**PRS New Music Biennial 2017 – Composer Residency**

The PRS New Music Biennial Composer Residency project is an embedded community participation project in Hull, running from January 2017-March 2018, part of the UK City of Culture programme. Multiple award winning composer BRIAN IRVINE is one of five composers undertaking residencies, working in Hull, so that local communities can spend time and create music with some of the New Music Biennial’s brilliant music creators.

Each residency will lead to the creation of music involving community participants, which will be showcased in a sharing event at Hull City Hall on 24 June, and extracts from the resulting work will be presented as part of the PRS New Music Biennial Festival weekend (2 July) woven together into a large-scale culmination piece, bringing together community participants and musicians from all five residencies for a ‘supergroup’ moment.

The residencies form an important part of Hull UK City of Culture 2017, and involvement offers an opportunity to be creatively involved in Hull2017.

**Proposal for Mersey Primary School Workshops**

**Introduction**

Music and culture have the power to bring us together, inspire us, and teach us about world around us and also ourselves. Through working with people who have recently come to Hull, exploring the themes of music which sustains us through hardship, and creating music with groups in the community and school children we will strive to help deepen understanding of how music can sustain us and the myriad strands of stories, song and culture weaving themselves together into the life and breath of Hull today.

**Proposal**

We would like to propose a series of creative learning workshops with Mersey Primary School as part of the PRS New Music Biennial Composer Residency, led by award winning composer Brian Irvine, with the support of university students and supporting musicians.

Brian will work in the community with a range of people in an area centred around East Hull, to create new material. Brian is going to work with older people in Buckingham Day Centre, with residents of Pickering and Ferens Homes who will form the Big Elastic Band, and with formerly homeless people who are residents at The Crossings and Emmaus projects. This work will take place concurrently with work with pupils at Mersey Primary.

It is proposed to work with up to 4 classes in school. Each school pupil involved will have a chance to create new music together.

The residency has two post graduate music students who will also be involved in supporting the delivery of some sessions in school.

Recordings of music created in the residency will be made, for sharing purposes, and extracts of performances of material may be submitted to be included in the next pack of Sound and Music’s ‘Minute of Listening’ application.

We are exploring the possibility of working with a documentary film maker to help build resource material alongside our field recordings – subject to budget. Some filming of the residency will take place.

**The Workshop Programme**

Each workshop session led by Brian is fundamentally about developing composition and singing performance skills in young people in a hugely fun and hands on manner.

Each session ends in an informal performance of a piece that the children have written themselves. This performance should be in front of a small audience of teachers and perhaps another class.

Work will involve the writing of lyrics and words as well as the composing of melodic, harmonic and rhythmic motifs

Work will involve the invention and performance of movement based ideas.

Work will also include opportunities for drawing and musical character invention

Brian would like to work with a class group of up to 30 children aged 7-11yrs.

It is envisaged that the project would be delivered across 4 half days

Proposed to offer 4 half day blocks of time (to be coordinated by project manager, Clare Drury) these could be delivered either on

Thursday mornings: 2 March, 6 April, 4 May, 25 May,

Or Friday afternoons, 3 March, 7 April, 5 May, 26 May

Session outline:

Each class would be given a half day of Brian’s time, made up of 2 x 45 mins sessions, preferably back to back. That way the work will begin and end on the same day and would allow for an informal showing of the music created directly after the 2 sessions.

Afternoon sessions might be good so parents and teachers can see the work at the end of the school day. However, we can be flexible about this to suit the needs of the school.

There may be an opportunity to perform some of the work in a presentation and sharing of what’s been created during the full residency programme, on the 24 June.

It is expected that the children in each class will create about 30 minutes of new music themselves under Brian’s guidance.

All works will be recorded at the end of the sessions.

The making, composition and performing of new work by the children is a very organic processes and does not follow any one particular structure. Rather the structure and content of the sessions is determined by the children themselves in real time in association with me.

The process relies on freedom of thought and is an organic process but it produces great work

So over 2 x 45 min the structure of the sessions would be something like:

Session 1

2 minutes introduction

43 minutes making the work

Session 2

35 minutes making the work

10 mins performance

 and audio recording of the work

The sessions are aimed at inspiring young music makers, composers and performers. The sessions demystify composition and equip teachers with a simple but effective methodology to engage in highly creative compositional activity. It is a methodology that is exhilarating, exciting and joyful and places young people at the centre of an imaginative creative process.

Sharing – We plan to celebrate this work in the summer term with a sharing performance at Hull City Hall on Saturday 24 June, of a selection of material we have generated with a performance by all participants of this residency, and the other residencies across Hull. There may be an opportunity for pupils from Mersey Primary to contribute to this sharing day.

Final performance. There are five composer residencies for the New Music Biennial (NMB), including Brian Irvine. Selected participants who have been working with the artists will be invited to present an excerpt of their work as part of a large public performance involving all 5 residency groups. This will be held on Sunday 2nd July. The composer James Redwood will be leading this concert and bringing the pieces together into one whole ‘supergroup’ moment.

**Commitment required from the school**

This is a free offer to the school, funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, however, there would be a commitment required from the school as follows.

A clear space in the timetable on the dates above including performance

Sufficient staff to manage the number of pupils involved

Provision of a space with a piano or keyboard

Provision of paper and drawing materials

A large whiteboard or flip chart with markers

Co-ordination and supervision of pupils involved in performances (including safeguarding children outside of school premises, and securing parental permissions as necessary etc).

Teachers should be actively involved and see this as CPD

A good sized, clear room or hall

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