

# Bridging the age gap

**Susan Elkin** reports on the work of Orchestra Europa

**A** GROUP of five- and six-year-olds is sitting in the balcony at LSO St Luke's in Islington, London. Below them a huge orchestra with 45 string players, double brass, five percussionists, harp and piano is rehearsing part of Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* ballet music for a concert the next day at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. The children watch attentively. They point excitedly but quietly.

This is the work of Orchestra Europa: an education project from beginning to end, not an artistic activity with education tacked on. The orchestra consists of very promising young players from conservatoires all over Europe for whom this is valuable performance experience.



OLIVE BARROA

'They are recommended by tutors and then we select by hearing and watching them play together,' says conductor Scott Ellaway, 27, whose idea and project this is. Professional players sit in the ranks of the orchestra, tutoring and mentoring the players.

The children in the gallery are from King Solomon Academy near Edgware Road. It has music and maths specialisms and is a new, all-age school. At present it has only Key Stage 1 and Year 7 pupils. 'It was discussions with the government which led to our choice of this school,' says Ellaway, explaining that he particularly wanted a 'through school' which values music. 'Europa players go into the school several times per term to run workshops,' he explains, adding that King

Solomon Academy has a strong focus on singing and group string playing.

At LSO St Luke's groups of KS1 children take it in turns to watch the rehearsal. At other times Peter West, Europa's Education Officer, and King Solomon Academy teachers lead them in activities designed to familiarise them with instruments of the orchestra.

Ellaway founded Orchestra Europa in 2006 following his experience in 2005 with Miami's New World Symphony under Michael Tilson Thomas, now boasting 600 alumni in orchestras around the world. It costs £500,000 a year to run, because professionals involved are 'paid properly' for what they do. 'We have no public funding and run on the generosity of individual donors and charitable trusts.'

The orchestra deliberately programmes mainstream repertoire (the overture *Bartered Bride* and Tchaikovsky's first piano concerto with soloist Alexander Melnikov follow the Prokofiev). 'It's the kind of music that orchestral musicians in a top orchestra are typically expected to play with very little rehearsal,' says Ellaway, adding that he also wants children to hear it and learn to enjoy this repertoire.

[www.orchestraeuropa.org](http://www.orchestraeuropa.org)

## BEGINNER WIND

16th - 19th July

Flute, Oboe, Clarinet,  
Saxophone, Recorder

*With a great team of expert tutors*

Age: 8 - 12 years

Ability: approx. Grades 1 - 4

## FLUTE

19th - 23rd July

STEPHEN O'REGAN  
and his team of tutors  
ROY STRATFORD -  
resident pianist

Age: 10 - 18 years

Ability: Grade 4 - 8+

## MUSIC MAKERS

24th - 27th July

For adult beginners who play  
orchestral instruments

Ability: Approx. Grade 2 - 5

## PIANO COURSE

29th July - 1st August

JAMES LISNEY  
SIMON NICHOLLS

*Four full days of music-making  
for advanced amateurs, students  
and teachers. Accent this year on  
Chopin and Schumann.*

Ability: Grade 7 - post Diploma

## HINDHEAD SUMMER MUSIC COURSES 2010



Glorious country house setting

- Six acre garden
- Heated swimming pool
- Superb home-cooking
- Friendly family atmosphere

\*

Courses are a blend of master-classes, chamber groups, workshops, technique classes, discussions, concerts, and free time for practice, swimming etc...

## CLARINET & SAXOPHONE

2nd - 6th August

PAUL SANDERS  
KYLE HORCH  
AMY DICKSON  
VICTORIA MEDCALF  
ALAN ANDREWS

Age: Adult & over 12 years

Ability: Grade 3 - Diploma+

## CELLO

8th - 12th August

WILLIAM BRUCE  
ALEXANDER BAILLIE  
JEREMY HUGHES  
ROBERT MAX  
SELMA GOKCEN  
DANIEL SWAIN

Age: 12 - 21 years

Ability: Grade 5 - post Diploma

## LITTLE CELLOS

15th - 18th August

JO HUGHES -  
CHAMBERLAIN  
Hugely inspiring  
course for young cellists

Age: 6 - 13 years

Ability: Approx Grade 1 - 4+

## DISCOVER MUSIC!

19th - 21st August

Discover the musical  
instruments and have fun  
with music!

*For children who do not yet  
play and those who have just  
started. Musically inspirational  
3 days for young children!*

Age: 6-10 years

## CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY MUSIC

23rd - 27th August

For those who play  
orchestral instruments

Age: 6 - 12 years

Ability: approx Grade 2 - 6

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