

# spotlight

on Children & the Arts

Winter Edition

## THE EXTRAORDINARY HEIGHTS THE ARTS CAN REACH

by Jeremy Newton, CEO Children & the Arts



I have recently begun work as the new Chief Executive of The Prince's Foundation for Children & the Arts and feel both honoured and excited by the opportunity to help make a real difference to the lives of a great many children. Like a lot of people (though, sadly, by no means all), I was fortunate enough to have a number of inspirational experiences of the arts whilst I was growing up.

Frequent visits to the theatre with my parents and to the cinema with my older sister were a supremely important part of my 'education' and instilled a lifelong habit which has enriched my life immeasurably. A love of Ben Travers farces and Hollywood musicals was instilled in me before the age of 7 and I have similarly strived to ensure that the arts have formed an equally crucial part of my own children's life.

Some experiences in particular revealed the extraordinary heights which the arts can reach - seeing Nureyev dance in "Romeo and Juliet", school trips to Stratford to see "Richard II" and "A Winter's Tale", watching "2001: A Space Odyssey" in full 70mm Cinerama, and many more examples, have inspired and moved me, as well as influencing my subsequent life and career in more ways than it would be possible to explain or fully understand.

Nevertheless, during the thirty years in which I have been working professionally in the arts, I have been frequently reminded that my own experience is far from universal. Throughout those three decades, I have witnessed a great many honourable attempts to develop programmes of education, access and outreach in an effort to broaden the social and economic mix of those who experience and participate in the arts. In fact, I've been responsible for devising one or two of them myself, but I would have to confess that all that effort has not created the kind of cultural shift which it was striving to bring about.

Far too many children remain untouched by the arts, denied access to all they have to offer. They are (or at least feel) excluded from a world which seems obscure, elitist and divorced from their real concerns and experiences. His Royal Highness's inspired and inspirational vision is to find, at last, a way to break through these barriers and the challenge of helping to bring that vision to reality is one I find both irresistible and energising.

## START SNAPSHOT: CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Birmingham Symphony Orchestra opened its second year of the Start programme with a workshop day for over 100 students from four secondary schools in Birmingham. The students came together to listen to, make and perform live music together and explore behind the scenes at Symphony Hall. At the end of the day students came together to share what they had learnt in a performance on stage.

**I really liked the day, because I was able to express my feelings in many different ways.**

Pupil, Aston Manor ”

In addition to the workshop, the CBSO performed an interactive concert designed especially for the Start students, entitled, "Symphonic Spectacular". The conductor worked directly with the pupils by breaking the orchestral piece down into sections, identifying motifs and inviting pupils to sit amongst the players.

**Start gives them the chance to learn and experience things that they can't learn in school. It is wonderful way of introducing them to a broad range of music.**

Teacher, Aston Manor School ”



## CHILDREN & THE ARTS CELEBRATE THE PRINCE OF WALES'S 60TH BIRTHDAY

On Friday 14th November 2008 TRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall attended a concert in the Paul Hamlyn Hall at the Royal Opera House, for 200 children who have taken part in music programmes run by Children & the Arts.

The concert, which took place on The Prince of Wales's 60th Birthday, saw The Philharmonia Orchestra perform some of his favorite pieces from Wagner to Elgar. Half way through the concert children sang a surprise rendition of Happy Birthday for the Prince and he was later presented with 'The Birthday Book' by Children & the Arts ambassadors Michael Morpurgo and Quentin Blake.

Footage of the concert can be viewed on [The Royal YouTube Channel](#).



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## AUCTION UPDATE

The Arts and Inspiration Auction hosted by Fleming Family & Partners at the Fleming collection raised a staggering **£66,000**. This will fund 2130 children through one of our programmes, so a big thank you to everyone who was involved and to all those that bid on auction lots, we hope you are enjoying your prizes! The event was sponsored by Radley + Co and supported by StratREAL Foundation and Laurent Perrier.

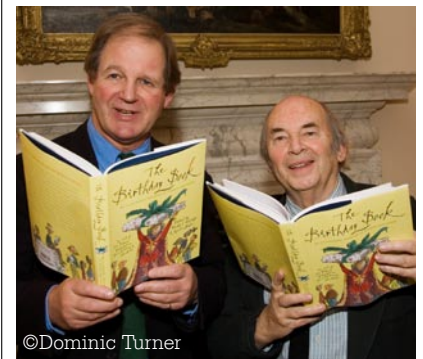
## JOIN THE PRINCE'S CHARITIES COMMUNITY

Have you joined the Prince's Charities Community Website [www.princescharities.org](http://www.princescharities.org) yet? Since its launch this summer the site has received an enthusiastic response from many of the Prince's Charities' employees, volunteers and beneficiaries – as well as the public – who have been joining as members, building their own profiles and enjoying benefits and opportunities including a monthly prize draw. Why not visit the Children & the Arts page on the site and explore our staff and beneficiary profiles? Visit: <http://princescharities.org/princes-foundation-children-arts>. Anyone can sign up and it's free to join!

## PALACE LAUNCH FOR THE BIRTHDAY BOOK

Some of the UK's finest children's authors and illustrators gathered at Kensington Palace in November 2008 for the launch of the much anticipated *Birthday Book*, a treasury of fantastic and inspiring birthday themed stories and poems, in aid of Children & the Arts.

Guests enjoyed champagne and speeches from Quentin Blake and Michael Morpurgo, who much to everyone's delight joked of a surprise appearance at the event from Johnny Depp, who had written the introduction to the extract from *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* featured in *The Birthday Book*.



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Buy your copy of *The Birthday Book* now online



## STARRY NIGHT WITH CAROLS AT ST JAMES'S

Children & the Arts' second annual carol concert on 10th December 2008, sponsored by Bank of America, saw friends, supporters and ambassadors of the charity gathering together for an evening of festive cheer.

Ambassador Pauline Collins had the 500 strong congregation in stitches with Shirley Valentine's recollection of her son Brian's uproarious appearance in the school nativity play. Other readings came from *Harry Potter* star Zoe Wanamaker and *Strictly Come*

*Dancing's* Don Warrington swapped his dancing shoes in favour of reading *Talking Turkeys* by Benjamin Zephaniah.

Other performances came from the official harpist to HRH The Prince of Wales, Clare Jones; tenor Alfie Boe; Collegium Musicum of London; Queen's Gate Junior School and The Chapel Choir of St Thomas's School, Clapham.

The appeal came from long standing ambassador Penelope Keith, who helped us to raise over £30,000 from the event.



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