

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2020

Notes from Lockdown

Coronavirus has put the WYO into cold storage with no certainty yet as to when we can get back safely into the rehearsal room, let alone the concert hall. This is particularly hard on those leaving the orchestra, sometimes after many years. In normal times we send them off at our summer concert with a tribute from their colleagues and a live audience.

Instead we have asked each of them to tell us briefly what the Orchestra has meant to them (below). But first a message from our Musical Director Fredrik Holm.

The View from the Podium

As we know well by now, things are changing, and we have been forced to find new ways to deal with activities that we might have taken for granted earlier. Due to the Coronavirus we had to cancel the summer concert which was going to include seven new compositions written by myself as well as former students, conductors, professionals and amateurs. This concert is now rescheduled for next summer.

During the lockdown I have been in close contact with the Cumbria Music Service to organise a major Christmas event at the Kendal Leisure Centre which was going to take place at the end of this year. The concert would have featured a number of sparkling new songs as well as music from films such as *The Polar Express*, *What a Wonderful Life* and *Frozen*.



This project incorporated audience participation and a big choir made up of children from a number of local primary schools. Earlier in the spring we weren't sure if this performance would take place. I decided to prepare the programme and print all the music anyway. We managed to borrow some music from the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and I wrote a fanfare and an arrangement of a selection of famous Christmas songs. The concert, as I am sure you are aware, has been cancelled. However, all this work has not been in vain, as we will launch the production next autumn instead.

If you haven't seen our online video performance, please go onto our website where you can find a playable link. I wrote the piece in April as I felt a virus shouldn't stop us from making music. It's in honour of the NHS and has already been spread far and wide. It has been played on Radio Cumbria and will be played again in August (unfortunately I am not sure when at the moment). I even had a famous musician contacting me from London to thank me as he had seen the video on social media.

I have now realised how much easier it is to actually meet and play than doing it online. Creating parts, backing tracks and instructions for this online performance has been extensively time-consuming. I also had to mix the sound to create a sound track which Åsa Sandberg expertly put together into a video.

We are now busy planning the coming autumn. Our aim is to find something for everyone to do. We obviously have to make sure that all activities are safe, so we are looking at putting together a range of smaller groups to ensure that we can keep appropriate social distancing and hygiene. As soon as we have moved further with the planning process, we will let you know.

Personally, I can't wait until I can actually see you all again IRL (In Real Life). And before I stop writing and have a cup of PBT (Proper British Tea), I would like to thank everyone for all the support and input we have had during this difficult time. (Don't know if you noticed, but I have become a genuine Brit - I say please and drink tea as often as I can and I have started to use weird abbreviations in every sentence!)

Fredrik

Putting it Together

I have always felt that video editing is a very 'musical' job. The change of pictures must come in a certain rhythm and if the editing is done correctly, the viewer should not be aware of the editing procedure at all. It should all just feel very natural. So the editor's job is basically remarkably like a cleaner's – you only notice it if it suddenly isn't done; or in the editor's case, if the picture sequence doesn't flow in a natural rhythm.



With this video it was important to me that all the youngsters got their own moment in the video. They had all made the effort to set everything up to be able to film it and play as brilliantly as they did despite the presence of the camera – an element that can sometimes feel very intrusive. Therefore, I opted for one musician's video at the time, instead of multiple windows. I felt that approach made it much more personal.

Having made that choice, I tried to place the 32 video clips at the place in the melody where their instrument played a main part, so to speak. Hopefully, I did everyone justice.

Åsa Sandberg, video editor of Homage to NHS

2020 Leavers

Imogen Banfield (violin)

I have played violin in WYO since I was 13. Being with the orchestra for almost 5 years, I've grown so much as a musician, but have also seen the orchestra grow and change too, and it's been a huge part of my life. Music is so special to me, and it always will be, but to me WYO is about more than just the music. It's about the friends I've made being a part of the orchestra, and the confidence it has given me – never would I have thought when I started WYO that by the time I'd left I'd have sung one of my favourite jazz standards with the orchestra and have led a concert! I'm so grateful to everyone who has been a part of my time here and will miss you all! Thank you.

Next year I'm hoping to go to Leeds to study English Literature and Theatre Studies, and although Music won't be a part of my course, I'll be looking to join Music societies, which I'm sure will form a big part of my life at University, as music clubs and WYO have during my time at school.



Rosemary Kelly (trombone)



It feels like a long time since I started playing in the WYO brass feeder group eight years ago. I can't thank Stella and Graham enough for the support and encouragement they have given me over the years. I'm sure the trombone section will double in volume now that I am gone!

Next year I will be studying liberal arts in Deep Springs College, California. I doubt there'll be much potential for orchestral playing, the university has only 28 students, but I hope to play in a small band or at least sing in their choir.

Kirsty Laverack (clarinet)

My time with WYO over the last couple of years has been so much fun! I have loved the diversity and excitement that each performance has brought. One that sticks out to me the most, however, was my first ever – I couldn't help but bop my head along whilst playing Danzón No.2. It is now one of my favourite orchestral pieces. Fredrik's most recent Mario outfit comes in a close second though!

In September I hope to be attending Sheffield University to study English Literature. There I hope to join a wind band or orchestra. In the meantime, I am tackling some tricky Crusell on the clarinet and trying my hand at saxophone....



Zoe Lovell (trumpet)



When I joined WYO I was their youngest member and it was my first real experience of orchestral music which has led to me being the musician I am today, opening doors for me in the musical world such as the Liverpool Youth Philharmonic Orchestra. I am especially grateful to Stella Crompton who has taught and inspired me since I was six and I hope to continue learning with her. I thoroughly enjoyed playing my concerto with the orchestra and was so glad everyone took to the challenge and gave a great performance!

My plans to study music and modern languages at university next year are on hold, but I aim to take my diploma next term and am making plans to live and work in Grenoble as an au pair, where I hope there will be new musical opportunities.

Maciek Rzepczyk (violin)

Thanks to Fredrik Holm and Roland Fudge, two phenomenal WYO conductors and composers, I explored and learnt how to express a broad selection of musical styles. With Pam, I worked on teamwork, leadership and listening skills. I developed my musicianship skills through practical interactions with other great players. Stuart's Jazz Band gave me an incredible chance to explore the violin from completely different angles and with numerous nuances. I will never forget the flash mob with Fredrik and the fantastic cooperation with my desk-buddies. Thank you for the music and a fantastic and welcoming atmosphere you all created. In September I am starting the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. Hopefully, it is going to be a smooth and easy transition after lockdown.



Charlotte Salisbury (harp)

Playing with the WYO has been such a great experience, and has really helped me grow as a musician, especially through the variety of different music I got the opportunity to play, from dance music to film music. Although the harp is notorious for counting more bars than playing, I loved every minute, and my sight-reading has improved beyond belief!

I am going to study medicine at university, but I will most definitely be lugging the harp along with me (we might need several cars!) and hopefully carrying on playing both as a soloist and in an orchestra.



Daniel Slater (viola)

WYO has been an important part of my musical education, helping me to transfer to the viola shortly after joining as a violinist. It has allowed me to explore composing as well, enabling me to create and perform my own solo with an orchestra at the (2019) Christmas concert. I would like to thank Fredrik for suggesting that I attempt this and having the confidence in me. A big thank you goes to Debby Howrie, who helped me throughout my time as a young viola player – encouraging me with such enthusiasm!

Next year I will be studying a Nautical Science degree at Fleetwood, through a scholarship from the Merchant Navy, having been a Sea Cadet for many years. In the future I aim to keep playing music, whether it be with an amateur orchestra or in the Sea Cadets Corps.



Ellie Tucker (viola)

When I joined WYO in year 9 I was very shy and lacking in any musical confidence. Playing in the orchestra for the last four years has not only improved my playing ability and skill, but massively boosted my confidence. Debby and my fellow viola players were a huge support and made every week really fun and entertaining. I've made lots of great friends through the orchestra and I've learned a lot.

Playing the viola has always just been about fun for me and I hope to continue with music in some form or other throughout my life. I'm hoping to go to university to study English Literature after school, but I fully intend to keep playing my viola by joining a string group or orchestra there.