

TOP UK ORCHESTRA TAKES UP RESIDENCY IN LONDON COMPREHENSIVE TO SUPPORT AND BOOST YOUNG PEOPLE'S CREATIVITY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (OAE), one of the UK's leading period instrument ensembles since its formation in 1986, is to move into a comprehensive school in Camden, North London later this month. The residency – a first for a British orchestra – will allow the OAE's musicians to live, work and play amongst the students of the school. The move has been made possible with a leadership grant of £120,000 from The Linbury Trust, one of the Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts. Their support is facilitating the move to the school and underwriting the first three years of education work.

For the foreseeable future the OAE, its musicians and staff, will be based at Acland Burghley comprehensive school in Camden. Three offices will be adapted for the administration team, alongside a recording studio and library. The Grade II listed school assembly hall will be used as a rehearsal space, with plans to refurbish it under the school's '*A Theatre for All*' project, so for the first time, all elements of the OAE will be in the same place: players, staff and library.

Crispin Woodhead, OAE chief executive who came up with the idea of a new partnership, explains: "Our accommodation at Kings Place [in Kings Cross] was coming to an agreed end and we needed to find a new home. I felt that we should not be trying to get a conventional office space solution. We already had a strong relationship with many schools in Camden through our education programme and our appeal hit the desk of Kat Miller, director of operations at Acland Burghley School. She was working on ways to expand the school's revenue from its resources and recognised that their excellent school hall might be somewhere we could rehearse. We were also inspired by one of their students who shared his story about King Midas, and it was impossible to resist his unspoilt enthusiasm for this magic tale and the Arts. It felt like a thunderbolt and meant we wanted to find a way for this place to be our home, and embark on this new adventure to challenge and transform the way we engage with young adults."

Nicholas John, Acland Burghley Headteacher, confirms: "This partnership is much broader than simply music education. Its reach will be measurable in other areas including physics and mathematics, and supports our new school mission '*Creating Excellence Together*'. The orchestra will very much be a part of the everyday school community, where students will be offered workshops and assemblies. This is a fantastic way to utilise our amazing facilities, alongside a diverse, unique artistic opportunity that inspires creativity across the curriculum."

Emily Stubbs, OAE's Development Director, said: "We are delighted to have a transformational grant from the Linbury Trust as well as generous donations from Adrian Frost, Selina and David Marks, The Margaret and Richard Merrell Foundation and Martin and Elise Smith to support this exciting new partnership. Without their enlightened support we would not have been able to embark on this exciting new chapter in the OAE's history."

Imogen Overli, OAE Chair, confirmed: "We are so pleased to bring a rare good news story in the Arts: OAE musicians continuing to blaze an extraordinary trail. The commitment shown by OAE staff, players, donors and Board to this project has been outstanding, and we are confident that this new partnership will be a huge boost both to the Arts and to Education. I would particularly like to thank the Linbury Trust and other donors, without whose support this extraordinary project would not be underway. We are looking forward very much to bringing the school and musical communities together, to achieve great and unforeseen things."

The school won't just be OAE's landlord or physical home. Instead it will offer the opportunity to build on twenty years of work in the borough through OAE's long-standing partnership with Camden Music. Having already worked in eighteen of the local primary schools that feed into ABS, the plans moving forward are to support music and arts across the school into the wider community. This new move underpins the OAE's core 'enlightenment' mission of reaching as wide an audience as possible.

Cllr Angela Mason, Cabinet Member for Best Start for Children and Families, said: "We are delighted to be supporting an initiative which builds on the excellent music education we have here in Camden. This partnership is a fantastic opportunity for the school to work with a leading orchestra, which I'm sure will inspire many pupils to get involved and learn more about classical music. I'm looking forward to what's to come."

A similar project was undertaken in 2015 in Bremen, Germany. The Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie moved into a local comprehensive school in a deprived area and the results were described as "transformational", with improved academic performance, language skills, mental health and IQ scores; reputational benefits; greater interest in and engagement with music among pupils; strengthened links between school, orchestra and community; and even, according to some of the musicians who took part, an improvement in the Kammerphilharmonie's playing.

Margaret Faultless, OAE leader and violinist, said: "As classical musicians, it can often feel as though we exist in a bubble. I think I can speak for the whole Orchestra when I say that we're all looking forward to this new adventure. We are all used to meeting with people from outside the classical music world of course, but the value of our new project lies in the long-term work we'll be doing at the school and the relationship that will hopefully develop between the students, their parents and teachers and the orchestra."

“The members of the Bremen Kammerphilharmonie said their experience actually improved them as an orchestra and I think the same will happen to us over the next five or so years, and it will remind all of us of the reasons we make music, which are sometimes easy to forget, especially in our strange and troubled times.” continues Margaret. “I am certainly looking forward to learning from the young people at Acland Burghley and in turn introducing them to the joys of our music and music-making. We will be working closely with students on developing our digital plans including the newly launched OAE Player so it really will be a true partnership between us all.”

For further press information, interviews with key individuals including Nicholas John, Acland Burghley Headteacher; Crispin Woodhead, CEO of OAE contact: Emma Carboni emma@eyepr.co.uk Mble: 07710774531 or Kerry Milliken kerry@eyepr.co.uk Mble: 07799714006

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (OAE) More than three decades ago, a group of London musicians took a good look at that curious institution we call the Orchestra, and decided to start again from scratch. They began by throwing out the rulebook. Put a single conductor in charge? No way. Specialise in repertoire of a particular era? Too restricting. Perfect a work and then move on? Too lazy. The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment was born. Since then, the OAE has shocked, changed and mesmerised the music world. Residencies at the Southbank Centre and Glyndebourne haven't numbed its experimentalist bent. Record deals haven't ironed out its quirks. Period-specific instruments have become just one element of its quest for authenticity. Today the OAE is cherished more than ever. It still pushes for change, and still stands for excellence, diversity and exploration. Thirty years on, there's still no orchestra in the world quite like it.

Acland Burghley Comprehensive School in Camden: The school provides a rich and stimulating education for boys and girls aged 11 to 19. High quality learning is at the heart of the school, prioritising high academic standards, as well as encouraging our learners to be independent thinkers with a broad world view. Its emphasis on creativity is about developing the thinkers and innovators of the future, and its curriculum offers a wide variety of opportunities for students to participate in the arts and sports, and play a part in community life. <https://www.aclandburghley.camden.sch.uk/Support-us/Donate---a-theatre-for-all/>

The Linbury Trust is an independent grant-making Trust established in 1973 by Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover, and his wife Anya, Lady Sainsbury CBE. The Trust has awarded almost £200m in grant funding across the world, supporting a wide variety of compelling and exciting projects in the fields of arts, heritage and culture; the environment; and social and medical welfare.