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2024 has been a very busy year so far for Music for the Many. We've had some very challenging moments as our charity continues to grow, to reach out to the wider community in Calderdale and to enjoy ever more opportunities to celebrate our young people's music making. It's all thanks to the support and encouragement of you, our supporters, that we are still here overcoming the barriers to do these wonderful, exciting things.

Our **Orchestra Project**, supported by Calderdale Cultural Fund, continued into its second year with Todmorden Orchestra's January family concert in Todmorden's majestic Town Hall. The progression from last year's family concert was brilliant, with many more children and young people joining with the adult orchestra, playing *March of the Toreadors* by Bizet, *Montagues and Capulets* by Prokofiev, *Fantasia on Greensleeves* by Vaughan Williams and *Juba Dance* by Florence Price. There were also some marvellously creative contributions from our visiting group from Cornholme School, featuring body percussion, chant, visual art and some minimalist tuned-percussion composition.

Meanwhile in Halifax, our Beech Hill School orchestra were invited to perform for the opening event at Dean Clough for Calderdale's year of culture, called **Culturedale**, where a noisy room of revellers was gradually brought to attentive silence by the stunning sound of our children playing Vivaldi and Beethoven. Their confidence as musicians in a new, challenging kind of situation was really impressive.



At the end of the Spring term most of our Todmorden musicians got together for our first ever **Combined Schools Orchestra Afternoon**. We just about all squeezed in (80 of us with instruments) St. Joseph's school hall for a very enjoyable, celebratory rehearsal, making new friends, younger and older inspiring each other, making a much bigger sound than usual and working together as one big community. We got to grips with this year's biggest musical challenge for our orchestras, the William Tell Overture by Rossini.

At **Todmorden High School** we've been experimenting with different ways of working together, exploring diverse repertoire with our fantastic new tutor, David Insua-Cao, bringing the improvisation and arrangement techniques of the Fantasy Orchestra to our young musicians. Our tabla pupils have been using their developing knowledge of Indian classical music to improvise with confidence and a new saxophone quartet has been formed of beginners. Some of our guitar pupils have been putting their skills into action to form a new band, called **Low Expectations** which has been surpassing expectations at recent gigs in Hebden Bridge and Todmorden.



Summer term has been full of performances by our young people.

Beech Hill School hosted a M4M fundraising concert where our orchestra's set included a Kurdish song and the Palestinian anthem, *Mawtini*, from the children's home cultures. Some of the children also went across town to perform for the students at **Ravenscliffe High School**, who particularly enjoyed our version of the theme music from Star Wars. It was a new experience for all and the start of a new friendship.

Our big **Todmorden Youth Orchestra** concert took place at Todmorden High School in June with lots of help from our volunteer musicians from Todmorden Orchestra and plenty of audience singing. A highlight was a **world premiere** of a beautifully lyrical and atmospheric new piece composed by one of our piano pupils, Jason, arranged for orchestra. There was also another spellbinding performance of the experimental *What is Music?* by the Primitive Percussion Youth Orchestra of Cornholme School.

The first week in July saw the summer music festival at **Halifax Minster**, which is a spectacular medieval building with a gorgeous acoustic. On the Thursday evening our Beech Hill Orchestra collaborated with the excellent choirs of Ling Bob and Bradshaw primary schools and Halifax Minster to give a concert of classical and gospel music, ending with a big combined performance of *Joyful Joyful*.



The Friday evening of the festival was our annual M4M **Festival of Nasheeds**, a celebration of Islamic song, featuring choirs from Feversham school, Bradford, Beech Hill School, Halifax and our Todmorden Nasheed Choir. There were some very special guest performances from our friends Hussnain Hanif, Imaan Lone and the Khan Sisters and the ecstatic young voices of Parkinson Lane Qawwali. Rather than our usual collection for M4M, at this event we collected funds for Medical Aid for Palestinians, to help children suffering in Gaza. Huge thanks to Canon Hilary Barber and all our friends at Halifax Minster for organising these events, making us so welcome and supporting our young people.

Our summer season was brought to a close with two events at St. Mary's Church, Todmorden. The first was a hugely successful fundraising concert by Three Valleys Gospel Choir. There was a memorable guest performance from our very own Sylvie, who gave us her spinetingling new song about climate change, confidently leading the audience to sing the chorus. This concert also saw the launch of our new **Todmorden Youth Chamber Orchestra**, showing that the standard of musicianship amongst our young players is reaching new heights, thanks to the constant support of YOU!



A few days later we had a return visit from Jon Boden. Having got the whole of Todmorden High School singing in harmony last September, Jon gave us a lovely evening of folksongs and pop songs, getting the community singing in **instant harmony** with his *Colourchord* method. As well as Jon's famously beautiful singing, the concert featured great performances by our young singer-songwriters Rebecca Spooner, Low Expectations, Gabriel Bath and Sylvie. This was a typically M4M opportunity for our young musicians to work alongside a top professional musician.

BUT it turned out not to be all over yet, as some of our young musicians and their families responded to a last-minute request on the morning of 6th August to come and play for a **community solidarity picnic** in the middle of Todmorden that same day. As soon as we heard about this event, arranged in response to the racist violence seen our towns and cities in the previous days, we knew that we had to help out because some of our families were left feeling very vulnerable, and Music for the Many is always a positive, creative response to a challenge. Our impromptu M4M orchestra also involved some players from Calderdale Fantasy Orchestra playing our customarily diverse mixture of classical repertoire, pop songs, folk tunes, Bollywood songs and nasheeds,. Then we joined in with our singalong superstar friend, Kirsty Newton who took the time to play a set en route to her run with Paul Merton at the Edinburgh Fringe. WE LOVE OUR COMMUNITY!



Big congratulations to our young musicians who have worked very hard to pass **ABRSM exams** this year (pictured here) with flying colours!

Our work is always developing and expanding. We are currently delivering weekly instrumental tuition and ensemble rehearsals for 148 pupils in 5 schools on 14 different instruments completely free of charge: (N.B. also the vacancy for new bassoon pupils!)

Schools	Beech Hill	Ferney Lee	National	St. Joseph's	Tod High	Total number of pupils for each instrument
Instruments						
Bassoon						0
Cello	3	2	3	2	3	13
Clarinet	3	2	2	2	1	10
Flute	3	3	2	1	1	10
French Horn				1		1
Guitar		9		6	9	24
Oboe	1	2				3
Percussion					3	3
Piano		4		1	5	10
Recorder		6		5		11
Saxophone				1	4	5
Tabla					4	4
Trombone	1		1			2
Trumpet	2	2	2	2	2	10
Violin	11	15	8	5	3	42
Total number of pupils in each school	24	45	18	26	35	Total number of pupils overall: 148

This in addition to the performances, workshops and other activities we run, this year reaching about 1,000 young people, costs well over £50,000 per year, and so **fundraising** is vital to us.

Our regular **concert series**, as well as raising money to fund our work, gives all our families and wider community the opportunity to experience a great range of pay-as-you-can live professional performances. Since January we have hosted concerts at Fielden Hall by Alyssium (contemporary a cappella) John Hingley (former lead-singer of Inspiral Carpets), Vocal Highs, St. Patrick's African Choir with John Haycock (kora player), Peadar Long and Daniel Bath (woodwind and piano improvisations).



Some of our fundraising champions this year:

- ❖ 3 Valleys Gospel Choir for our highest-earning fundraising event to date.
- ❖ Sam Stelling and all involved in Choirfest at St. James' Hebden Bridge.
- ❖ Joyee Cheung, Joe Bath and Todmorden Harriers for their long-distance running.
- ❖ The Trades Club for a fundraising concert on their centenary weekend.
- ❖ Scintilla and Jiggerie Folkerie for their ceilidh.'
- ❖ Antony Brannick for his chamber music recitals.
- ❖ Honey Andrews for her guitar gig.
- ❖ The Rotary Clubs of Halifax and Todmorden.
- ❖ St. Mary's Church for collecting donated instruments for our children to play.
- ❖ ALL OF YOU who have donated and fundraised for us this year.

We have recently welcomed our first two official **M4M Patrons**.

Jon Boden is one of Britain's best-loved folk singers, having risen to prominence performing with John Spiers and as the frontman of Bellowhead. He is the recipient of 11 BBC folk awards and 2 honorary degrees for his contribution to English traditional music, increasing awareness and access for all. We look forward to working more with Jon to promote the social benefits of music in our community and to get all our young people singing in harmony!



Rima Ahmed is a star of BBC Radio, as regular presenter of Radio Leeds' breakfast show and also heard on Radio 5 Live, Radio 4 and the World Service. She is a great advocate for equal opportunities for all young people in education and supports young artists starting off in their careers. We look forward to working with Rima in getting the vital message of M4M's work across to the world. Exciting times ahead!

Dates for your diary:

- ❖ Saturday 14th September 2024, Todmorden Station - *Platform 1 Festival* – art exhibition by Todmorden Art Group and performances from our young musicians.
- ❖ Saturday 21st September 2024, *Walsden Scarecrow Festival* – performance by our young musicians.
- ❖ Saturday 19th October 2024, Tod College – *fundraising ceilidh* – with music by Scintilla and Jiggerie Folkerie.
- ❖ Saturday 16th November 2024, Tod College – *Todmorden Book Festival* - M4M Youth Orchestra with poet Peter Sansom
- ❖ Saturday 25th January 2025, Todmorden Town Hall – *Family Concert*-with Todmorden Orchestra and our young musicians.

More details and other events to be announced soon.....



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Thanks for all your support!