

RSNO launch schools programme



Nationwide music programme for schools launched with national composition competition for 12-18 year olds

RSNO Engage for Schools most ambitious Scotland-wide orchestral music initiative to date

From May, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO) will provide the most comprehensive orchestra-led music access programme to primary and secondary schools across Scotland. In terms of scale and choice, RSNO Engage for Schools is the first of its kind in the UK, as education establishments can pick and choose the level of music education provision they require from over thirty options.

Headlining the new initiative, the RSNO launches a national composition competition, in partnership with the National Trust for Scotland, open to 12 to 18 year olds across the country. Notes From Scotland invites young composers to write a two-minute work for an instrumental trio, quartet or quintet. The theme for the first year's Notes From Scotland is inspired by five National Trust locations around the country.

BAFTA, GRAMMY and Ivor Novello award-winning composer Craig Armstrong OBE, famed for his soundtracks to blockbusters such as Moulin Rouge!, Love Actually and The Great Gatsby, welcomed the move: "This is a fantastic idea to engage young people in composition and to bring them together with existing composers and musicians to pass on their knowledge and skills. I'm sure it will be an invaluable experience for all concerned."

RSNO Engage for Schools comprises four distinct sections; RSNO PLAY – performance-based workshops, RSNO CREATE – composition workshops, RSNO LISTEN – exploring musical concepts and appreciation, and RSNO WATCH – educational performances. Among

the many available activities and workshops are conducting lessons, improvisation for beginners, samba workshops, instrumental coaching, digital composition sessions, an Instrument Petting Zoo (where children can play with orchestral instruments for the first time), and, from January 2015, a cross-Atlantic collaboration with US orchestras examining the music of American composers.

Last June the RSN0 published the first ever careers booklet created by an orchestra, providing information on available courses and further education opportunities as well as case studies and insights into the workings of a modern professional symphony orchestra.

The booklet is available from the [RSN0 website](#). Now the Orchestra will be providing work experience opportunities to fifty young people each year, where pupils will assume control of Scotland's national orchestra over a two-day period, with a view to planning, producing and performing their own concert at the end of the placement.

RSN0 Engage for Schools is devised to be fully integrated into the goals of the national Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), offering increased music education and learning provisions through new concerts for every level of CfE from age 3 – 18 years. It is intended that, in its first year, over fifty thousand young people in Scotland will benefit from engaging with some form of RSN0 Engage activity.

The RSN0 Engage for Schools is part of the RSN0 Engage initiative, announced last year, which has led to a five-fold increase in the number of people enjoying music with Scotland's national orchestra outside of its Season performances. A notable success story is the RSN0's Young Ambassadors scheme, which invites young people aged 16 to 18 to help promote the live orchestral experience in their area. There is now at least one RSN0 Young Ambassador for every local authority in Scotland, and the attendance of audience

members under 26 years old has risen to 15% across Scotland and nearly 20% in Glasgow as a result.

RSNO Director of Learning and Engagement Jenn Minchin: “We’re very excited to be unveiling our new programme, RSNO Engage for Schools. Its development is geared towards providing the most valuable experience in terms of musical enjoyment and understanding, and provides a seamless integration with schools curriculum requirements at all levels. What’s more, it is available to every school across the country, and those who choose to engage with Scotland’s national orchestra can do so at the level of their choice. It promises to be the most ambitious learning and engagement drive of any performing arts organisation in the UK, and we are very much looking forward to sharing our love of music with many new enthusiasts.”

For more information on RSNO Engage for Schools, contact the RSNO Engage Team

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Photo of RSNO Principal Trombone Davur Juul Magnussen and Col Young from St John’s School, Perth by Fraser Band