

# Music Centre News and Views

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## Music *is* for Life! 2010

Children and teachers from Merton Primary Schools and members of Merton Youth Music performed to a capacity audience at this year's Music *is* for Life! concert, which took place on Tuesday 23rd March 2010 at the Fairfield Halls, Croydon. An audience of over 1,000 people listened to enthusiastic performances by 450 young voices that made up the 'Sing Out' 2010 Primary Mass Choir. Primary Schools involved included Bishop Gilpin CE, Garden, Garfield, Joseph Hood, Liberty, Merton Park, Morden, Sacred Heart RC, Singlegate and Wimbledon Chase. Joining the schools on stage was Pete Churchill and members of the London Vocal Project who gave a fabulous vocal performance to the children and then joined the young singers with Pete Churchill's 'Rainbow Nation' and 'We Are The World'. Former Music Centre members Phil Merriman and Ed Babar along with Flavio Li-Vigni gave an inspirational accompaniment to the singers.

In the second half, the Merton Youth Jazz Orchestra and Merton Youth Concert Band showed why the bands of Merton Music Foundation have an international reputation for their excellent music making. MYJO was fronted by three talented vocalists who gave confident performances of some of the great jazz standards whilst MYCB entertained the audience with a rendition of Peter and the Wolf and a vibrant foot tapping performance of 'Michael Jackson: Through the Years'.

## Exciting news for all those people wanting to play recorder- you know who you are!



From September there will be an opportunity for children to play recorders as part of an MMF ensemble starting on Mondays 4.30 – 5.30pm. We will be playing music specifically written for recorders and working on the general musicianship skills needed for ensemble playing. Once this group is established I would like to organize joint ensemble work with the guitars, strings and percussion groups. We are also hoping to hold a Recorder Road show on Monday 22nd November, as part of this year's Wimbledon Music Festival. It will give an opportunity for young recorder players in Merton to perform alongside inspirational professional musicians! If you are interested in joining please email me at [caroline.segolo@mmf.org.uk](mailto:caroline.segolo@mmf.org.uk)

## MYJO reaches the National Festival of Music for Youth

Congratulations to the Merton Youth Jazz Orchestra which has been invited to perform at this year's National Festival of Music for Youth. MYJO will be appearing on Saturday 10th July at the CBSO Centre in Birmingham. This year's invitation follows the group's successful performance at the South Bank as part of the MFY Regional Festival, which took place back in March.

### Important dates for your diaries

**Tuesday 29 June 2010**  
Youth String Ensemble  
with the **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment** at  
Royal Festival Hall,  
Southbank

**Wimbledon Tennis Championships**

**Thursday 1 July 2010**  
Youth Concert Band,

**Friday 2 July 2010**  
Youth Jazz Orchestra,

**Sunday 4 July 2010**  
Gala Concert  
Epsom Playhouse

**Saturday 10 July 2010**  
MYJO at the  
Music for Youth  
National Festival  
CBSO Centre  
Birmingham.



## String Day with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment

The string day in March gave some of our younger string players the experience of playing period instruments and an opportunity to be coached by the OAE players. Throughout the day we worked on 'La Follia' by Geminiani which allowed us to combine all of our string players from the very beginners to the more advanced players. 'La Follia' was performed during the concert and it was a staggering sound, not surprising with eighteen cellos and three basses! Each ensemble also performed their own specific baroque piece having received specialist coaching from the OAE. The players all took part in a baroque dance lesson whilst live music was performed by the OAE players. One of the highlights was a mini concert and a demonstration given by the OAE players. They showed us several period bows and instruments and explained how string instruments have evolved into what we play today.

The next thing that we have to look forward to is a composition project which is ideal for any GCSE or A level music students. As part of the OAE's flagship project 'A Celebration of Life on Earth' our senior string ensemble will be taking inspiration from Haydn's Creation and help to compose and perform part of a song cycle at the Southbank Centre.

If you are an aspiring player of any orchestral string instrument to Grade 5 standard or above, Merton Youth String Ensemble wants to hear from you. Rehearsals take place from 7.30pm - 9.30pm each Monday evening in term time at the Chaucer Centre, Canterbury Road, Morden, Surrey SM4 6PX. To join, come along to a rehearsal on a Monday evening - new members are always welcome.

### More important dates for your diaries

**Sat June 19th**

**Youth Brass Ensemble and Chaucer Band are playing at St Mary's Church Fete**

**Music Centre Half Term**

**31 May**

**2 June**

**5 June**

**Term end.**

**Do check with individual tutors for final lesson dates.**

**Remember to visit the MMF Website to have all the latest information about MMF activities**

**Music is for Life 2010 Souvenir DVD**

Professionally recorded for DVD using a multi-camera set-up.

Available to order via website or collect an order form from the admin office.

### Hands On Day

On Saturdays throughout the term the Chaucer Centre resounds to the music of experienced players as the bands and orchestras are put through their paces. However twice a year MMF opens the doors to people who have never played a musical instrument and invites them in to have a go to see if they might like to start learning to play. On 24<sup>th</sup> April over 150 people visited the centre and tried out all the orchestral instruments plus listened to percussion demonstrations during the afternoon. Many of the children on this occasion had just recently sung at the Fairfield Hall as part of the Music *is* For Life! concert and heard the band play, and were now wanting to see which instrument they might like to learn. If you would like to help demonstrate your instrument and share your enthusiasm, why not ask if you can help out at the next Hands On Day in the Autumn Term.

### Strictly Series

The latest venture for MMF is our new "Strictly" series which started this term with "Strictly Oboes" and is planning "Strictly Trombones" for the Autumn term. This is a cheap and effective way of trying out an instrument for a term to see if you are suited to it. Places are limited by the number of instruments available and it was with some tentative first steps that ten children signed up to learn the oboe and began squeaking their first reed on the 24<sup>th</sup> April. Now two lessons into the term they have already learnt seven notes. Tutor Sara Grint is really impressed with their progress. She said "When I started the oboe it took me two weeks to get a sound out!! To be playing tunes and duets already is amazing". The students and their parents are equally enthusiastic describing the lessons as "really good fun" and "cool". I wonder what their neighbours think!!

If you would like to be considered for the trombone lessons, have a word with Norma or email her at [norma.whitson@mmf.org.uk](mailto:norma.whitson@mmf.org.uk). Keep an eye on the MMF notice boards to see which instruments come up in the future.

### Peter Woodings in Memoriam Concert

The Peter Woodings 'In Memoriam' Concert was a tremendous success. This was most definitely a very special evening, which will be remembered for many years to come. Many alumni members of the Music Centre returned to pay tribute to Peter by being present at this celebration of Peter's work within the Merton Music Foundation. Janek Gwizdala, a professional Bass Guitarist now living in the USA, sent a very personal tribute thanking Peter for being his mentor and inspiring him to become a musician.

MMF's two guitar groups performed some of the pieces they have recently recorded for the 'In Memoriam CD'. Some of the alumni members of the guitar ensembles returned to produce their own set of pieces. Then the three guitar groups combined at one stage to make a huge guitar orchestra, to perform a number of Peter's arrangements,

With the Auction and the money raised from tickets and CD sales the grand total raised at the event was £2,413.00, a large sum to be added to the new fund for young guitarists to be launched soon.