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CHAMPIONING
VOLUNTARY MUSIC

Concert Promoters' Committee *NEWSLETTER* Autumn 2006

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- We present two more case studies from the Promoting Societies' Development Project
- Micaela Schmitz comments on the Live Music Now project - and the Editor asks for comments
- Sue Hudson gives information about the day of your concerts
- Howard Greenwood provides a profile of Richmond Concert Society
(Please send your own society profile in 600 words to b.ranby@makingmusic.org.uk)

CONCERT PROMOTERS' AGM

Shirley Mitchell retired as Secretary by rotation. She has been replaced by Rosemary Allen. Since Rosemary was previously a committee member this has created a committee vacancy for which we had no nominations. Looking ahead, our Treasurer retires next year and the Chairman and the Network Co-ordinator the following year. **So we really need some new blood!** If anyone is interested to learn more about our activities please get in touch with Berkeley Ranby - contact information on the back page.

The Chairman's report covered the calendar year 2005. The Committee has continued to monitor its work around a Three Year Development Plan, now in its second year.

Analysis of the Network for 2004-2005 season showed over 91 bookings and savings of £30,000 to our members.

Each member of the committee attended a non-western-classical event as a learning experience.

The Network brochure was produced 'in-house' by Mike Alexander rather than, as in the previous year, via an external designer. The same high standard of design and production was maintained and we are ensuring that this can be continued in future years. Previously the brochure only went to MM Reps but we have now obtained Concert Organisers' addresses and they are sent their own copy plus additional ones if requested. The brochure now contains more information about the artists' educational work and their contemporary music contributions.

We have set up a panel of Listeners. When an artist applies for the Network scheme, we ask them to tell us about their forthcoming concerts and try to send a Listener if we do not know of the artist already.

A web site has been launched, www.makingmusic.org.uk/cpc and two newsletters produced by a new editor.

The Committee continues to be self-funding and produce a profit (based on the adverts in the Network brochure).

CPN BROCHURE

Don't forget that the price of an artist comes down when more members make bookings. If you cannot afford the single concert fee, tell the agent to call you when the price comes down to £X. And when you sign a contract, agree the fee to be: *'as determined by the number of bookings through the Concert Promoters' Network brochure'*

Sorry for the typo on p3, 6th bullet! The booking season is **September 2007 - August 2008** as on the cover. No prizes for spotting the other typo (s).....

Neil Chaffey's address and telephone number have changed since the brochure. Telephone is now: 01462 451 863 but his email is still the same

Selected artist, clarinet soloist Kevin John Hurst announces that his pianist John Lenehan has withdrawn from the scheme due to pressures of other work. His pianists are now listed on his web: www.kevinjohnhurst.com

Order extra brochures from
Mike Alexander
7 Church Lane,
Ticknall, Derby DE73 7JU
Tel: 01332 862549
cpn@makingmusic.org.uk

Education Workshops - Case Studies from the Promoting Societies' Development Project

Developing education initiatives does not have to be an arduous task. **We hope to be able to provide more advice if you will all fill in the enclosed questionnaire please.** It is always worth discussing potential projects with visiting and local musicians and educators. And try investigating local venues and find out if future events might provide some thematic inspiration!

Birmingham CMS

Birmingham Chamber Music Society wished to develop an education-based project to work with young people in developing compositional skills while extending their audience. Through meetings with Birmingham Music Service and Birmingham Conservatoire Junior Department, a project formed around a local open-air exhibition by Yann Arthus-Bertrand, entitled *Earth from the Air*.

Eighteen young musicians aged 14-17 from the Birmingham area took part in the project. Five creative composition sessions took place between November 2004 and May 2005, led by composer Liz Johnson, in which each group devised, wrote and performed music based on photographs at the exhibition.

Students were initially asked to select a photograph from the exhibition and discuss the photograph with colleagues. Groups then worked on ways of translating those features into musical form involving only their own instruments. This process led to focused group improvisation and open composition, which was new to most students. Students were encouraged to rely on and develop their innate musical and listening skills while performing as chamber ensembles, and therefore without a conductor. The performance was recorded onto CD and distributed to the participants.

As a result of the project:

- 100% of the participants noted that their confidence as composers and performers had improved as a result of the project.
- The creative project idea was attractive to local trusts. Applications were highly successful, raising over £2,300 for the project.
- A CD was produced that can be used in future project developments
- Participants and new audience members have made further contact with BCMS.

Plymouth Jazz Club

Plymouth Jazz Club aims to bring jazz in all its forms to the West Country. Although the bulk of the Society's membership prefers Traditional & New Orleans jazz, the Society decided to investigate their networks to increase its capacity for audiences across a broader spectrum through facilitating a joint education workshop and contemporary jazz concert.

Saxophonist Tony Kofi was contacted to discuss a concert and workshop ideas. Initial contact was made with the Plymouth Arts Development Officer and Plymouth Music Action Zone (PMAZ). Discussions with PMAZ revealed that they offer excellent resources along with a recording studio, large venue capacity and excellent media and school contacts. PMAZ offered to design and print flyers, contact schools and promote the entire event to local radio. In addition, they agreed to host the education workshop and provide necessary backline for the evening performance.

The project took place on Sunday 5 June 2005. Tony Kofi and his group led an afternoon improvisation workshop for 20 students aged 13 - 18. The 5 tutors introduced the students to a Thelonius Monk Blues entitled Blue Monk, demonstrating various improvisation techniques including rhythmic phrasing and scale choices. Fourteen of the students performed Blue Monk that night onstage with the Kofi Quintet, in front of a packed audience. The event received excellent media coverage in local newspapers and radio and provided a steep learning curve for the Society.

If your society is considering running an education event, it may be worth investigating other organisations in your area. Youth Music has a range of outreach centres, or "Music Action Zones" around England. Such centres can provide excellent partnership opportunities. www.youthmusic.org.uk/Action_Zones.jsp

Live Music Now- Progress or Regress?

There have been gargantuan efforts to contact and persuade member societies to take advantage of the scheme throughout the Midlands as well as Scotland. (See *Spring Newsletter for a description of the scheme - Ed*).

I understand that there was difficulty fitting the programme into just the 2006-07 season, but the project has been extended to allow 2007-08 concerts - at least the autumn of 2007. Also, one group wanted only the Sacconi Quartet, but the group were finishing the scheme with the final bookings here.

Despite the difficulties we have confirmed four definite bookings:

- Hinckley Music Club - Nicola Phillips (flute) & Deian Rowlands (harp)
- Matlock Music Society - Duo Manoso (flute & guitar)
- Music in Lyddington - Eleanor Turner (harp)
- Abbotsholme Arts Society - Sacconi Quartet

We have three further who are interested and awaiting scheduling, and these are:

- Glossop Concert Society
- Music at Duffield
- Stratford Music Festival.

Some eleven further groups are awaiting committee decisions to go ahead with the project, so we won't name those.

Of the remaining five targeted as likely candidates, five were not interested.

Of course all societies had a letter, so it was open to them, but the bulk never responded.

I hate to sound like doom and gloom but we have some challenges. Which of these three statements is true, and to what extent:

- We are providing things that groups are not interested in.
- We are contacting them too much about

things that do not interest them. (I have heard this at surgeries)

- We have representatives who are not all reliable in communicating.

Live Music Now is viewed as an outside organisation that is using our network to advertise. (Marie Curie has more obvious support from Central Office at the moment).

People need better manners; it's part of a culture that does not acknowledge job applications or respond to invitations to dinner.

I believe that communication is the real problem. We cannot be allies if we aren't talking to the right people, and if we talked to them more, they'd respond better the next time!

Micaela Schmitz

Making Music Contact for Live Music Now

Ed: There's the challenge! Please send any thoughts on this topic to the Editor. For contact details please see back page.

When do you hold your concerts?

Sue Hudson, our Committee Treasurer, recently started to analyse the brochures that you have sent in. Looking at about 100 brochures, she found that over half the concerts take place on days other than Saturdays. The percentage split between the days of the week was:

Monday	6
Tuesday	5
Wednesday	6
Thursday	14
Friday	11
Saturday	43
Sunday	16

This is just as well, otherwise it would be difficult to arrange 'Tours'. Do you know which day of the week your neighbouring societies use?

Richmond Concert Society: A Dream Realised

Forty five years ago the Richmond Concert Society was formed despite a great deal of opposition from various quarters. Why create a concert society so close to London, a matter of twenty minutes away by train, when one could go to the South Bank and the Wigmore Hall? The arguments were convincing but youthful enthusiasm or sheer pig-headedness won the day and the Society was formed. Looking back forty five years later the early struggles were worthwhile as the Society continues to bring much enjoyment to increasing audiences.

Last May, at the final concert of the 2005-6 Season, the Belcea String Quartet were given a standing ovation by the audience of about 470 who heard this great quartet. At a time when one reads of falling membership and audiences at other concert societies in the UK, why does the Richmond Concert Society succeed in attracting increased membership each season, and, at the same time increase non member audience as well? There is no easy answer so all I can do in this short article is to say what we do and how we do it in the hope that some of my comments may be of help to fellow societies.

To start with the obvious -choice of artists is of paramount importance and as space precludes me going into detail I would direct you to our website:- www.richmondconcerts.co.uk which gives full details of the ten concerts we are presenting between September and May 2007. We receive no financial help from the local authority unlike more fortunate societies, indeed, we receive no funding from various charities that exist. We are dependent on the subscriptions from a large membership (510 members last year) and the fact that each concert is sponsored. I have found that if you produce a high quality product you can attract sponsors as long as you are not too greedy. For the new season I needed to find two new sponsors. This took two days to find and then another company contacted me and the only event left was the AGM - as this also includes a short concert he accepted it with alacrity!

Each season we need to watch the membership level carefully so that we can avoid attracting audiences without room to seat them. One of the attractions of the RCS (so I am informed) is the informative programme notes which are provided with every concert. These take hours to prepare but the effort is well worth while. The notes, covering eight pages, are enclosed in an attractive cover and altogether I have written over two thousand notes over the past forty five years.

Providing concerts is only one part of the service we should provide. At the RCS we have built up a strong social side. At each concert we provide wine or fruit juice, at no specified cost but ask for donations. The amount we receive this way far exceeds what we would have received had we charged for this refreshment and we avoid having to obtain a licence. The fairly long interval of say thirty minutes also allows members to browse around a CD counter we provide which sells CD's and DVD's of operas at a substantial discount.

I have not mentioned what it costs to belong to the Society - we have always sought to set the subscription at a reasonable level, which is of course subsidised by the sponsors. The fact that the subscription is set at £35 for the whole season makes it very good value and we maintain a subscription level for at least three seasons. This attracts the large and appreciative audience and the proof of this philosophy lies in the fact that we make a small profit each season, and, as we pay the going rate for our artists, why should we increase it?

Near London we certainly are, but the Richmond Concert Society continues to grow season by season and I am optimistic that this will continue. We are living at a time when the demand for chamber music is on the increase and we must respond to this need.

Howard Greenwood

Founder Member and Director of Music:
Richmond Concert Society.

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Articles may not necessarily represent the policy or views of Making Music

EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CONCERT PROMOTERS

The Making Music Concert Promoters' Committee is interested to find out how it can best serve the interests of promoting societies who wish to undertake educational work. For ease of reply, tick boxes have been used but do feel free to make full use of the space for comments, or add page(s). By 'educational work', we mean organising or promoting events, either in or out of the school system, that specifically involve young people.

Q 1 Does your society engage in educational work:

a) annually

b) occasionally

c) rarely

d) never

Comments

.....

Q 2 How many educational events has your society run in the last five years:

a) on your own(insert number)

b) with help from Making Music officers(insert number)

c) with help from other sources(insert number)

d) none

Comments

.....

If your answers to Q1 and /or Q2 are none or never, go straight to Q14

Q 3 What type of events have you run (tick all those that apply):

a) workshops by professional musicians

b) teach-ins related to your concerts

c) talks to pupils by society members.

d) composition/performance by pupils (delete inapplicable)

e) other

(please describe):

Comments

.....

Q 4 Where did the event(s) that you ran take place:

a) at a school/college

b) at your society concert venue

c) elsewhere

(please describe):.....

Comments

.....

Q 5 What type of school and age group did you work with: (tick all those that apply)

a) primary ages to(insert numbers)

b) secondary ages to(insert numbers)

c) no school involvement ages to(insert numbers)

d) other ages to(insert numbers)

(please describe):.....

Comments

.....

Q 6 If your event took place in a school or college, how did it fit in with their activities:

a) included within school activity

b) held as an extra-mural school activity

c) no direct school involvement

Comments

Q 7 Apart from the events themselves, are you aware of any lasting benefit to your society from running them e.g:

- a) an increase in attendance at your concerts
- b) an ongoing liaison with school/college/organisation
- c) increased recognition by local media/community
- d) other

(please describe):.....

Comments

Q 8 What was the average cost to your society of running an educational event;

- a) £0 to £100
- b) £101-£500
- c) over £500

Comments

Q 9 Did any of the following provide: encouragement finance

- a) Local Educational Authority
- b) Local Council/Borough
- c) Making Music
- d) other sources

(please describe):.....

Comments

Q 10 Were your members involved in running your event at schools/colleges required to obtain a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure before being permitted to talk to/work with students:

- a) Yes
- b) No

Q 11 If answer in Q6 was yes, was the obtaining of CRB clearance:

- a) straightforward
- b) difficult

Comments

Q 12 What was your experience in running an educational event (tick all those that apply):

- a) it was essential to involve the Head of school
- b) it was necessary to involve one particular member of staff
- c) it was helpful to have advice from Making Music

Comments

Q 13 What advice would you give to a society considering involvement in educational work:

.....

Q 14 If you have not done any educational work, what would encourage you to do some?

.....

Name of Society (optional)

Please return completed questionnaire by 30 November to CPC Questionnaire, Making Music, 2-4 Great Eastern Street London EC2A 3NW.