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# Newsletter no. 15

## August 2023

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This year has been so action-packed for M4M that this is the first time since January that we've been able to sit right down and write ourselves a newsletter, so this one is a bit longer than usual.



Our focus this year has been on all things orchestral, giving our young musicians an immersive experience of playing in and listening to orchestras and orchestral repertoire, music as a way of developing social skills and structures, communication, and opening the doors to the treasury of our shared cultural heritage. Having launched our [Complete Beginners' Symphony Orchestra](#) scheme in Todmorden C of E School and Beech Hill School in Halifax, we have also started on a three-year [orchestral project](#) in collaboration with Todmorden Orchestra, funded through Calderdale Cultural Fund. The aim of the project is to increase opportunities for engagement and participation in orchestral music

by our young people and families.

In the snowy days of **January** we kicked off the orchestra project as children at Shade and Ferney Lee schools took part in workshops exploring pieces by Mussorgsky, Vivaldi, Sibelius, Copland and Bach, responding in visual art, storytelling and dance, all contributing to Todmorden Orchestra's family concert. Some of our instrumental pupils took the opportunity to play their instruments in the orchestra, alongside the adult players joining in with Bach's Toccata in D Minor and Copland's Hoedown. For the grand finale, the Bollywood hit Chaiya Chaiya, the orchestra was graced with the bhangra beat of our tabla pupils and the singing and dancing of our primary school groups. For many of our families it was their first time at an orchestral concert and the atmosphere was celebration.

The following week was our first fundraising concert of 2023 at Fielden Hall where the wonderful new cello quartet, *Celloship of the String*, gave a fascinatingly varied programme, showing the breadth and depth of cello playing. The group was joined on stage by 8 of our cello pupils for a sumptuous rendition of [Pachelbel's Canon in D](#), all to a packed audience of families and friends. Our friends from *Jiggerie Folkerie* played a colourful support spot of traditional dance music which won the hearts of one and all.





**February** had us all whistling Harry Styles' dangerously catchy song, *As it Was*, as it was one of the pieces our pupils practiced to play in the fundraising concert with [Beware of Trains](#). It was a super evening of charming songs, old and new from this irresistible cabaret duo of Marie Claire Breen and Leighton Jones, augmented by the M4M mini orchestra, with a lovely support set from Todmorden singer songwriter, *Rebecca Little*.



In **March** the children in year 5 at Ferney Lee worked on songwriting with comedy performer and brilliant musician, [Kirsty Newton](#) who fired their imagination and shared her art with them, inviting them to perform with her in her M4M fundraising concert. This event was an evening for all to join in with Kirsty's fabulous singalong of popular requests. Mums, dads, grannies, grandads, friends and neighbours raised the roof with raucous Abba, Beatles and Bowie, fuelled by our customary homemade cakes.

**April** coincided with Ramadan, when our youth nasheed group at *Todmorden Hamza Mosque* practiced every Thursday evening, learning beautiful traditional and contemporary Islamic hymns in English, Bengali, Urdu and Arabic. The guests at Todmorden's community iftar were delighted as these young singers' voices echoed around the



Town Hall. Then, in **May** we welcomed professional nasheed singer [Hussnain Hanif](#) as our special guest artist for the annual *M4M Festival of Nasheeds* at Todmorden Community College. Our own mosque group was also joined on that summery Saturday afternoon by children from Feversham Primary Academy, Bradford, and it was very uplifting to see families from all parts of our community joining in with these traditional songs. Finally, for our May fundraising concert, Hussnain Hanif sang duets with his brother Ismail in an evening recital of spiritual gems from the Punjabi Islamic tradition. *The Hanif Brothers* were supported by the [Khan Sisters](#) – two amazing young singers from Bradford, who sing

nasheeds in close harmony. Truly inspirational!

Meanwhile in Halifax our exuberantly ambitious orchestra at Beech Hill School gave their first performance, enchanting and amazing the whole school community with the huge amount of progress they have made



Through the Summer term the choir of Ferney Lee School, led by their wonderful teacher Anna Dumville, worked with Sonya Moorhead to learn, perform and record her new song, a lyrical reflection on the year's cycle, entitled *Begin*. They gave the live premiere of this song in our **June** fundraising concert, along with Sonya's band, *The Greyhounds*.

June also saw a great landmark in the Music for the Many journey, with, at Todmorden High School, the first ever concert by [Todmorden Youth Orchestra](#) – a coming together of many of our instrumental pupils, woodwind, brass and strings, from our four Todmorden schools, assisted by some lovely adult volunteers from Todmorden Orchestra. It included pieces by Vivaldi, Handel, Dvorak, Bizet and Bartok. Highlights included a sumptuous rendition of Faure's Pavane featuring our Tod High brass pupils, a brand new composition by Dexter from Ferney Lee, and a very brave violin solo in Spring from Vivaldi's 4 Seasons played by Lola from St. Joseph's. We were very excited to hear dramatic new electro-acoustic piece about the climate crisis composed and performed by our very special guest group from

Cornholme School led by their fantastic teacher, Mark Williamson. Many of us were moved to tears by the evening's joyous finale celebrating how our music brings us all together in Ode to Joy from Beethoven's 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony.

In **July** as the academic year came to an end our young musicians found more opportunities to perform, surprising visitors at Ferney Lee summer fair with a pop-up orchestra, entertaining proud orchestra parents at Todmorden C of E School and starring in Todmorden High School's summer concert, where, amongst other instrumental delights, our tabla players performed their energetic collaboration with the school's steel pan ensemble.

### Next Academic Year....

The Complete Beginners' Symphony Orchestra model of learning has proven to be a great success in the two schools where we have trialled it this year, with pupils making very quick technical and musical progress, playing in a social context and experiencing a wide range of classical repertoire. So we have decided to use the same model of learning in all our



M4M schools. As well as giving our pupils more time each week making music with their friends, this type of tuition also gives our tutors a chance to work collaboratively and to make sure that each individual learner gets the most

appropriate, targeted individual coaching.

To help develop all this we will be welcoming four excellent new tutors to our team and, thanks to a grant from The Sir George Martin Trust, we will be working with a new administrator to improve our fundraising and outreach and to ensure the most effective running of Music for the Many as our work reaches more children, young people and families.



We will be kicking off next term with a **September** singing project at Todmorden High School. Led by folk music superstar, [Jon Boden](#), we will be using his new system of instant harmony singing, [Colourchord](#), to get the whole school singing in four-part harmony.

The next public event in our *Calderdale Cultural Fund* project with Todmorden Orchestra will be a concert of South Asian Music in **October**.

We are very delighted to say that, in **November** for [Todmorden Book Festival](#), we will be producing a spectacular performance of poetry and music in collaboration with poet [Peter Sansom](#) at Todmorden Hippodrome on 25<sup>th</sup> November.

All of this work and all these opportunities for our children and young people are only really possible because of the generosity of **you**, our supporters. We are always amazed and humbled by the constant efforts of the community and of our fellow musicians near and far in fundraising for Music for the Many, in the form of individual donations of money or of instruments, fundraising concerts, sponsored feats of athletic prowess, etc.

Special thanks go to:

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Brian and Margaret Peters  
Steve and Esther

and all our visiting artists, schools and friends.



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