/godchildren>

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.britishkodalyacademy.org/kodaly\\_approach.htm](http://www.britishkodalyacademy.org/kodaly_approach.htm)

## School workshops and projects

Another staple of the orchestral education programme is school workshops and projects, but how these are setup and run vary substantially from organisation to organisation.

I observed schools workshops in every country I visited. Interestingly, the majority of projects that I saw focussed on the creativity aspect of music and were mainly composition based. I also visited a Nederlands Dans Theater dance workshop in a school which again focussed on the creation and choreography aspect of dance, alongside composition of music and sounds to accompany.

In Vienna, workshops were very traditional in format with a professional musician giving a lecture to a group of students about their instrument. The University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, ranked in the top 5 in the world<sup>9</sup>, engages with the orchestras in their educational projects however these are very traditional in nature. They tend to focus solely on classical music and don't engage with other artforms. The workshops are also quite passive in their level of engagement for the participants with active listening being promoted and no real hands on activity for the students, unless they already receive lessons in an instrument.



*Image above: University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna taken December 2017.*

Berlin, Amsterdam, The Hague and Helsinki ran multi-disciplinary school projects which saw music and dance mainly come together. All were based around creation and making something new. They each had a similar format in that they used a main stage production as the stimulus. Berlin and The Hague projects resulted in performances linked to the relative professional companies, whilst Amsterdam and Helsinki were treated as performances in their own right and given separate airings.

The delivery of projects varied from each organisation. Some used solely the professional performer to deliver with no training in facilitation, others used solely a member of the education team, others used specialist freelance facilitators and one project saw teachers working alongside professional musicians and dancers.

The price for participating again varied from country to country. Berlin and Vienna's education programmes were all fully funded and schools bid to participate via an application form. Helsinki's programmes were fully funded but the organisations sought out the schools rather than schools applying to the organisation. Amsterdam and The Hague had 10 free workshops to give as part of their funding agreements and the rest were to be paid for by the schools or the costs of participating past onto the parent/carer of the participating child.

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<sup>9</sup> QS world rankings 2018: <https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/university-subject-rankings/2018/performing-arts>

#### **Case Study 4: Very Young Composers, Helsinki**

Very Young Composers is a project which takes place across the world. It was started back in the 1990s by Jon Deak, double bassist of the New York Philharmonic. The project involves taking 11 – 13 year olds and engaging them for 6 months to create a piece of music for a full-size symphony orchestra – a feat that even undergraduate composers struggle with. In 2010, the idea of international musical postcards was created and Jon began working with orchestras and children across the world.

The project has been running in Helsinki, a partnership between the Helsinki Philharmonic, Sibelius Academy and led by Jon Deak. Here, the partnership has taken the project that little bit further and has also partnered with Finnish National Opera to create a new opera written by and for young people, however this case study focuses on the symphonic music part.

The children worked alongside Jon over a number of visits to create their music. Rather than notation, they used graphics scores initially to create the music. All sessions were held at the Sibelius Academy. Musicians from Helsinki Philharmonic came to show the children the capabilities of their instruments, the sounds that can be created and the range of their instruments. Children therefore were not only writing for the orchestra, but gained an understanding of the instruments involved in the orchestra.

Alongside the project, Sibelius Academy had its trainee teachers learning from Jon and others involved. They observed and assisted on the projects to gain a deeper understanding of creative ways of using music in the classroom.

At a schools celebratory concert, three pieces created as part of the project were performed – one by a composer from Helsinki, one by an American student and one by a Korean student. Each young composer introduced their piece (via video link for those in other countries) and the professional orchestra played them, with Jon conducting. The other Finnish pieces created will be performed by orchestras across the world.

Videos of the Very Young Composers project can be found here:

<https://nyphil.org/education/learning-communities/very-young-composers/very-young-composers-videos>



*Image above: Very Young Composers project - young performers sit side by side with the Helsinki Philharmonic*

## Case Study 5: Music Plus..., Berlin

The Berlin Philharmonic run a series of schools' projects called Music Plus. The aim of these projects is to link music to another aspect of the curriculum i.e. Music Plus *Literature*, Music Plus *Science*, etc. The project I visit is Music Plus *Biology*.

What is different to most UK orchestras is the way in which schools are selected to participate in the creative project, which can span from four to eight weeks. In the UK, orchestras tend to work in partnership with a school to create something that attends to a specific need of that educational establishment. Here, the project is created by the education team (in partnership with the musicians who will take artistic lead) and then the schools interested apply to take part. The education team select as many schools as they have space for based on the application form made by the school.



Image above: Die Spinne performance in the concert hall foyer.

All Music Plus projects are linked to the main season of the orchestra. The current Music Plus Biology project is tied to the concert during the week I am there which features *Le Festin de L'araignee* (The Feast of the Spider) by Albert Roussel. The children have been working with Berlin Philharmonic violinist Holm Birkholz to create their own version of this piece of music and the final performance is given in the foyer as an opening act to the main stage work.

Birkholz has composed a suite to describe the story of a spider attracting flies into its web and then eating one. Between each piece in his composed suite, the children have created their own music. Both Holm (orchestral musician) and Dennis (one of the orchestra's education team) have worked with the children to create the interludes. This is Holm's very first creative project for the orchestra's education department. I'm interested to hear that his facilitation skills were not taken into account when asking him to run this project – it was his creative idea that

attracted the education team to engage him in the role. As all projects have a facilitator from the education team, plus an orchestral musician, the belief is that the musician doesn't therefore require a training in facilitation.

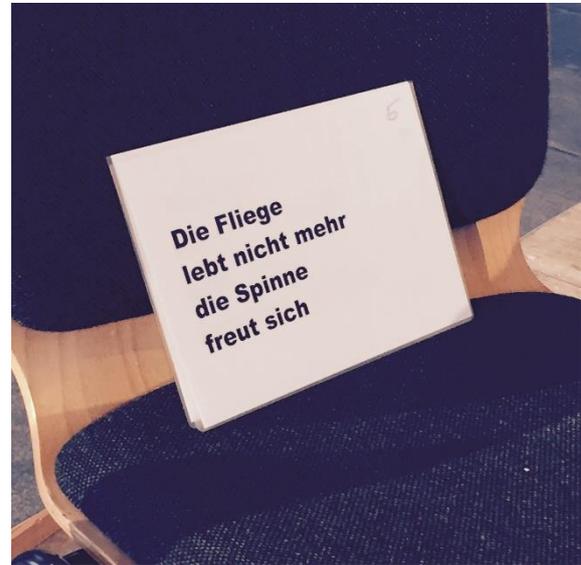


Image above: The cloth spider made by the children

The project uses both dance, music and art to engage the children. I'm told that in school, the children were all encouraged to participate in each artform – they each engaged in creative dance – they each engaged in creative dance – they were involved in the creation of the set and props (which includes a 3-foot round cloth spider and 8-foot long web) and were involved in the creation of the music. They also each wrote Haiku poems about the story, a few of which were chosen to be read out during the performance.

The children are all engaged fully in the project and the final rehearsals are akin to a theatre production with a number of technical rehearsals followed by three dress rehearsals. These take place over four days of the school teaching week. When I ask the teacher how she feels about losing precious classroom time, she tells me she believes they learn so much more through this process, including self-discipline, confidence, wider citizenship values and of course specific arts skills.

The performance itself features all the children in their chosen role – some are musicians, some are dancers, some are narrators and then a few are involved in behind the scenes work such as lighting and sound. The children are well-supported by an enthusiastic audience who take up most of the space in the foyer. I can't help noticing that the majority of the audience appear to be parents and friends/family rather than the main Berlin Philharmonic audience. When I question the education team about this, they concur. Although they have a desire to engage both ways (main stage audience in their education work and their education participants in their main stage productions), they find the former the most difficult to communicate and unless a main stage audience member has a personal connection to a community/education participant, they see it as a difficult task and one which they currently don't have the solution for.



*Image above: A haiku poem written by one of the children reads: 'The fly no longer lives, the spider is glad.'*

As the final performance takes place, it's clear from the children that I speak to, the parents and the teacher that all have felt this a very worthwhile project and have gained far more than they thought they would at the beginning. It's been much more than 'just another music project'.

## Conclusions

The Fellowship was conducted over a two-year period and in that time, the face of education and arts education in particular is changing quickly. What remains a constant, however, is the growing case for arts organisations to engage with the younger generation in order to continue the succession line of cultural audiences for the future. Arts organisations everywhere talk of how they are enhancing and enriching, and not there to replace.

The classroom teachers I came into contact with all had a personal passion for music and this is why they had got involved in the orchestra's projects. Visiting schools, it was very apparent that in those countries where arts in the school curriculum were not supported wholeheartedly at Government level, as in the UK (Berlin, Amsterdam, The Hague, Vienna and Sao Paulo in Brazil), there was a lack of engagement with music, unless the school had a teacher who had a personal passion and skill in the subject.

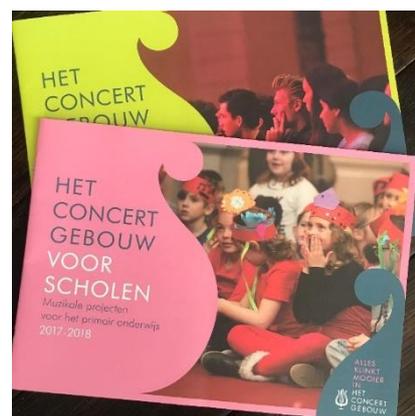
I therefore wonder that, as arts education is decreasing, how much longer will there be something for orchestral education programmes to enhance and enrich, rather than these organisations having to deliver much more basic engagement than they have before as the baseline level of knowledge is just not there

In terms of the orchestral education projects, the big trend I saw was multi-disciplinary work, both in concerts and in workshops. European orchestras have come to the understanding that they cannot go it alone and have been repeatedly engaging a variety of artforms in their work to find different ways of engaging children and young people in classical music. This is something I feel we can learn from in the UK. Combining both financial resources and cross-disciplinary supports organisations and schools to engage.

Interestingly, I didn't experience much engagement digitally by the orchestras or concert halls, other than online videos or apps supporting concert content. Combating the issue of STEM subjects by working hand in hand with them is something that is yet to be approached it would seem.

The projects I observed which appeared to be the most successful in terms of the outcomes for the child/young person and orchestra were projects where either the workshop leader had training in facilitation skills, or where the teacher worked alongside the professional artist to combine their skills for the activity. Where this didn't happen, the children didn't engage as fully as they could during the process.

Although orchestras education programmes are increasing and the variety of work they do is growing, with the diminishing priority on arts education in schools, there was a consensus from all I met that more intervention needs done in order to continue to provide quality arts provision to the next generation. With all the benefits arts bring to young people in terms of their overall development, there is a need for organisations working in the informal sector to continue to increase their work. Being performing organisations however, they cannot do this alone and unfortunately, unless the situation in schools increases, arts education, in central Europe at least, already an endangered species could become the exception as an experience for a young person, the rather than the norm.



*Image above: Teacher resource packs from Het Concertgebouw, Amsterdam.*

## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1**

**That UK orchestras actively seek to co-produce their concerts for children and young people alongside other artform organisations.**

In this economic climate and with arts education reducing in schools, organisations should look to combine resources to ensure the highest quality of concerts for children and young people, utilising expertise of dance, drama and filmmaking organisations, producing a new type of interaction for this young generation.

### **Recommendation 2**

**All orchestral musicians leading workshops undergo comprehensive facilitation skills training.**

The most successful projects I observed had experienced facilitators leading them. Those leading orchestral workshops need to be able to communicate clearly with the young people in front of them in order to engage them in the process.

### **Recommendation 3**

**That facilitation and teaching skills become part of any performing arts undergraduate degree.**

As arts education reduces in schools, arts organisations role of outreach and learning work becomes more important. By giving all those training in performing arts in conservatoires basic facilitation skills means they are more prepared for the multi-function orchestra/dance company that these companies are now becoming.

### **Recommendation 4**

**That primary school teachers are given enhanced arts training during their postgraduate and undergraduate studies.**

Every project I observed involved teachers who had a personal passion for the arts. As training in arts subjects reduces in teacher training institutions, we put at more risk the impact that arts can have on children's development in primary school and their exposure to the subject.

### **Recommendation 5**

**That orchestras utilise multi-disciplinary activities in their workshops and projects by working with professionals in that field.**

From my observations, children were more engaged in projects that used at least two arts disciplines (e.g. music and dance) as it gave more opportunities for children with different skills and aptitudes to succeed and grow.

### **Recommendation 6**

**That orchestras look at more ways to engage the youngest of children and their families in their work.**

The example of the Godchildren project in Helsinki shows an interesting way for orchestras to truly start children on a lifetime engagement with music in a rounded way. Rather than just performing concerts for this age range, orchestras need to look at deeper ways to engage with the children and their families.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1

#### Itinerary

##### Stage 1: Helsinki, Finland

<b>Day 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourist day visiting attractions in Helsinki.</li></ul>
<b>Day 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observing Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra workshop and rehearsals for school project.</li><li>• Meeting with Jon Deak of the New York Philharmonic and Riitta Tikkanen of the Sibelius Academy on their Very Young Composers project.</li></ul>
<b>Day 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra final rehearsals and performance of school project involving 200 children and the 140-strong orchestra.</li><li>• Discussions with HPO administration staff about their work.</li><li>• Observation of Pieni Alkusoitti (a small overture) foyer performances by children from local schools.</li></ul>
<b>Day 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interview with Jon Deak on Very Young Composers project and how they are now collaborating with multi-arts including dance.</li><li>• Presentation given by myself at a Heads of Orchestra Education conference about the work we do at RSNO.</li><li>• Meet other orchestra Heads of Education from Poland, Iceland, Norway and Denmark.</li><li>• Discussion around the Kummilastani programme (The Godchild programme).</li></ul>
<b>Day 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final day of conference. Listen to presentations by Iceland, Poland, Norway and Denmark.</li><li>• Meet Finnish National Opera education team. Visit to school project and observation of end of project performance. Interviews with school staff about impact.</li></ul>
<b>Day 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visit to the East Helsinki Music school – interviews with staff and pupils.</li><li>• Further discussion and tour of HPO Administration offices.</li></ul>
<b>Day 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourist day visitor neighbouring Tallinn, Estonia.</li></ul>
<b>Day 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visit to the Sibelius Academy. Discussions with staff and students there about music teacher training. Observation of activities for music teaching students.</li></ul>

##### Stage 2: Berlin, Germany

<b>Day 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussions with Education team from Berlin Philharmonic. Introduction to their Music Plus... project.</li><li>• Observation of workshop with local primary school - project is Music Plus Biology.</li></ul>
<b>Day 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussions with musicians at the Berlin Philharmonic about their roles within the education team.</li><li>• Observation of family concert – multi-disciplinary. Performance is entitled Toy Box.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussions with musicians about the use of artists from other genres and art forms engaging in creating orchestra concerts.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final rehearsal for Die Spinne (The Spider) school project performance. Shadow tech team.</li> <li>• Interview teacher from school involved in project about the impact on her teaching and her pupil's learning.</li> <li>• Attend Vokalhelden (vocal Heroes) project in disadvantaged area of the city.</li> <li>• Discussions with project leaders about how the project is administered and funded.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day at Universitat Dee Kunste Berlin (university of the arts).</li> <li>• Discussions had around teacher training, the junior music school, the boys choir of the Cathedral of Berlin, and Olafur Eliasson's project looking at new ways to teach the arts to young people.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Die Spinne multi-disciplinary rehearsals and performance</li> <li>• Interviews with students and parents/carers of participants.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourist day visiting attractions in Berlin</li> <li>• Attend a second vokalhelden project in the evening in East Berlin.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourist day visiting attractions in Berlin</li> </ul>

### Stage 3: The Hague and Amsterdam, The Netherlands

<b>Day 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourist day visiting attractions in Amsterdam.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to the International School of The Hague (ISH). Observation of junior classes and orchestra rehearsal.</li> <li>• Visit to Het Haags Symfonie Orkest Euterpe, an amateur adult orchestra. Discussion with participants about their setup and their views on music education.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to Willem de Zwijger elementary school to attend a dance workshop run by Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT). Discussion with school staff about the impact of the project.</li> <li>• Visit to NDT Headquarters to interview the Head of Education about their upcoming venue move to be alongside Residente Orkest, and how music features in their work.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day spent at Het Concertgebouw in Amsterdam.</li> <li>• Observation of two chamber family concerts by Amsterdam Sinfonietta.</li> <li>• Meeting with education team of Het Concertgebouw and discussions about orchestral programmes and programming.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with Head of Theory at Kininklijk Conservatorium (Royal Conservatoire of The Hague).</li> <li>• Tour of the conservatoire.</li> <li>• Observations of senior students music classes at ISH.</li> <li>• Interviews with senior students at ISH.</li> <li>• Observation of choir at ISH.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with staff of The Young Talent Programme at the conservatoire.</li> <li>• Observation of classes in music and dance.</li> <li>• Observation of end of term performances.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourist day visiting attractions in The Hague.</li> </ul>

**Stage 4: Vienna, Austria**

<b>Day 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourist day visiting attractions in Vienna</li></ul>
<b>Day 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visit to Musikverein and meeting with the education manager.</li></ul>
<b>Day 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Day spent with Musik und Kunst Privatuniversitat der Stadt Wien</li><li>• Meetings with dance and music staff.</li><li>• Observation of dance and music classes.</li></ul>
<b>Day 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attend schools' performance of The Pianist of Willesden Lane at Musikverein.</li><li>• Tour of Staatsoper Vienna and meeting with education manager about projects with Vienna Philharmonic.</li></ul>
<b>Day 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Day spent with University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna.</li><li>• Meeting with staff from various departments to discuss approaches to learning and music education.</li><li>• Observation of junior music lessons.</li></ul>
<b>Day 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visit to Vienna Symphoniker and discussion around their programme.</li><li>• Afternoon with school discussing their engagement with orchestras.</li><li>• Performance in evening at Volksoper.</li></ul>
<b>Day 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourist day visiting attractions in Vienna</li></ul>

## Appendix 2

### Index of organisations visited

Name of organisation/project	City	Website
Amsterdam Sinfonietta	Amsterdam	<a href="http://sinfonietta.nl/">http://sinfonietta.nl/</a>
Berliner Philharmoniker	Berlin	<a href="https://www.berliner-philharmoniker.de/">https://www.berliner-philharmoniker.de/</a>
East Helsinki Music School	Helsinki	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7M2s0343Dxc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7M2s0343Dxc</a>
Finnish National Opera	Helsinki	<a href="http://oopperabaletti.fi/en/">http://oopperabaletti.fi/en/</a>
Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra	Helsinki	<a href="http://helsinginkaupunginorkesteri.fi/en">http://helsinginkaupunginorkesteri.fi/en</a>
Het Concertgebouw	Amsterdam	<a href="https://www.concertgebouw.nl/en/">https://www.concertgebouw.nl/en/</a>
Musik Schule Wien	Vienna	<a href="http://www.viennamusicsschool.at/">http://www.viennamusicsschool.at/</a>
Musik und Kunst Privatuniversität der Stadt Wien	Vienna	<a href="http://www.muk.ac.at/home.html">http://www.muk.ac.at/home.html</a>
Musikverein	Vienna	<a href="https://www.musikverein.at/">https://www.musikverein.at/</a>
Nederlands Dans Theater	The Hague	<a href="https://www.ndt.nl/en/home.html">https://www.ndt.nl/en/home.html</a>
Residentie Orkest	The Hague	<a href="https://www.residentieorkest.nl/en/">https://www.residentieorkest.nl/en/</a>
Royal Conservatoire of The Hague	The Hague	<a href="https://www.koncon.nl/en/">https://www.koncon.nl/en/</a>
Sibelius Academy	Helsinki	<a href="http://www.uniarts.fi/en/siba">http://www.uniarts.fi/en/siba</a>
Universität Der Künste	Berlin	<a href="https://www.udk-berlin.de/en/home/">https://www.udk-berlin.de/en/home/</a>
University of Music and Performing Arts	Vienna	<a href="https://www.mdw.ac.at/">https://www.mdw.ac.at/</a>
Vienna Philharmonic	Vienna	<a href="https://www.wienerphilharmoniker.at/en">https://www.wienerphilharmoniker.at/en</a>
Vienna Staatsoper	Vienna	<a href="https://www.wiener-staatsoper.at/">https://www.wiener-staatsoper.at/</a>
Vienna Symphony	Vienna	<a href="https://www.wienersymphoniker.at/en">https://www.wienersymphoniker.at/en</a>
Vokalhelden	Berlin	<a href="https://www.berliner-philharmoniker.de/en/education/projects/vocal-heroes/">https://www.berliner-philharmoniker.de/en/education/projects/vocal-heroes/</a>
Young Talent Programme	The Hague	<a href="https://www.koncon.nl/en/programmes/school-for-young-talent/school-for-young-talent/school-for-young-talent">https://www.koncon.nl/en/programmes/school-for-young-talent/school-for-young-talent/school-for-young-talent</a>

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