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The Cat's Whisker

Community Music Wales

Spring Newsletter 2014

Training—Inspire through Music

This year we will be running an expanded programme of training for community music practitioners across Wales.

CMW believes that participating in music activity can inspire, having a transformative effect on participants. We are committed to training practitioners, both new and experienced. We believe that the learning never stops so are expanding our programme to contain more work. We have short introductory courses, additional practical modules and one day sessions of continued professional development.

We will be running two five-day courses which act as an introduction to community music practice, in Bangor in June and Wrexham in July. The course will give trainees an understanding of community music and support trainees to deliver good quality, inspiring and safe community music sessions. The course aims both to develop essential core competencies and to celebrate and encourage individuality and diversity. The course is both informative and practical, with opportunities to try things out and discuss real life experiences. Central to the course is fostering an attitude of reflective practice and continuing professional development – encouraging people to learn from each-other and from their own experiences and to go on doing this beyond the course. Music, creativity and people will be at the core of all that we do. We expect people to come to the course because of their passion for both music and for working with people. We expect them to become effective as music leaders for the same reason.

Our CPD sessions will include days on dealing with challenging behaviour, icebreaking exercises, setting up equipment for workshops and performance, first aid training for tutors, health and safety, child protection, self employment, basic video editing/making, advanced drumming and percussion techniques for workshops, reflective practice with skill sharing and action learning techniques.

Keep an eye on our website for the dates as they're published or contact us for more information.



Trainees sharing skills at our training course in the Atrium, Cardiff in February this year



Welcome

to the spring edition
of the Cat's Whisker.

Spring is upon us! As always we've had a busy few months. We were successful in our application for three year core funding from Esmee Fairburn Foundation, which you can read about overleaf. We also had great news about our Ciwddod project which has had its funding extended for a further year. Ciwddod is 10 this year and we're planning some exciting celebrations which we'll let you know about asap.

We've been working on a large training package to deliver training courses across Wales over the summer and are looking forward to meeting new trainees enthused about community music. We're also remain committed to the fantastic tutors we currently work with and will be offering them more CDP over the coming year.

Our Soundworks project is coming into its final year which will see us expanding the project across South Wales in a variety of performance, song writing and studio skills workshops.

We're excited for our Project Officer Martin Hoyland and his band 9Bach's new album. *Tincian* will be released on none other than Peter Gabriel's Real World Records, on the 12th of May.

We want to give a huge thank you to Rhys Lewis for donating amps to us for us in our community workshops. If you have any working instruments or music equipment that you no longer want, we promise that they would be looked after well and used to help communities take part in music making.

Thanks for reading!
Hannah Jenkins, Director



National Lottery Awards

We are delighted by the news that our Horizons Engagement Project has been nominated for a National Lottery Award.

This was a collaborative project between Community Music Wales, Ty Cerdd, Live Music Now and Music Development Cardiff. The creative vision behind this programme was to capitalise on WOMEX 2013 coming to Cardiff by providing additional activity and opportunities for communities in Cardiff and the surrounding area to engage with the world class music being showcased. Development Manager Emyllt Williams said "I'm so pleased that this project has been nominated. I enjoyed my experience at WOMEX immensely and being able to use that as a springboard to inspire others was fantastic."

The project was led by CMW and funded by the Arts Council of Wales.



Soundworks!

Soundworks is a three year project working with young people aged 12 to 18. The project engages young people in music making by providing a variety of music activities from recording tracks to making animated videos with a soundtrack. The project aims to increase the confidence, employability, aspirations and basic skills of young people in South Wales.

For the first year the project concentrated on working with young people in Newport based around the Riverfront Centre. These young people were mentored whilst they wrote original music and recorded tracks. They had a masterclass from Akil from Jurassic 5 and performed the work created with him in Newport in collaboration with Urban Circle. Akil is a keen supporter of community music in Los Angeles and was very impressed with their work.



We ran soundwalks with St Julian's School and Newport High School. We also worked closely with Communities First on their Aspire Project, which offers alternative provision that allows pupils the opportunity to achieve and reach their full potential when they finish year 11. We have continued to create music with participants from the Aspire project and they recently went to the studio to record.



The project continues with more workshops over the next year. We're delighted to have the musician Richard Thair working on the project by mentoring a group of young people in Powys, who will come together to create music as a group.

You can watch the video we made with Akil, the soundwalks and see photos from the project on our website.

We'll keep updating you throughout the year so don't forget to follow us on Twitter and Facebook to get the latest on this exciting Children In Need funded project.

The Suitcase Sound Walk

In November Community Music Wales visited Llangiwig Primary school in Pontardawe with the Soundwalk project. It was organised in collaboration with Neath Port Talbot Arts Centre. Soundwalk is a really creative project, which involves not only experiments with sound, but also using animation tools, such as drawing "talking heads", creating images with small objects, taking photos and videos. The pupils from Llangiwig had two days of Soundwalk workshops. The first day was focused on finding ideas for the final piece, which all the children were going to create together. They even wrote a poem with Mike from Literature Wales! All the ideas were evolving around a very simple, yet a mysterious object – a suitcase.

So, the suitcase. What's in it? It can be anything and everything: a giant cooked breakfast, a cheesecake on the phone to ice-cream, a hot coffee drinking coffee, a little bit of dust, another suitcase in the suitcase and many other things. Having created this imaginary world, the following day the pupils went for a walk with cameras, sound recorders, pencils and pieces of paper to collect anything interesting from around them: sounds, pictures, small objects – anything that can be inside the suitcase. Later they worked in groups using technology and software to create music and animation from all the sounds and images they had gathered during the two days. All that music and animation was then brought together to produce the final video called The Suitcase.

On the 11th February The Arts Centre in Pontardawe was celebrating the 10th anniversary of Community Arts projects, and as a part of the celebration young people from several schools, including Llangiwig, were participating in different arts workshops. Chris Dawson, CMW project officer, was happy to be there and present the project results on a big screen. The audience saw not only the final composition, but also a video about the workshops and how the pupils were creating the images and sounds.

Llangiwig Primary School was not the first to participate in Soundwalk, and the project has been very successful with young people. Hopefully, more and more pupils will get involved and will enjoy experimenting with sounds and animation to create a unique composition.

The project was funded Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.



Hergest Rock!

During February and March this year we worked with Ysbyty Gwynedd on a series of workshops in their Hergest Unit which is devoted to mental health.

The participants were engaged in music making to build confidence, and teamwork, whilst learning new skills and having fun.

We took a selection of instruments, including drums, bass, guitar, keyboards and percussion to the hospital every week. Participants started writing their own songs together and as individuals. The reaction to the project was great with participants saying they enjoyed being creative and that listening to, and making music, made them feel happy. Some participants were trying instruments for the first time and several said they wanted to continue with structured lessons.

The staff of the hospital added that it was a great experience for the participants, and the activity was a much needed way for service users to let off energy which helped them to focus and achieve results. Our tutors really enjoyed working at Ysbyty Gwynedd and we hope to work with them again in the future.



CMW Funding News

We are delighted to announce that CMW will be receiving three years of core funding from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. This will help support us to deliver our Wales wide programme of training, mentoring and workshops.



**Esmée
Fairbairn
FOUNDATION**

Hannah Jenkins, Director of CMW said, "We were extremely pleased to receive this news. We've had an excellent working relationship with Esmée Fairbairn Foundation in the past and are excited to be looking forward."

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation aims to improve the quality of life for people and communities throughout the UK both now and in the future. They do this by funding the charitable work of organisations they believe have the ideas and ability to achieve positive change.

The Foundation is one of the largest independent grant-makers in the UK. They make grants of £30 - £35 million annually towards a wide range of work within the arts, education and learning, the environment and social change. They also operate a £26 million Finance Fund which invests in organisations that aim to deliver both a financial return and a social benefit.

For up to the minute news and project information:
www.communitymusicwales.co.uk

Great British Harry-off

With Spring in the air, our Noiseworks dog Harry is all a-flutter over the Great British Bake Off. We keep telling him he's too early but he's determined to practise his best cakes in a bid to impress the new BBC 1 audience. We're not sure how his paws will manage with Paul Hollywood's bread kneading but Harry's mini me cakes look like a winning showstopper to us.



Mary Berry was unavailable for comment.

Staff Profile



Hannah Thomas
**Administration & Accreditation
Officer**

Hannah supports the organisation's Administration and oversees all of CMW's accreditation; working as an internal verifier, collecting and assessing evidence. She also develops new units alongside the Project Officers. Hannah has experience of working in schools as a teaching assistant and has book keeping experience. She is interested in travel and has lived in Australia.

If you had to be stuck in a lift with anyone who would it be?

Stephen Fry

Favourite film?

Labyrinth

What was the last album you bought?

Not sure, Arctic Monkeys or The Black Keys possibly

What is your greatest fear?

Being made to listen to Abba on loop!

Which person do you most admire and why?

My grandad, he was just awesome!

What's the first gig you went to?

Catania at Margam Park

Cat or dog?

I really like both but deep down I'm more of a cat person

Star sign?

Virgo

If you could have an alternative career what would you be?

A Milliner and at least once a week I would dress as the Mad Hatter

What do you like to do when you're not in work?

Watching films, cooking, sleeping and anything that involves being in the sun (obviously when applicable)

Focus on Community Arts Practice

Last week we went to the ArtWorks Cymru Conference 'Creating a Community of Practice' in Llandrindod Wells. Artworks said that "the conference was a chance for us all to have a true sector wide conversation that includes our leading participatory artists, arts organisations, commissioners, thinkers and participants". The conference was an opportunity to meet with others to explore how we can work together to build a stronger and more confident participatory arts sector, and create a shared view on assuring quality and a joined up training network for artists, organisations and participants.

We did a project presentation about our Soundworks project and saw a number of other presentations which both interesting and inspiring from a variety of participatory practices including theatre, circus, puppetry, music and dance.

ArtWorks: Developing Practice in Participatory Settings is a special initiative which supports the continuing professional development of artists working in participatory settings. CMW have been a project partner since ArtWorks Cymru's inception. Hannah Jenkins, Director said "As an organisation working with a large amount of community music practitioners across Wales, we are committed to supporting them and their work. This conference was an opportunity for us to talk about our values as a sector, to share ideas and best practice. This can only make our work more effective and help us to have a positive effect on participants, and practitioners', lives".



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Tell us what you think!

It's been five years since we started publishing the Cat's Whisker, and we'd like to know your opinion on it. What do you think of our stories? Would you like more? Maybe you'd like less? Is there anything else you'd like to know about our work? Would you prefer an email only newsletter?

Drop us a line, give us a ring, let us know what you think – we'd really appreciate your feedback.

All our contact details are above
Thank you, we'd love to hear from you!

CMW



Tafwyl

Tafwyl is back this year with a week of activities from July the 11th to the 18th. Tafwyl is the annual festival established by Menter Caerdydd in 2006 to celebrate the use of Welsh in Cardiff.

On the 12th Tafwyl fair will be in Cardiff Castle grounds once again and CMW will be there. We'll be presenting a diverse program of workshops throughout the day as part of our long standing project Ciwddod. In the morning you will have the opportunity to create digital music or try your hand at West African drumming. In the afternoon we will be delivering music workshops so you can experience what it's like to be in a band - learn how to write songs and jam alongside some of our expert musicians. You can also join our Junk Orchestra by creating your very own instruments using recycled junk, which you can keep and take home with you.

www.tafwyl.org



Inspiring through Music