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The Cat's Whisker

Community Music Wales

Winter Newsletter 2013

MEDIEVAL MASH-UP

We are very excited by our new project Medieval Mash Up which celebrates the 400 year anniversary of the Robert ap Huw Manuscript, with a series of workshops re-examining the work using traditional Welsh folk music and contemporary music.



Robert ap Huw was a Welsh harpist and copyist, born circa 1580. He is most notable for compiling a manuscript, now known as the 'Robert ap Huw Manuscript', which is the main extant source of cerdd dant and is a late medieval collection of harp music. Robert Ap Huw's manuscript is considered one of the most important sources of early Welsh music. Robert Ap Huw used Binary music in his manuscript as his form of music notation. This notational concept dates back to ancient Greece and was used extensively throughout Europe during the medieval period as form of recording and preserving music of the time. 2013 sees the 400th anniversary of Robert Ap Huw's retrospective compilation manuscript of traditional Welsh binary music. Robert Evans and Mary Anne Roberts of the traditional Welsh folk band Bragod, have been studying, recording and performing the manuscript to audiences throughout Europe. On this project they are working with CMW on a series of workshops with young people in Cardiff, Llanelli, Caernarfon and Anglesey.

The participants are working with the manuscript, examining concepts of binary music and learning about their musical heritage. Our CMW trained and experienced tutors will work alongside Bragod and contemporary music producers to record and perform their interpretations of the manuscript. Participants are getting to grips with traditional folk instruments such as the crwth and the lyre and responding to them by incorporating modern musical styles.

Through this fusion of modern music recording and performance technologies with ancient traditional methods, the project will bring Robert Ap Huw's manuscript into the modern era.

The project will have its own website where you can keep up with activity and see what the participants have been composing; we'll publish details as soon as the website goes live.

This project is funded by The Heritage Lottery Fund.



Welcome

to the winter edition
of the Cat's Whisker.

We've had a great autumn at CMW. We were successful in getting funding for a number of major music projects in Wales, such as the Horizons Engagement Project funded by the Arts Council of Wales, which you can read about overleaf. We attended the WOMEX festival in Cardiff which was both exciting and inspiring. We made links with other organisations involved in community music in the UK and across the world, and we hope to have more news developing from this in the future.

We welcome a new member of staff in Anastasia Savchenko who joins us as a Project Assistant. We're also currently recruiting for an Accreditation and Administration Officer so look forward to a new face in the office soon.

We're continuing to work with ArtWorks Cymru exploring practice in a participatory setting. We're committed to constantly improving standards of delivery and exploring how community arts, particularly music, can be developed so sharing ideas with other organisations and practitioners from across the nations and in different disciplines has been very interesting.

We were sad to say goodbye to Mirain Evans who left us after two and a half years of steering the fantastic Ciwddod scheme. We will miss her but wish her the very best of luck in her new job.

Finally congratulations to tutors Huw Owen and Helyn Latimer who both ran the Cardiff Half Marathon – we're very proud of you!

Merry Christmas!

Hannah Jenkins, Director



Horizons Engagement

This is a very unique project which is a collaborative project between four of Wales's major music organisations Community Music Wales, Ty Cerdd, Live Music Now and Music Development Cardiff. The project is being led by CMW and is funded by the Arts Council of Wales.

The creative vision behind this programme is 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.

The programme incorporates music workshops with musicians from across the world working in schools, community venues, centres for Older People and very small children, alongside a specially developed Education Pack.

Here are some stories about CMW's projects:

Beats Orchestra

On the last Saturday in October we were in Cardiff Central Library. In our workshop we created a beats orchestra, using DJ decks and drumming and percussion instruments. The participants and tutors Ron, Joel and Nastia collected sounds from in and around the library space and using music technology programmes manipulated them to create a backing track which can now be heard on our Facebook page. The group then performed, showing off their drumming skills in the Library itself during their regular Saturday gig slot, and the audience watching the performance can join in – filling the library with great music.



Colombian Rhythms in Caerphilly

Together with the WOMAD Foundation, we ran a day in two schools in Caerphilly with Colombian musicians Mauricio Velasierra and Camilo Menjura. The musicians were very enthusiastic, we could tell straight away that they had music in their blood. When we met them at the Caerphilly train station, we could read from their faces, "Let's play some music!" - and so we did.

St. Martin's school welcomed us in the warmest way, a group of music GCSE students were sitting in the music room, looking excited but still a bit shy. Ten minutes later all of them, with drums in their hands, were trying a Colombian rhythm called Cumbia. Mauricio and Camilo created that amazing atmosphere at the workshop, that students started improvising, sharing their ideas and trying to incorporate their instruments into the composition they were creating as a group. Everyone enjoyed it so much, time passed so quickly, it was a great start of the day, and everyone left happy and inspired.

The next stop – Twyn School. Twenty-eight year six students - the room was buzzing with excitement! These kids didn't stop at just playing rhythms – they learnt some bits of a song in Spanish! With all those instruments, and being led by Mauricio and Camilo, the pupils created a "sound story" about an elephant. It was a great day of music, creativity and fun, and for a day Caerphilly felt that exciting Columbian energy.





Take Over Cardiff!

At some point, when we are young we wish we could have more power or independence so that we could make things work the way we want. We're full of energy, fresh ideas and enthusiasm that need to find the way out. This is what the British Council's Takeover Cardiff is about, it is created and curated and run by young people, for young people.

The idea behind Takeover Cardiff is to create an exciting platform for youth education and art activity. This year Takeover Cardiff was presented as a launch to the public. It took place on the 12th October in a number of significantly important places in Cardiff, including the Senedd and Wales Millennium Centre. The launch itself, from developing ideas to managing the event on the day, was done by young people from Wales, Brazil and New Zealand.

This event was a one-day taster, the full Takeover itself will take place in 2014, when young people from different countries will collaborate in person and online to work on a big youth engagement project.

CMW is a Takeover Cardiff partner, so for the launch event we were working with Ballet Nimba and Ysgol Plasmawr. The young people from Ysgol Plasmawr attended the workshops organised by CMW and Ballet Nimba where they could learn more about African rhythms, improvise and compose their own work. On the day of the Takeover Cardiff launch the audience could see the amazing composition that was performed by Ballet Nimba and the school students.

Preparing for the performance was a great pleasure for everyone, the students enjoyed the energy of African rhythms and the musicians were impressed by the students' talents, particularly their ability to improvise and innovate ideas. For the Plasmawr students working with Ballet Nimba was a fascinating new experience, great fun and another reason to love music.



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

Space—Walkies!

Laika may have been the first dog in space, but our very own Noiseworks dog Harry was the first dog to undertake a spacewalk. Harry was delighted to see a fictional account of his astronaut days hitting the cinema in 3D blockbuster smash Gravity. Although initially unhappy with the script for making his character female, he felt the overall story was worth telling, he said "it is fiction after all, and I'm not going to give away the ending".

Sandra Bullock was not available for comment.



Staff Profile



Anastasia Savchenko
Project Assistant

Nastia joined CMW in September as part of the EVS Volunteer Scheme, from Buy in Russia. She will work with us for ten months

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

Vladimir Putin. It would be nice to have a friendly chat with him.

Favourite film?

Closer

What was the last album you bought?

I think it was "Piece of my soul" by Garou.

What is your greatest fear?

At the moment it is death, I think. There's still a lot I haven't done!

Which person do you most admire and why?

My mum. Even though she has lived her whole life in a tiny town in Central Russia and has never been abroad, she stays open-minded and supports me in everything I do.

What's the first gig you went to?

It probably was a gig of some local Russian bands in a small club called "Bosikom" (Barefeet)

Cat or dog?

To be honest, I don't like pets. But if I am to choose from the two, then it's definitely a dog.

Star sign?

Gemini

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

A programmer/coder, a fashion designer or a choreographer.

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

Walking, watching films, dancing, working out in the gym, cooking and eating it (more eating, than cooking).





WHAT NEXT?

There are so many things you can do in life, so many paths for you to choose from, that sometimes you wish someone had told you about them before. What will you do when you finish school? Can you be good at it? And how to find out whether you will like it or not? So many questions and not enough time to try different things...

Luckily, young people from different parts of Wales had this opportunity at "WHAT NEXT? '13" event thanks to

Careers Wales and other participating organisations. On Friday, October 11, Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Centre turned into a mini zoo, a hair salon, a construction site and even a kitchen - and all of that in one place! Colleges, youth centres and organisations were telling young people about the career paths they can pursue after they finish school. But they were not only telling, they were showing and engaging everyone to participate in different activities: you could try on a police uniform, score a goal, create new hairstyles, lay bricks, polish car parts and even create your own beats at the DJ decks. The more activities you do - the more stickers you get and the higher your chances are to get a prize! So, the young people were really excited to try as many new things as possible.

Since we believe that music is powerful and has a big impact on people's lives, Community Music Wales couldn't stay away from this event. Represented by our tutor Joel, CMW showed that such exciting thing as DJing can be performed by anyone, and it can be more than just a hobby. The greatest thing was to see happy smiles and shining eyes when everyone a chance to spin and scratch a record following the beat. Who knows, maybe some of them will find their place in community music.



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Fun at the Bwrlwm workshop in Ysgol Penycae

Ciwddod news!

Ciwddod has been running some of our very popular school rock workshops over the past few months. We were in Ysgol y Preseli, Crymych and Ysgol Ystalyfera encouraging pupils to form a band and write a rock song within a day with the help of a our tutor Mei. The resulting songs were fantastic and can be heard on our Facebook page .

Ciwddod also ran junk instrument making workshops with Menter Iaith Caerdydd as part of their Bwrlwm scheme, which offers Welsh language holiday activities for children. Participants made instruments with our tutor Fran from recycled materials and got together to play them for a special performance.



A fusion of genres at Ysgol Ystalyfera



Ysgol y Preseli



Bringing Communities Together Through Music