

Orpheus



THE ORPHEUS CENTRE JUNIOR BIRDSONG PROJECT Report to The Funding Network: November 2013

The Project

The Junior Birdsong project was a series of five day workshops run by music tutors with disabled and disadvantaged young people working together. The project aimed to bring young people together from the margins of society and, working with professional musicians, to break down barriers through the creation and performance of their own work.

The project has been an amazing and enriching journey for all the young people involved. With generous financial support from The Funding Network, Orpheus students and a group of Kings College students spent a week working with expert musicians to create a fantastic array of unique joint compositions which they shared in a public performance at Kings College Guildford School.

For our students, the opportunity to go out into the community and share their skills is invaluable. Working with new people develops confidence and community skills which are essential when they leave Orpheus and live independently. At the same time, young people in danger of exclusion from mainstream learning have few opportunities to develop their self-belief and self-esteem. This project has given young disadvantaged people the opportunity to work with Orpheus students and learn from their positive attitude.

"I am a passionate advocate of the principle of bringing together disabled and disadvantaged young people in the common pursuit of writing and performing their own songs. This project offers interventions and inspiration to young people on the margins of society." – Sir Richard Stilgoe, founder.

The Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries were:-

- Orpheus students, who have physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities
- Young people in danger of exclusion from mainstream learning

Orpheus students were involved in the project from the start, taking their inspiration from the time they spent working with prisoners on the Birdsong Project. A student from Orpheus was on the team that came to the fundraising network to appeal for funding.

Outcomes

Quantitative

- 6 Orpheus students worked with 13 students from Kings College Guildford
- 15 new songs were written and performed
- A CD was created of the group's work (enclosed)
- Public performance with the High Sheriff of Surrey, Dr Helen Bowcock and the Deputy Mayor of Guildford, Cllr David Elms in attendance
- Interest created amongst audience to fund future similar weeks

Qualitative

- Increased self-confidence: the project has had a very large impact on our students, not only musically and artistically, but in their social and emotional personal development.
- Improved self-esteem: the project allowed our students to understand that they can have a valuable role in helping other groups of disadvantaged people. The appreciation they received from the young Kings College students was empowering for them.
- Improved social inclusion: the professionalism and hard work of the students impacted positively on the way they were perceived by the audience.
- Attitude: the project encouraged a group of disenchanted young people to develop a positive attitude and make a constructive contribution to society.

Feedback

Feedback from students demonstrated that they thought highly of:-

- their involvement in planning, and delivering the project
- integration with the local community, breaking down barriers and challenging stereotypes

"We like to pass on what we've learnt at Orpheus and really enjoyed seeing these young people's talents. Hopefully we have given them the belief in themselves to be able to write their own songs in the future." Kim – Orpheus student

"It's really amazing to think that when the Kings College students first came they were really nervous and it was good to see them come out of themselves. They have to believe in themselves, and we have helped them to do this." Peter – Orpheus student

"This has been an amazing experience – we've made some fantastic friends who have helped us realise our true potential. Some of the songs are about breaking free from your own personal boundaries. We wrote songs about not letting what other people think about you define who you are and what you want to be." Kings College student



“It was a fantastic collaboration. The Orpheus students really supported the young people to grow in confidence and create their music. As a tutor your job is to inspire, but I came away from this project inspired – by the students from Kings College and Orpheus, and by the other tutors. You’re here to deliver a project but you get so much back.” Bing Lyle – tutor

“This project was an incredible demonstration of the power of young people and the power of music. The partnership between Orpheus and Kings College has been an incredible journey for all involved. Our young people have developed confidence, belief in themselves and grown hugely in their understanding of the different strengths which every one of us brings.” Kate Carriett – Principal Kings College



Thank you

On behalf of all the staff and students at Orpheus we would like to thank The Funding Network for supporting us in this extremely successful project and hope we may work together in the future.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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