

# ***Cranbrook Colourstrings School Newsletter***

**Summer 2012**

Hallo Everyone!

We have got off to a great start this term with lots of fun music-making and listening. There is plenty of news to tell you, so forgive me if this newsletter is a rather long!

## **EASTER CONCERT**

On 17<sup>th</sup> March all the children who are currently learning instruments with Colourstrings had the opportunity to perform to an enthusiastic audience of parents, siblings, friends and grandparents. They were lucky enough to perform in All Saint's Church, Woodchurch.

Everyone who heard them was thrilled to hear how much these young musicians had improved since they last heard them in the Christmas concert. Even our youngest musicians, performed with confidence and sang with pleasure and conviction! Everyone agreed that it was the best concert yet!



There were some lovely duets performed. The violinists in the Junior Ensemble played a pleasing variety of music and the musicians

in the Senior Ensemble gave a splendid performance of the second movement of Boyce's Second Symphony. It was truly a memorable afternoon of music-making!

## **INSTRUMENTAL DEMONSTRATIONS...**

Instrumental demonstrations to the after-school kindergarten children take place in the spring and summer terms each year. This is so that each child who may wish to take up an instrument with us can make an informed decision about which one s/he would prefer.

(It is very important that the child choose the instrument: the character of both the child and the instrument need to 'fit' if at all possible.)

Last term the children heard demos by a 1<sup>st</sup> year violinist and a 2<sup>nd</sup> year cellist. They were delighted to hear the tunes of songs they could sing being played on these instruments and were very excited to have a try at playing the instrument under the supervision of the teacher. The children have had another opportunity to have a go on the violin and cello this term and last week our cello teacher, Felix Buser, brought in a tiny cello and well as his full size instrument and we had great fun finding out how to play Molly Dolly in three different places on the cello and responding to high and low notes.

Not all children will be ready to start an instrument in September. Do have a word with Ingrid if you would like to discuss the matter with her.

## **Parents' Meeting for New Instrumentalists for September 2012**

Venue: Church House, Cranbrook

Attendance is **mandatory** for all parents who wish their child to join the instrumental programme

Date: Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 8pm  
Ingrid will be talking about the Colourstrings approach to instrumental teaching and the commitment involved to ensure that your child's experience of learning an instrument is a positive and successful one.

We offer only the instruments that are the hardest to learn and require the best teachers for success – violin and 'cello . There will be an opportunity to ask lots of questions and to hear what other parents' experiences have been.

Don't miss it! It's a journey that is not without challenges but it is an inspiration to most!

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### **EXAM SUCCESS!**

All the performance opportunities that we give our musicians in Colourstrings undoubtedly help them to positively enjoy the challenge of taking external exams occasionally! Congratulations to Ellie Young Min who achieved a distinction in her Grade 4 violin exam last term despite nursing an injured finger! Good luck to Ella Frost who will be taking her Grade 5 exam this term.

### **Lydian Chamber Orchestra**

We mentioned in the last newsletter that Maddie and Ellie would be taking part in a weekend string orchestral course with the Lydian Chamber Orchestra which exists to give talented young musicians from all parts of Kent an opportunity to make music together. Both girls absolutely loved it! They had the opportunity to play a huge variety of orchestral music in a stimulating and immensely enjoyable atmosphere. The informal concert at the end of the second day was most impressive. In the girl's words the experience was "awesome!"

### **Kent Music Summer School**

Once our instrumentalists have been learning for a few years they can look forward to making music outside the Colourstrings school and several of our musicians will be taking part in a residential course in July in which they will play in an orchestra and sing in a choir as well as having great fun playing tennis, swimming, watching films and generally having loads of fun. Those who have been before consider it to be a real highlight.

### **Concert Reviews + Workshop**

On Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May our instrumentalists gathered together at Cranbrook Primary School to perform two of their favourite pieces to an audience of parents, friends and other students and senior teachers. Everyone performed splendidly. Maryan Balkwill, a very experienced Colourstrings cello teacher from the Roehampton Colourstrings School,

headed up the panel of teachers and she was thoroughly impressed with the standard of playing.

The Concert Reviews provide a prime opportunity to pass on congratulations and constructive advice to students and teachers. The children will be given a written report on their performance that will be discussed in their next lesson and will serve to enthuse and encourage them still further in their studies.

After tucking in to a much needed picnic tea, the afternoon was rounded off with a workshop taken by Maryan in which all the children played as an ensemble as well as 'walking' the solfa notes of 'Once a Man Fell in a Well!' Their chamber music skills were put to the test as they were required to play four Singing Rascal songs **SIMULTANEOUSLY (!)** whilst our youngest musicians provided a melodic ostinato. Younger siblings from the audience then joined in with bells to provide a rhythmic ostinato which complemented the music beautifully. Well done to everyone for a hugely enjoyable afternoon's music-making!

### **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July 4pm Summer Concert**

Venue: St Mary the Virgin Church  
Goudhurst

Do come along to this concert in which our young instrumentalists will be delighted to share their musical achievements with you. They will be playing solos, duos, trios and playing

in larger ensembles as well as singing to you. It will be a feast of music-making! We will no doubt enchant unsuspecting members of the public who will come in to visit this very special 12<sup>th</sup> Century church. As they admire the wonderful views of the Weald from the top of the newly refurbished tower they will be treated to the resonant tones of young voices and lovely stringed instruments!

The concert will be very informal, so our youngest children in the Kindergarten are especially welcome. The opportunity to experience live music-making is not to be missed! It will make a great impression on them!

#### **Music to listen to...**

Each week the children listen to a piece of classical music for a short period.

This term's listening music:

#### **Haydn**

Symphony No 76 in E flat major  
1<sup>st</sup> mvt: Allegro

#### **Schubert**

Sonata in G minor D408  
3<sup>rd</sup> mvt: Menuetto

#### **De Falla**

Suite Populaire Espagnole for cello  
"Nana"

### **SINGING RASCALS BOOKS and CDS**

These attractive, colourful books and their accompanying CDs/tapes form the **core repertoire** for our music kindergarten and instrumental programmes.

They are **EXCLUSIVE** to Colourstrings and are particularly well presented,

musically. With a child singing each song, followed by a solfa rendition of the song and then a beautiful string orchestra arrangement.

**It is well worthwhile acquiring the set of 3 books and 2 CDs...**they will not only give hours of pleasure to children and parents alike but will also confer a thorough knowledge of the songs that will bring myriad benefits to your children in their classes for years to come.

**Books: £7      CDs: £16**

All books and other materials are available from Ingrid.

#### COLOURSTRINGS                      INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

Rebecca Aimi, who teaches violin and musicianship for us is furthering her knowledge of this wonderful method by attending the International Teacher Training Course where she will be tutored by Geza Szilvay, who created Colourstrings . She is sure to be inspired and we look forward to benefitting from all she learns at the course.

#### COLOURSTRINGS                      CLASSES                      IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS....

Many of you will know my colleague **Ali Rycroft** who, as well as helping me, runs classes of her own. If you know anyone who lives in the area, so pass on the good news! Ali's classes take place on Wednesdays and Thursdays as follows:

**Under 3's** on Wednesday mornings

**3 – 5's** on Thursday afternoons

For more information you can contact Ali on 01892 617491, email her at [Alison.rycroft@btinternet.com](mailto:Alison.rycroft@btinternet.com) or

Facebook: Phoenix Music Kindergarten

Ali has given her families some lovely advice about listening to music and I would like to share her thoughts with you:

In music classes we take the time to lie down comfortably and simply listen to a few minutes of classical music. If you can make the time, try it at home. Really listening with your whole attention rather than hearing it running in the background can be immensely satisfying, relaxing, reinvigorating, enlivening...

As a small child, I was lucky enough to listen to some of my parent's old classical LPs. (Choosing classical music was easy as there wasn't anything else much other than a much-loved single of the Peter Rabbit song "We're a happy family"). I had a few favourites that I listened to over and over and over again.

You may have noticed that children don't always just lie still and listen....

Nor did I, believe me. When I had the room to myself I acted out the ballets, hid from the magician in the scary bits of The Firebird, used every cushion and toy available to make boats and characters for Britten's Noye's Fludde and generally made a great mess and had a great time. Some of those pieces I got to know and love so well I can still listen to them in my head and they continue to be a source of solace and inspiration.

So if a piece of music grabs your child's attention, try and get hold of a copy and play it often. They might be still enjoying it 40 years later.

Lying still and listening for a few minutes is a fabulous way of developing a listening attention and that's what we encourage in class. But at home, if music inspires movement that's great! Sometimes little ones can ramble about happily to music and they are still listening to it and soaking it up.

#### **Summer Term Dates**

23<sup>rd</sup> April – 13<sup>th</sup> July

(Half-term: Mon 4<sup>th</sup> – Fri 8<sup>th</sup> June)

Have an enjoyable term!

*Ingrid Sellschop*

[www.cranbrookcolourstrings.co.uk](http://www.cranbrookcolourstrings.co.uk)