



PRESS RELEASE

March 2009

The Henley Festival's music in schools event a great success

Two local primary and two local secondary schools got together recently to present a performance of the work designed to hone their music-making skills – and all thanks to The Henley Festival. The event was held at Christ Church, Henley-on-Thames on 20th March. In the run up to the performance, music workshops were led by Andy Baker (Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra) and Joby Burgess (percussion specialist) and funded by The Henley Festival. The creative music project was designed to extend a Henley Festival outreach project that saw murals created in 10 schools at the end of last year. Schools who took part in Friday's performance were: Langtree School, Woodcote (yr 11 GCSE music students), Gillotts School Henley (yr 10 music students), Shiplake Primary, and Crazies Hill Primary, Wargrave.

10 Henley area schools have been working with the Henley Festival SHOUT team since September, looking at cultural influences across the continents of the world. Large scale visual arts company Hugh Jart created the giant murals with each school before Christmas and professionals from the worlds of dance and music have been leading creative workshops to prepare performance pieces inspired by the works of art.

During Friday night's performance - A musical tour of Africa and South America - students from 4 schools performed against a backdrop of two of the 20' x 6' murals - Ghana and Brazil. The evening opened with an energetic rendition of the Swahili Song 'Ka Lay Lif' by Crazies Hill Primary and their arrangement of Abdullah Ibrahim's 'African Market Place' for percussion and vocals. Langtree School have a close link with a school in Ghana in West Africa, and their year 10 music students performed a rhythmically tight traditional 'Kpanalogo' from Ghana on West African drums. The programme then moved to South American and a wonderfully put together Samba by Shiplake Primary School using a mixture of vocal sounds and percussion rhythms. Gillotts School music students brought the evening to a rousing finale with their performance of 'Oye Come Va'. The audience had their work cut out for them too, brought to their feet several times to learn the African and South American rhythms on body percussion.

The music programme will continue in schools after Easter with students working towards a performance as part of the Henley Festival on 12th July. All 10 of the giant murals will be displayed along the riverbank during Henley Festival week 8th - 12th July.

**14 Friday Street, Henley-on-Thames
Oxfordshire RG9 1AH**

This initiative was made possible by the Henley Festival Trust and is funded by Henley Festival Trust membership income, Festival sponsorship and ticket sales. For more information on the Henley Festival's schools' outreach work, visit The Henley Festival website at www.henley-festival.co.uk

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Henley Festival Trust

As in previous years, all net proceeds from Henley Festival 2009 will go direct to the Henley Festival Trust to finance charitable activity. Examples of this valuable, and much appreciated, work include providing: music and arts activity in local schools, instruments for promising young musicians and music therapy for brain-injured attendees at Headway day centre in Henley-on-Thames.

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