



2024/25

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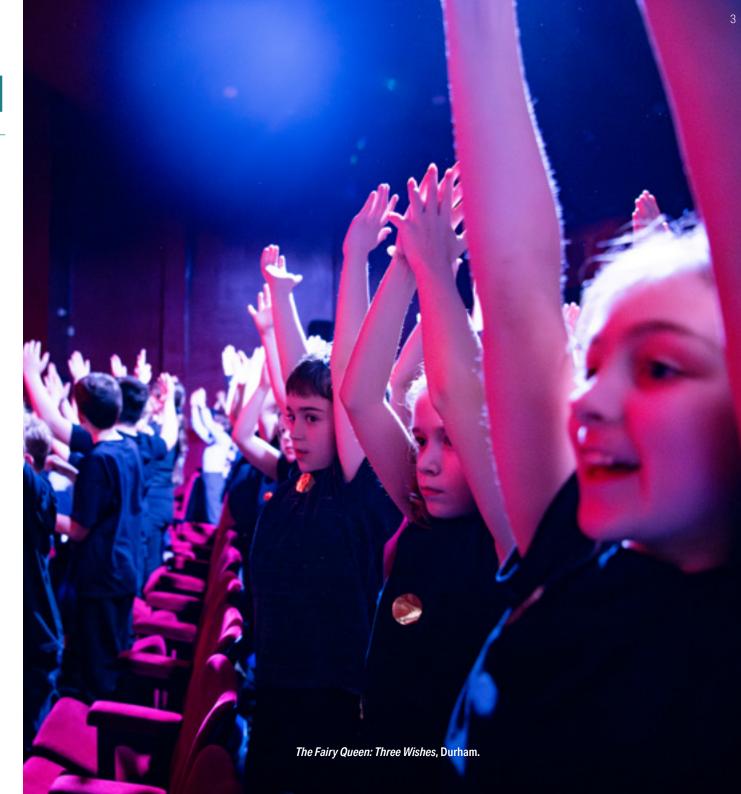
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INTRODUCTION

Over the past twenty-five years, our Education department has grown in stature and reach to involve thousands of people nationwide in creative music projects. Our participants come from a wide range of backgrounds and we pride ourselves in working flexibly, adapting to the needs of local people and the places where they live. The extensive partnerships we have built up over many years across the country ensure maximum and lasting impact for all those who work with us.

OUR MISSION

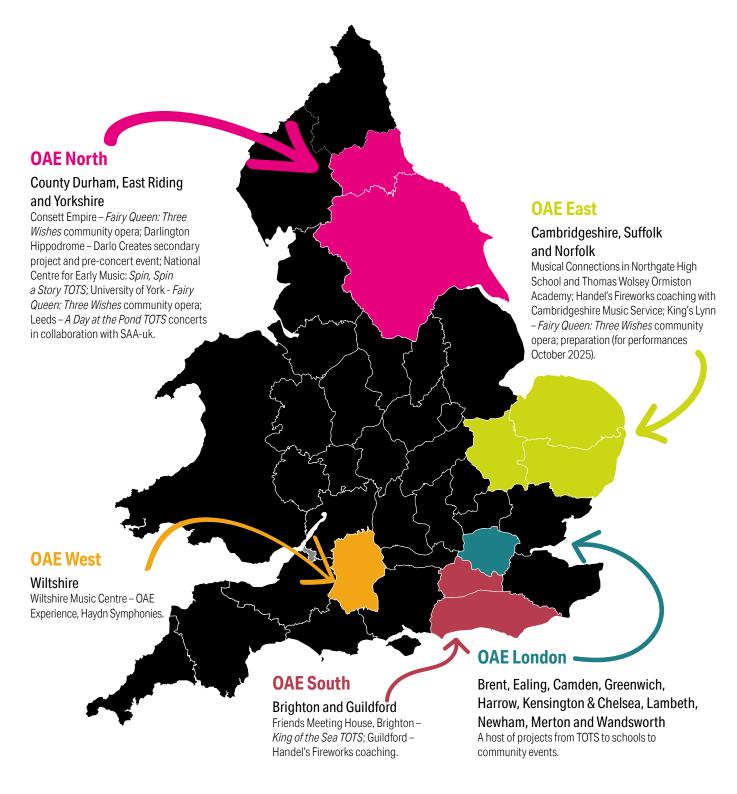
We believe that the OAE is a leading voice in the orchestral education sector. We will always strive to develop our partnerships so that the broadest, most diverse communities may enjoy and experience the arts, and so that participants, teachers, partners and stakeholders all have a valued voice.



OUR REACH

WELCOME TO WHEREVER YOU ARE

At the OAE we love embedding ourselves in the communities where we work. Our national residencies involve teacher training, workshops and concerts where local people of all ages have the opportunity to hear the OAE and perform alongside us. From theatres to pubs, from schools to care homes, we delight in being right at the heart of every community we work in. During our 2024 / 25 season we enjoyed residencies in County Durham, Leeds, York and King's Lynn. We also performed concerts and ran coaching projects and workshops in Guildford, Cambridge, Ipswich and Brighton. We are ever grateful to Orchestras Live (who are our partners in producing projects in County Durham, Darlington and Norfolk), the National Centre for Early Music (for partnering with us in York) and the Wiltshire Music Centre (for our work in Bradford on Avon), as well as numerous music services across the country.



FULL OF SURPRISES!

As we move into our 40th anniversary season it has been a time to reflect on the past but also the future. Who'd have thought back in 1986 that in 2025 the OAE would be resident in a school, performing all over the world to huge acclaim, whilst at the same time working closely with communities around the country to share our love of music. I passionately believe that music is for everyone, everywhere; whether on the concert platform, in a care home, in a school, in a special needs setting or on the street.

Highlights for me in this season have been numerous and range from the quiet interaction with a single student in a special school in Ealing to the beautiful *Day at the Pond* concerts for Early Years to our exploration of Haydn symphonies for Key Stage 1 pupils to the massed community

events in Durham, York and London with *The Fairy Queen: Three Wishes* and *The Magic Flute* and the Bird That Would Be Free. Our residency at Acland Burghley continues to bear fruit and we feel embedded in the local community too.

I feel very privileged to be a part of the OAE community and after more than a quarter of a century working with the OAE I love it more than ever! I hope you enjoy reading about our latest season of musical adventures which were full of surprises!

CHERRY FORBES
Education Director





2024 / 25 IN NUMBERS

24,531 Participants

15,813 Live audience

56 Concerts

384 Workshops

27 Primary schools

9 Secondary schools

4 Special Educational Needs settings

2 University settings

in 16 towns / cities / villages across England

FLAGSHIP AND RESIDENCIES

The Magic Flute... and the **Bird That Would Be Free**

For our Queen Elizabeth Hall community opera in 2025, we decided to build a programme around Hazel Gould and James Redwood's beautifully crafted show based on Mozart's *The* Magic Flute. We also wanted to showcase music by some of Mozart's contemporaries and chose works by Joseph Bologne and Marianna Martines, which sat alongside new compositions by students from Acland Burghley and Northgate secondary schools. For the show, we were joined by a 90-strong primary choir, directed by Sheena Masson, as well as musicians, dancers and singers from Acland Burghley and Northgate schools for a highly enjoyable evening!

"It was a brilliant tour de force which brought the house down, the culmination of many, many months of meticulous engagement with young people in their communities around the country."

CRISPIN WOODHEAD, CEO

"The Magic Flute performance by our students yesterday was phenomenal!"

"Not only was I incredibly moved by the performance (I couldn't stop crying each time they sang!), I was really struck by what an incredible experience it was for all the children. The Orchestra of Enlightenment was really inspirational – the devised pieces, the dance, the choir and the traditional music - such an eclectic and enriching mix of genres for all the children to experience. A really extraordinary experience for all involved and one

PARENT



THE STORY

Kirsty is a bird. Tim is a bird catcher. Every day Tim must catch a new bird to take to the terrifying Queen of the Night. In return for the birds, The Queen gives him food and drink.

One day Tim catches Kirsty. Before he can take her to The Queen, she explains that she does not want to sing on demand or live in a palace. She wants to be free. Moved by Kirsty's plight, Tim agrees to set her free – only to be caught by The Queen of the Night!

Tim and Kirsty beg for mercy and The Queen agrees to free them both if they can complete her challenge of silence. A song in the distance encourages them to try but at the last moment Tim talks, and they fail the challenge. Kirsty begs The Queen for another chance.

This time, The Queen gives them trials of fire and water, gifting them with a flute and some bells. At first, armed with what they see as useless objects, Tim and Kirsty get nowhere, but





The Fairy Queen: Three Wishes

This season, we kicked off our UK tour of *The Fairy Queen: Three Wishes* community opera. Composer James Redwood and writer Hazel Gould's creative magic seamlessly blends the story of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and music of Henry Purcell's 1692 opera *The Fairy Queen*, creating a magical new adventure for the whole family. It's about wishes that come true and what happens when they do, as we learn about friendship, love and telling the truth...

"It was nice seeing everyone cheering me on! The orchestra were blasting music loudly and their instruments were amazing! They sounded brilliant. This was a one-in-a-lifetime experience and I would willingly do this again!"

CHILD ACTOR, DURHAM

The Story

It is the 365th birthday of The Fairy Queen, and she wants her party to be the most magical night of the year. She wants music, dancing, entertainment and... mischief! Her loyal sprites are set to work, playing tricks and creating havoc for hapless humans they find in the forest. Meanwhile Tim and Kirsty are both invited to the party. They are secretly in love with each other, but are too embarrassed and full of worry to tell the truth. When Puck, the leader of the sprites, finds them in the forest, they are the obvious choice for magical trickery for the Queen's entertainment. They are both granted three wishes, but as Puck knows "Human beings don't always... know what they're doing". As they move through their wishes, their choices become increasingly disastrous, much to the amusement of the Queen and her guests, until finally they realise that all they really need to do is tell the truth.

You can watch a snapshot here.



The Fairy Queen: Three Wishes, Durham.

RESIDENCIES

One of our aims is to become local wherever we work and we delight in being right at the heart of all of our communities. Our national residencies involve training, workshops and performances for local people to hear and perform alongside the OAE. During 2024 / 25 we enjoyed residencies in County Durham, Darlington and York. Each residency is built on strong partnerships, working where local stakeholders have a real voice in the development of our work and decide where it is targeted.

We are really grateful to Orchestras Live (our partner in Norfolk, County Durham and Darlington) and to the National Centre for Early Music (our partner in York). We also really value the close relationships we have with over ten music hubs across the country.

COUNTY DURHAM

In County Durham we were joined by six primary schools, the Durham Music Service Youth Choir, and students from Consett Academy for two performances of *The Fairy Queen: Three Wishes*. Ten aspiring young actors from local primary schools performed as sprites alongside the cast (Kirsty Hopkins, Simone Ibbett- Brown, Timothy Dickinson and Lynne Forbes) to help tell this story of magic, mischief and mayhem.

"My daughter has suffered with huge anxiety issues recently but took part with the Youth Choir and it was absolutely the best thing for her and her confidence. She said she felt emotional in the final number as she realised it was coming to an end!!! This is the first thing she has been involved in at all in over two years because of anxiety.

So I personally have seen the impact as a proud parent!"

PARENT, DURHAM FAIRY QUEEN

DARLINGTON

The Darlington Hippodrome and Orchestras Live invited us to compose a new piece with students from Carmel College as part of the Darlo Creates programme to open the OAE's Baroquebusters show in February 2025.

YORK

In York, we performed two *Fairy Queen* shows at the Sir Jack Lyons Concert Hall (University of York) as well as our *Spin, Spin a Story TOTS* concert for families at the NCEM. Over 400 primary children from seven local schools took part in the *Fairy Queen* performances and our stage band was made up of students from Fulford School. Cantar Community Choir joined our choristers, cast and the OAE; it was a truly joyous occasion!

Our TOTS audience was treated to a story of magic spells and mischief, revolving around a King and Queen in a magical forest. When they both decide to throw a grand party on the longest day of the year, a competition ensues. Our audience are left to discover if one of them wins or if everything ends in disaster!

"I loved the feeling of playing together as a unity and it taught me lots of useful skills in playing with an orchestra."

STUDENT, FULFORD SCHOOL

"I am writing as a parent and audience member to share my sincere appreciation for the recent performance of *The Fairy Queen*. It was an absolutely wonderful experience for both myself and my daughter, The students' talent and energy were outstanding, and the production was truly a joy to watch from start to finish. It was clear that an incredible amount of thought, effort, and collaboration went into every detail of the show."

PARENT

The Fairy Queen tour will continue in 2025 / 26 in King's Lynn, Plymouth and Wiltshire.

"You have truly made an enormous impact on the young people across County Durham!"

STAFF, DURHAM MUSIC SERVICE







"These people were amazing! Their acting was brilliant and the kids were amazing, it was the best, and no-one knew whether we messed up or not (which we didn't!). Everyone's voice was amazing, especially the Fairy Queen, Tim and Kirsty! Their vocals were over the roof!"

CHILD ACTOR, DURHAM FAIRY QUEEN





"Please send my huge thanks and well done to all.

The OAE are amazing and all such lovely people. All the primary schools absolutely loved it. I have had lots of messages saying so. Plus, how the music and story came together was so clear for the children to understand, how amazing! I'm being honest – I did shed an emotional tear when I saw Fulford secondary school band walk on stage with the OAE – what an amazing opportunity for those students, certainly something they will never forget."

JOANNE YAU, YORK MUSIC HUB



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ACLAND BURGHLEY SCHOOL

In 2020 the OAE moved into Acland Burghley School and since then we have had the pleasure of having our office, music library and rehearsal space on site. But there is so much more to us being in the school: from music being the soundtrack to the playground to our established programmes of Musical Connections, Ground Base and Dreamchasing Young Producers, to dance and cross-art projects, curriculum support and our ever-growing relationships with staff and students.

As we end Year 5 of our residency at Acland Burghley it feels truly wonderful and natural for us as an organisation to be based in a school. Our relationships with staff and students are deepening and the branches of our tree are growing, and most importantly, we are going on this journey together.

A Snapshot of the Year

CURRICULAR

Year 7 Introduction to the Orchestra

During their first term, the whole of Year 7 hear the Orchestra perform with the Year 10 Music GCSE students

Ground Base

Monthly sessions in the Acland Burghley Base for students with autism and complex needs to support wellbeing

Musical Connections

Creative music sessions throughout the year

Creating Excellence

Creative music project for Year 10 GCSE Music students

EXTRA CURRICULAR

Dreamchasing Young Producers Programme

 Weekly sessions, regular special events and OAE office drop-in throughout the week; specialist training in lighting, production, film craft, costume techniques, management, budgeting, photo and video editing

- The Magic Flute and the Bird That Would Be Free technical support and filming
- Little Shop of Horrors BTEC Musical lighting and sound production support
- Beauty and the Beast school musical props making, lighting and sound production support

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- School Prom lighting and sound production support
- Southbank Centre concert attendance
- Training sessions at the Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond
- Lighting and sound production support at Acland Burghley TOTS concerts

Other Enrichment Activity

- Southbank Centre concert attendance Acland Burghley Concert Club and student attendance
- Creating a Musical Environment Opportunities to hear the OAE and OAE Experience ensemble in rehearsal
- The Big Dance a flashmob with students and the OAE: WATCH HERE
- Work experience placements for students and volunteering placements for Duke of Edinburgh students
- T Level placements
- Annual Winter Concert
- Monthly staff socials
- Community Open Rehearsals and Concerts
- Music GCSE performances at end of year 'Creating Excellence' evening
- Year 7 Music Day during the Acland Burghley Summer School

Additional Special Projects

- Breaking Bach a new dance work choreographed by Kim Brandstrup, performed by dance students from Acland Burghley alongside professional dancers at the Edinburgh International Festival and Enescu Festival, Bucharest
- The Magic Flute and the Bird That Would Be Free community opera
- Acland Burghley TOTS concerts for the local community
- Camden Music Celebration at the Royal Albert Hall



ACLAND BURGHLEY SCHOOL IN NUMBERS

621 TOTAL student involvement, including:

Year 7

GCSE Music Composition

Musical Connections

Dreamchasing Young Producers

Ground Base

Creating Excellence

The Magic Flute

Royal Albert Hall Camden Celebration

7 Breaking Bach

ABS Summer School

Community Concert Attendance

131 students attending performances and open rehearsals, 534 local families, 41 school staff, 1,390 live audience







A Snapshot of the Year

"We are richer for having the OAE in the way they want to work and collaborate with us to improve learning, experiences and ultimately life chances – it's next to none. Behaviour, attendance and attitudes have been transformed as a result."

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM, ACLAND BURGHLEY SCHOOL

Summer School

Each summer, new Year 7 students are invited to a week-long summer school before the start of term. The week gives them a chance to get to know their new school environment and meet some of their teachers. We run a music day in which students meet and make music with the Orchestra and sing and play alongside their peers. It's also a great opportunity for us to meet them in an informal setting and find out about their musical likes! We are increasingly finding that around half of the new intake each year met us during their time in primary school through our London schools programme.

Year 7 Introduction to the Orchestra

As part of our universal offer to students at Acland Burghley, we run workshops at the start of each year for all Year 7 students to introduce them to the Orchestra. Presented by James Redwood, these sessions give students, many of whom we have met and worked with during their time at primary school, the chance to meet players from the OAE, hear Baroque music and make music together.

Musical Connections

Musical Connections is a three-year arts-based learning project, bringing together students with additional needs with their peers in London and Ipswich to work together creatively. Acland Burghley is one of four schools involved in this project. We have found time and time again that music breaks down barriers, while working across multiple year groups enables students to build their skills and form friendships. We are incredibly grateful to the Paul Hamlyn Foundation who have supported this project.

"I think that it's amazing to come to Musical Connections and practice songs that were made by people like me."

STUDENT, ACLAND BURGHLEY SCHOOL

"Musical Connections is one of the places I feel most free as a musician. It's a space of creativity, risk taking and celebration – both of the individual voices and the ensemble as a whole. Nothing quite beats the euphoric feeling of shredding your gut string heart out in one of James Redwood's rock out sections, riding the musical wave of students on electric guitars, thumb jam on the iPad, and a charge of cajons. This, juxtaposed with the moments of powerful stillness during 1:1 interactions, improvising alongside a lap harp or sparking vocalisations from non-verbal participants, is the pure magic of Musical Connections."

OAE PLAYER

Ground Base

Our monthly sessions in The Base (Acland Burghley's unit for students with autism and complex needs) give students the chance to work together in cross-year groups in an informal, safe setting in which every student's voice is heard. Led by Raph Clarkson with a team of OAE players, these sessions are very well received by students and staff alike.

"The OAE made me realise that I'm good at something, I can set myself on one thing and I can work with people I wouldn't normally work with, and that was what made me choose Music GCSE."

STUDENT, ACLAND BURGHLEY SCHOOL

"I love the warmth of our Ground Base sessions. It is always fun hearing the students' musical ideas, which are often genuinely inspiring, with us then responding to them and creating something new as a team. One of my favourite things about our sessions is watching the edgy, anxious students calm down and the shy, quiet ones relax and unfurl. Sometimes this happens over one session and sometimes over the course of several but it's always amazing."

OAE PLAYER

For Acland Burghley's Winter Concert students from our Musical Connections and Ground Base programmes worked together to to compose a piece which was called 'Best Wishes for a Good Year'.

"Musical Connections was absolutely the highlight. Seeing such a varied group of students, who would be invisible or neglected in many schools, take centre stage with a world-renowned orchestra, in front of their parents and peers to perform good quality music, exceptional in some cases, was truly magnificent."

STAFF, ACLAND BURGHLEY SCHOOL

The Magic Flute and the Bird That Would Be Free

Our community opera, performed in June at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, gave a platform to dancers and musicians from Acland Bughley, alongside London primary school pupils, and instrumentalists and singers from Northgate School in Ipswich.

Breaking Bach

An exciting new music and dance project, bringing together a group of talented young street dancers from Acland Burghley School with professional dancers. Directed by the internationally renowned choreographer Kim Brandstrup, it premiered on 20 August 2025 at the Edinburgh International Festival and toured to Bucharest in September 2025.

Dreamchasing Young Producers

The Dreamchasing Young Producers scheme is an initiative that mentors and trains students at Acland Burghley in project management, creative design and production through weekly after-school sessions. Young Producers also get the opportunity to shadow OAE staff and assist on OAE projects as work experience trainees at our public engagements. Across the year they have been involved in running numerous events such as organising lighting, sound and props for the ABS Winter Concert, school prom, and school musical, and assisting front and back of house at the Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Royal Festival Hall. Two recent graduates of the scheme have recently completed work experience placements at Garsington Opera Company.

"There's always something new to learn with the OAE and now I'm in sixth form I've been able to teach the younger students at Burghley which has been really rewarding."

DREAMCHASING YOUNG PRODUCER

Creating Excellence

A three-day creative music project for students to work together creatively as they embark on their Music GCSE.

"Seeing OAE bringing a group of GCSE musicians together over such a short time is truly inspirational. The impact for me is never lessened by having seen you do this consistently for the last five years! I think what is changing is the holistic sense of purpose from the students and teachers who are part of the project. This is down to the relationships you invest in and of course Jordan and the new team."

ANNA RIMMINGTON, ACLAND BURGHLEY DIRECTOR OF LEARNING KEY STAGE 5 & OAE LIAISON

Community Concerts and Open Rehearsals

Free or accessibly priced OAE rehearsal visits and informal concerts at Acland Burghley School for students and staff at the school as well as the local community.

Much of our work at Acland Burghley is beyond the classroom and our OAE TOTS, open rehearsals and community concerts at the school are a good example of how we are bringing the Orchestra's work to the wider community. During the season, we performed three TOTS concerts at Acland Burghley to delighted audiences: *Puzzle TOTS*, *A Day at the Pond TOTS* and *Enchanted TOTS*.

"Thank you! This was amazing. It's wonderful for children to have so much fun while learning music."

PARENT

"I LOVED IT!" CHILD AGE 5

FAMILIES

OAE TOTS

Our OAE TOTS programme includes workshops and concerts for 2 – 5 year olds in nursery and school settings, or in the community. Our TOTS events are always lively with lots of interaction, lots of noise and lots of fun for children and adults alike!

AT ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL

Enchanted TOTS

This journey back in time featured music by Handel, Monteverdi and Raph Clarkson who also arranged well known nursery rhymes for the OAE. Audiences got involved with the music-making with singing, dancing and interactive wizardry.

Puzzle TOTS

From our writer Hazel Gould: 'Puzzles are tricky! How do the pieces fit together?' A family concert inspired by puzzles featuring music from the 17th and 18th Centuries

LPO FUNharmonics

Continuing our partnership with the London Philharmonic Orchestra (LPO) we ran themed TOTS workshops alongside the LPO FUNharmonics concerts at the Royal Festival Hall. This season saw two sets of workshops which took families on musical adventures inspired by music of the OAE. Children and adults were encouraged to sing, dance and play alongside OAE musicians.

"It was incredible! Thank you for introducing us to classical music!"

PARENT

"I LOVED IT (AND I WANT TO COME BACK!)"

CHILD

"Wonderful concert which was a great introduction to Baroque music.

More of these please."

PARENT

"Mummy please book again"
CHILD

"My granddaughter and I really loved the concert on Saturday. I think it was perfectly pitched for the age group and also just the right length!"

GRANDPARENT

"The concert was fab! Really great introduction for kids & excellent musicianship. Thank you!"

PARENT

"Music was lovely, it made me calm and happy"

CHILD

"I just wanted to get in touch to say thank for the wonderful OAE TOTS concert yesterday at the Royal Festival Hall. I have been to quite a few of your OAE TOTS events since having my first child and yesterday, we brought all 3 of our children, all of whom loved it! The length of the concert, as well as the balance of audience participation with listening, was perfect and so well suited to the children there. We came away very uplifted. Please keep on doing the wonderful work that you do!"

PARENT

OAE TOTS at Acland Burghley School

This year, we welcomed local families to Acland Burghley for three TOTS shows: our enigmainspired *Puzzle TOTS*, the magical *Enchanted TOTS*, and *A Day at the Pond TOTS*, a collaboration between the OAE, South Asian Arts-uk, Orchestras Live and Amazing Music Projects.

OAE TOTS ON TOUR

London and Leeds - A Day at the Pond

Tracking the day in the life of a pond, our young audiences in London and Leeds enjoyed Western and Asian classical music and dance in a beautifully crafted show by Hazel Gould, a collaboration between the OAE, South Asian Arts-uk, Orchestras Live and Amazing Music Projects – connecting young people with sound opportunities.

Spin, Spin a Story! - National Centre for Early Music, York

An enchanting story full of magic spells and much mischief... Once there lived a King and Queen in a magical forest full of wonder, laughter and song. They both decide to throw a grand party on the longest day of the year but then end up having a competition to see who can host the best party. Will their friends join them or will it all end in disaster?

King of the Sea - Brighton Early Music Festival

In this lively concert, Poseidon, the God of the sea, is delighted when offerings appear from above the water. But on discovering that these were not gifts from the people of the land, but rubbish they were throwing away, he decided to teach them a lesson!

"We wanted to thank you all at the OAE for such a beautiful concert. We felt very privileged to be able to experience a performance like this. The children and accompanying parents all loved it and at least one of the children has asked for double bass lessons!"

EARLY YEARS TEACHER







SCHOOLS

Each school year we offer Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 programmes to our partner schools across London. Every project involves a teacher training day, in-school workshops with our players, and a culmination concert, in which pupils become active performers: singing, playing and listening. We provide in-depth resources (both printed and digital), allowing teachers and music specialists to support the projects in the classroom and building a legacy of work for them to draw upon.

We are incredibly grateful to the John Lyon's Charity for supporting us in four of our London boroughs – Camden, Brent, Harrow and Ealing – with a three-year grant towards 'Louder! Widening Musical Communities' which includes our schools programme.

This season, with the Orchestra's 2024 / 25 theme 'the whole world is an enigma' in mind, we offered the following projects:

KS1-FULL OF SURPRISES

A project for Year 1 and 2 children, exploring the music of Haydn and the surprises we find in his symphonies; led by composer James Redwood.

KS2 - DANCING, MOVING AND MUSICKING

A project for KS2 pupils to explore the connections between historical classical music and the folk music of the past. Led by composer Raph Clarkson, this project included an exploration of Matthew Locke's Tempest Suite from 1667 which is full of rhythm, energy and movement.

KS3 – HARROW COMPOSITION WORKSHOPS

Building on our Introduction to the Orchestra concerts in 2024, we delivered GCSE workshops in two Harrow schools: Nower Hill and Park High.

KS3 – NORTHGATE MUSICAL CONNECTIONS

Students from Northgate High School joined the OAE at the Queen Elizabeth Hall for our community opera, *The Magic Flute and the Bird That Would Be Free*. Alongside musicians from Acland Burghley, they became our onstage band and choir to the delight of many parents who travelled from Ipswich for the performance. Earlier in the year, the group joined students from Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy for a joyous afternoon of music making.

ROYAL ALBERT HALL - CAMDEN CELEBRATION

Camden Music invited the OAE to create a piece for their borough-wide celebration in April 2025. Led by James Redwood, we brought together Acland Burghley Musical Connections students, the Swiss Cottage School choir and 1,500 primary and secondary-school singers from across the borough in a piece called 'Music Brings Us Together', and it certainly did just that!

"I love that my school has a partnership with OAE. It is always a special and unique experience for the children."

SECONDARY DEPUTY HEAD

"What a wonderful session! Thank you so much. I feel inspired and invigorated after today's session. I've been teaching primary music for 10 years and it's easy to get stuck in doing things in the same way for ages. I am so excited to get teaching the OAE's material to my KS1 children, I know they'll love it!"

KS1 TEACHER [DISCUSSING CPD TRAINING]

"It was fantastic. We've got Year 1s who are five and six and if I try and talk to them for more than about two minutes in a row they get very fidgety and this was an hour-long concert and they all were so engaged throughout which was fantastic."

KS1 TEACHER

"They're telling all their friends about the concert. And, you know, the other year groups are also talking about it, who haven't even been part of it."

KS2 TEACHER

"Thank you for such a wonderful time yesterday, the children (and the adults!) absolutely loved it."

KS2 TEACHER

"Thank you so much for the wonderful, engaging workshop yesterday. We are so fortunate to make use of this fantastic opportunity. The students have learned so much from you. Thank you for the wonderful way you engage with the students, they were so proud of the composition they created! I even heard some students playing the main tune this morning."

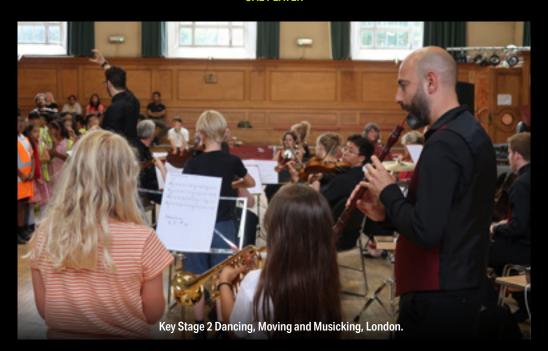
TEACHER, NOWER HILL

"It really was a fantastic day and I know how much the students enjoyed it. We all saw that not only in their final compositions but also in the way they worked together and with you. The skilled and comfortable way in which you all worked with our students – quickly understanding their different abilities – enabled such wonderful work. As we discussed, it is amazing how different the responses were from the same starting points; and, all of it musical, all of it exploring different aspects of music that will hold them in good stead moving forwards as more confident composers and musicians. The ease with which we collaborated made the whole process easy and I very much enjoyed sharing in the presenting and the comfortable way in which we interacted. This wasn't missed by the students."

HEAD OF MUSIC, PARK HIGH SCHOOL

"What a fabulous event to be part of. SO slickly organised, and everyone so well supported. It's such a testament to the partnerships the OAE has developed, and the way the projects are paced, that enabled all the students from Swiss Cottage to just step up onto stage and perform, and put together a band that is so inclusive of so many needs and different levels of ability and development. And for all of it to be brought together with such a brilliant catchy tune – James does it again!. SO effective and just wonderfully moving to hear massed voices singing together like that, and for it to finish with all those beautiful sparkly sounds from the Musical Connections Band."

OAE PLAYER







SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Our special educational needs programme has expanded significantly over the last few years to include large-scale projects such as Musical Connections, a three-year arts-based learning programme supported by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. This season we also worked with Raph Clarkson in two special schools in Ealing.

MUSICAL CONNECTIONS

Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy in Ipswich and Swiss Cottage School in Camden are both wonderful places full of students who love music, staff who nurture them and where every success and achievement is celebrated however big or small. At the OAE we have had the privilege of working with these students over a number of years. This long-term approach means we can really connect with each student as an individual and see their development across sessions. Students know what to expect and every visit builds on the last, as we create music together.

Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy

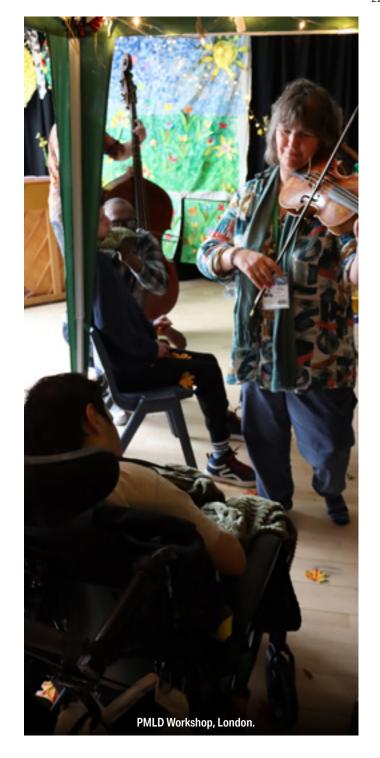
At Thomas Wolsey we continued working with the same cohort of students. It has been a joy to see them grow in confidence across our time with them. The project culminated in a fabulous music sharing day led by James Redwood. Students made music with the OAE, other students from across the school, and their parents and carers. In the afternoon, they were joined by their peers from Northgate High School. It was wonderful to see how the Northgate students' skills and confidence had also developed since their first visit to the school the previous year.

Swiss Cottage School

We worked at Swiss Cottage across the school year on a beautiful project inspired by the seasons. Five students from St Paul's Cathedral School joined us, and together we created a concert, which was enjoyed by the whole school and Musical Connections parents, included songs about growing ('Colourful Carrots' being one of them!) and the world around us, as well as movements from Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*. Alongside the art department, we constructed a musical installation for students with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities to experience music, sights, sounds and smells of the different seasons through the year.

Mandeville School Ealing

After a pilot project in the Autumn term working with children from all classes in this lovely special school in Ealing, we returned to Mandeville in the summer for a mini residency with 16 children. It culminated in a sharing session with a small ensemble from the OAE to which parents were invited.



"Every single one of our students has developed in some way throughout the different projects. We have had students that were very reluctant to participate initially and by the end of the project, they were undertaking solo parts. We have a very musical student who continues to sing one of the songs she learnt earlier in the year, as she goes down the corridor. We have students who have gained in confidence and who have been allowed the time to show their skills. We also have students who find it difficult to work with others. They have been able to share ideas, listen to the ideas expressed by others and allowed those ideas to be carried out."

THOMAS WOLSEY MUSIC COORDINATOR

"The OAE have brought many different qualities to the project. The most important being that the colleagues we have worked with have adapted to the varying needs of our pupils during all workshops and performances, with ease. The ability to change ideas and follow suggestions given by students instantly and incorporate them into the work. They listen carefully to the students and always make everyone feel valued and that their ideas are important. They have given students in the wider school the opportunity to experience live music from an orchestra, which is something that most of our students would not get the opportunity to do."

THOMAS WOLSEY MUSIC COORDINATOR

"We work hard at school to make our children see themselves as, and be seen as, equals to their mainstream peers. Working alongside pupils from Northgate High School was a key component of this project, for me and dispelled any narrative that our children are to be pitied or patronized, but rather that they can participate and perform as well as their peers, with equal amounts of vigour and enthusiasm, passion and creative expression...and that is the power of music."

EMILY WEBSTER, CO-PRINCIPAL, THOMAS WOLSEY ORMISTON ACADEMY

"Working at Swiss Cottage School with OAE was a truly moving, inspiring, and unique experience. I've rarely encountered a setting where the power of music to transcend language, culture, and ability was so beautifully and clearly demonstrated."

OAE PLAYER









"Coming to Swiss Cottage School to make music with their students is joyful and grounding. One of the songs we perform is called "Clouds". The lyrics are simple but beautiful – "Clouds come and clouds go,my mind is a clear blue sky". I always come away from our sessions with a sense of utter clarity: that music can be a powerful force for social good and wellbeing. Working with these students is deeply humanising experience."

OAE PLAYER

"It's been fantastic working both with the OAE and St Paul's. We've worked with the OAE on a number of occasions before – including this ongoing Musical Connections project which has been running for three years – and, in that time, the classes that they that they've been working with have seen a real boost in their confidence."

STEPHEN BARNETT, SWISS COTTAGE

"It's been an inspiration on so many levels. It's a real privilege to work alongside OAE and to see how they work. It's opened doors beyond music within the school."

MARK WILDERSPIN, ST PAUL'S SCHOOL

"Musical Connections has been such a positive musical experience, but it has not been exclusively about music, It has boosted the children's confidence. Being in that group context has resulted in them socialising more. We see that. Being part of a group matters and the fact that it culminated in a performance in front of a big audience, with all those other pupils, teachers, family members, it's been a very special experience."

MUSIC TEACHER, SWISS COTTAGE SCHOOL

"The orchestra's sessions were excellent on many levels. They offered an opportunity for the children to engage with peers from different classes; this facilitated social interaction and collaboration. The build-up to each session created a sense of anticipation, while the inclusive structure encouraged participation. Children were clearly excited during the sessions and some of them found difficult to leave the venues after some of the sessions.

We especially valued the orchestra's effort to visit every class, ensuring broad engagement and making the experience accessible to all."

MANDEVILLE MUSIC COORDINATOR

"The Orchestra was engaging, fun, inclusive and it provided opportunities for the children to participate in their one unique ways. T was particularly involved, as soon as he was given a drum to play with he started to bang on it; he was clearly trying to follow the rhythm."

MANDEVILLE TEACHING ASSISTANT

"The music was beautifully stimulating, gentle, and harmonious, which seemed to resonate well even with P, who typically struggles with noise. Instead of being disrupted, he was fully engaged and actively participated in the musical activities offered during the session."

MANDEVILLE TEACHER

"I felt the Orchestra really understood and connected with children and staff and created a beautiful safe space, there was a feeling of being held. The main performance was beautiful, the energy was something to behold, there was such engagements from the children and parents especially."

MANDEVILLE TEACHING ASSISTANT

"We had an amazing time seeing the Orchestra of Age Enlightenment last week. My son loves music and to see him and other children participate and get up and dance was an emotional and empowering experience. All the children who got involved, sang through, danced, showed excitement towards the music were an absolute delight to watch. It was the most feel good experience I have experienced for the children. I believe music is so important especially for children. After watching the orchestra in action with the kids my feedback was 'if only they could do this every week'! That's how amazing it was, and best of all I got to dance with my son and see pure joy on his face as I'm sure the other parents felt too. It's one of the best experiences we have had."

MANDEVILLE PARENT





NURTURING TALENT

Through our Nurturing Talent programme we aim to share our passion for the music we play and to inspire the next generation of players to reach their full potential.

The Ann and Peter Law Experience Scheme supported by the Henocq Law Trust

The Ann and Peter Law OAE Experience Scheme continues to be a wonderfully vibrant and fertile part of the OAE's Education programme. The cohort of students comes from a wide variety of backgrounds and experience. They come together to explore repertoire that is the beating heart of the OAE. In our Classical OAE Academy courses, students form a Haydn-size ensemble to explore the musical, stylistic language of late-eighteenth century and to come up with ways of performing this music that is a new, living, breathing experience for everyone. The same group of players, but on Baroque instruments, also explore earlier repertoire with OAE principals. The results are exciting and dramatic. As well as the Classical ensemble, students study with OAE principal players, they have privileged access to rehearsals and concerts where they are encouraged to quiz OAE players to develop their knowledge and expertise.

This training ground is a way for the OAE to recruit extra players and a striking percentage of recent OAE Experience graduates have now performed with the orchestra. The future is secure!

MARGARET FAULTLESS (OAE LEADER)

This cohort of musicians joined us in February 2024. They have now completed all of their Academy courses, which included Teatime TOTS sessions for local families and concerts in Cambridge, London and Wiltshire. We're looking forward to keeping in touch with them and to be welcoming a new group of talented young musicians later in the season.

Camden Strings

Our string projects continued this year with opportunities for young musicians across Camden to learn from and play alongside OAE players. In July we brought together 90 primary pupils for a massed string day at Cecil Sharp House.

"It's amazing to do music like these Haydn symphonies as you see the great scope of colour that you can get from the music together."

OAE EXPERIENCE STUDENT

"It is such a treat to delve into the excitement of Haydn's music. There is both subtlety and extremeness that modern orchestras seem rarely to touch upon. It is a completely different experience and it's so nice to have such a warm collegial environment."

OAE EXPERIENCE STUDENT

"Exceptional experience! Full of nice discoveries!"

OAE EXPERIENCE STUDENT

"The best of all programmes that I played so far! Maggie's way of rehearsing is sooo inspiring!"

OAE EXPERIENCE STUDENT

"Truly wonderful. Thank you so much."

AUDIENCE MEMBER

"An inspiration – what more can I say?"

AUDIENCE MEMBER

"Great selection of composers nicely liked by the Leipzig Thomaskirche Vawney!"

AUDIENCE MEMBER

"Brilliant – great to know the next gen is going to be so exciting!"

AUDIENCE MEMBER

"Fantastic ★★★★ Absolutely amazing. Thank you so much"

AUDIENCE MEMBER

"Fantastic! Brimming with positivity. Brill musicians.

Orchestras in schools – is this the future of classical music? Hope so!"

AUDIENCE MEMBER

"A belated note of thanks for all that you achieved at St Catherine's on Thursday last week. I can't tell you how brilliantly it was received! The OAE part of the concert was characteristically excellent and everyone loved Leo's intros and how he brought it to life. But the main orchestra playing was a revelation to so many, and I can hardly believe what you achieved in your time with these young musicians. My daughter's close friend was on the point of giving up the tuba because she didn't see the 'point' of it, but has renewed enthusiasm now, and has fully re-committed to the instrument. I have also heard that at least two sets of parents have booked for OAE concerts in London as a result of the day... a roaring success."

BRAMLEY PARENT

"The day was just tremendous! Our staff and students were inspired, so much so that one of the students is now looking at University courses specialising in early music!!!"

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & PERFORMANCE MANAGER, CAMBRIDGESHIRE MUSIC



St Catherine's, Bramley Project

Under the wonderful direction of Leo Duarte and after an invite from the Head of Music at St Catherine's School, Bramley in Guildford to work with their student orchestra, we devised a project exploring Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks*.

Cambridge Accelerate Day

Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks* also provided the basis for an enlightening coaching day with students from Cambridgeshire Music. Led by Christopher Bucknall and Henrietta Wayne, the day included yoga, coaching and sectionals and culminated in a performance to friends and family at the end of the day.

Harrow Recorder Extravaganza

During the summer term we worked with 120 recorder players from six Harrow primary schools, collaborating with music service staff and teachers. To support this work, we created learning resources for the pupils who performed with an OAE ensemble for a celebration concert at the Elliot Hall in the Harrow Arts Centre.





"Participating in the Ann and Peter Law OAE Experience Scheme has been one of the most rewarding steps in my journey as a young musician. The scheme offered me a rare opportunity to gain practical experience in historical performance practice. Since very few orchestras specialise in this field, it can be challenging for recent graduates like me to find a place to learn and develop. The OAE created exactly that environment: a space where I could build confidence, explore stylistic questions, and feel supported as I developed my voice as a historically informed musician.

A personal highlight for me was the chance to be involved in the OAE's educational projects and concerts for younger audiences and those with disabilities. Of all the orchestras I've worked with, I have never seen so much care, thought, and genuine passion devoted to outreach and education. The OAE's commitment to making music accessible and meaningful for everyone is something I found both inspiring and deeply moving. The OAE Experience Scheme has shaped both my artistry and my outlook, giving me skills, confidence, and inspiration that I will carry into the next stage of my career."

CHARLIE HODGE, OAE EXPERIENCE TIMPANIST





"It has been a true gift to be a part of the OAE Experience Scheme for the past two years. We have built such an amazing community between the students that features so much diversity and collaboration, a real melting pot of backgrounds, ideas, strengths, and such a high level of integrity in the music we produced together. To be surrounded by so many other fantastic musicians playing in such an involved, committed, and communicative way took each project or new piece to a different level of musical excitement. The experimentation and out-of-the-box thinking (a trademark of Maggie Faultless' leadership) were such a key component to the calibre of music we as a group produced. As we come to the end of this group's time together, I cannot take for granted each time I have entered these musical laboratories and left with such a fulfilling and inspiring experience.

As a member of the Experience Scheme, I have also had the privilege to be invited to join the OAE with a number of education projects, all across England, from incredible Fairy Queen productions, to TOTS shows, and everything possible in between! The number of students the OAE Education projects reach with their music is staggering to me: often an easy few hundred in a day! But it is also the individual impressions left on students that show how intentionally crafted each project is, brought so vibrantly to life by the wholehearted enthusiasm of each of the members of the orchestra. Catching the eye of a curious 6-yearold during a demonstration, sharing smiles with a giggling group of 10-year-olds when they catch musical jokes, having conversations with students of how each instrument is made differently in the Baroque period, and watching as almost half of a room of 500 students raise their hands in answer to the question: is this the first time you are hearing an orchestra live? All of these are moments so filled with the magic of music – that connection made between a member of the orchestra and the young and curious ears in the audience, bridged by the creativity of the composers and arrangers of such inventive, instructive projects. It is such an inspiration for me to know that these possibilities of music education exist, and to be just a part of such a vibrant group of musicians, committed to excellence no matter the age of the audience, has given me such a pride in what I do and an excitement for the possibilities of music education in the future!"

ELIZABETH VAN'T VOORT, OAE EXPERIENCE VIOLA







FAINTASTIC SYMPHONIES

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2025/26

We're getting ready for another wonderful season of music-making inspired by the OAE's 40th-anniversary season. We will revisit old favourites from our 'Watercycle' flagship project alongside new works as we explore the world around us and the importance of looking after our environment. Projects will include:

TOTS & Family

- Royal Festival Hall TOTS Mozart Chased a Cat and Sailing Away
- OAE TOTS at LPO FUNharmonics
- Brighton Early Music Festival *Puzzle TOTS*
- A Day at the Pond TOTS in Lincolnshire
- Community TOTS concerts at Acland Burghley School Puzzle TOTS, Mozart Chased a Cat and Sailing Away

Schools and Acland Burghley

- Key Stage 1 Watercycle: 1, 2, 3 Water Rises from the Sea
- Key Stage 2 Watercycle: We are moved by the light of the moon
- Acland Burghley School Musical Connections, Ground Base, GCSE composition work, Introduction to the Orchestra, Creating Excellence music and dance event, Dreamchasing Young Producers, Community Open Rehearsals and the OAE Collective (a new performing group for Acland Burghley School)

· Composition work in Harrow

Special Educational Needs

- Musical Connections projects in Camden, Harrow, Ealing and Ipswich
- Merton Music Foundation Royal Albert Hall Celebration 'To Boldly Go'

Nurturing Talent

- The Ann and Peter Law Experience Scheme
- Brent, Camden and Harrow string and recorder projects

Residencies / Flagship Projects

- Life of the Sea community opera, 3 June 2026 at Queen Elizabeth Hall
- Residencies in York and County Durham
- The Fairy Queen: Three Wishes in King's Lynn, Plymouth and Wiltshire

EDUCATION TEAM 2024 / 25

Ruth Alford

Emily Armour

Marina Ascherson

John-Henry Baker

Nicola Barbagli

Rachel Beckett

Adrian Bending

Lisa Beznosiuk

Elitsa Bogdanova

Rosie Bowker

Alistair Brookshaw

Abigail Brown

Cecelia Bruggemeyer

Christopher Bucknall

Ellen Bundy

Geoff Coates

Carina Cosgrave

Nicholas Cowling

Philip Dale

Huw Daniel

Iona Davies

Melissa Davies

Kaviraj Dhadyalla

Carina Drury

Leo Duarte

Daniel Edgar

Gavin Edwards

Alice Evans

Margaret Faultless

Dominika Feher

Cherry Forbes

Leo Fulwell

Hannah Gardiner

Jacob Garside

Nathan Giorgetti

Melanie Gruwez

Rebecca Hammond

Rebecca Harris

Katie Heller

Tom Highnam

Claire Holden

Sarah Humphrys

Annette Isserlis

Josie Jobbins

Nivanthi Karunaratne

Simrandeep Kaur Iris Korfker

Julia Kuhn

Nina Kumin

Joanna Lawrence

Martin Lawrence

Nia Lewis

Rebecca Livermore

Katie Lodge

Jonathan Manson

Fiona Mitchell

Ann Monnington

Roger Montgomery

Peter Moutoussis Brendan Musk

Miriam Nohl

Ursula Paludan Monberg

Alice Poppleton

Rebecca Ramsey

Luke Reddin-Williams

William Russell

Oliver-John Ruthven

Joshua Salter

Martyn Sanderson

Mark Seow

Zoe Shevlin

Sophie Simpson

Katherine Spencer

Angelika Stangl

Jacob Swindell

Henry Tong

Jonty Ward

Andrew Watts

Henrietta Wayne

Benedict Williams

Stuart Young

ANIMATEURS, COMPOSERS, PRODUCERS, SOLOISTS:

Natalie Ayton

Raphael Clarkson

Adam Courting

Timothy Dickinson

Lynne Forbes

Hazel Gould

Kirsty Hopkins

Simone Jonetsu Ibbett Brown

Brett Kasza

Jyoti Manral

Sheena Masson

Tom Mungall

Ruth Paton Jopling

James Redwood

Hannah Roberts

Tom Cohen*

Names in **bold** are OAE

Player members

*Dreamchasing Young Producers scheme graduate

2024 / 25 OAE EXPERIENCE SCHEME

Laura Alexander
Theodora Alexiadou
Callum Anderson
Eden Azoulay
Charlotte Bartley
Hannah Blumsohn
Fergus Butt
Barry Chak-Hin Lo
Federico Cuevas Ruiz

Verena Eggensberger Bárbara Ferraz Balboa Libby Foxley Charlie Hodge Lucas Houldcroft Saaya Ikenoya Okusa Osian Jones Dorota Kolinek Daniele Lorefice Joseph Lowe Sophia Mücke Eriko Nagayama Mariana Paras Sandra Pérez Romero Natascha Pichler Azzurra Raneri Rosemary Salvucci Grace Scott Deuchar Tadhg Sudlow Karolina Szymanik Elizabeth van't Voort Aysha Wills Weronika Zimnoch





OUR SUPPORTERS

We would like to thank the following supporters whose generosity and enthusiasm enables us to continue our ambitious education programme. We are also very grateful to our anonymous supporters and to the individuals who supported our Arts for Impact campaign.

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OAE South

Brighton Early Music Festival

OAE West

Wiltshire Music Centre















