

Counterparts Music Theatre Arts 'SWING' PROJECT REPORT

'SWING' was a song writing and music project devised by musicians Helen Porter and Andy Baker to introduce children to elements of jazz music and song writing. The aim of the project was to produce new jazz songs written by local children, which would be performed at the Old Chapel, Calstock (Cornwall) on the Sunday afternoon (28th October) of the first ever Jazz & Blues Festival in Calstock, accompanied by double bass and piano. This aim was fully realised, and the children performed to a packed to capacity hall. The event, which included new songs written by local people, was deemed to be one of the most successful and important of the entire festival, because of the level of community inclusion.

Calstock CP Primary School

3 sessions with Helen Porter and Andy Baker

The head teacher, Jan Gould, was initially reticent as to whether we'd get enough children to the Old Chapel to perform, because of the clash with half term. However, the turn out was exceptionally good. The quote below came from Jan Gould:

"The children really enjoyed their time with you both. The class teacher thought that the experience was 'superb' for the children; every child was engaged with the singing and song writing. They developed an understanding of the jazz genre that we could not have provided for them. It was a great opportunity to work with professional musicians and at such a level of composition - in preparation for a live performance. It was an extremely worthwhile project, providing such an enriching experience - something that the children will remember for years to come. Thank you so much for including us in the project."

Jan Gould, Head of Calstock CP Primary School.

"They really enjoyed the experience, although they said that it was scary! Thank you so much, and please thank Andy for me as the children got so much from two experts. "

Lizzie Congdon, class teacher, Calstock CP Primary School

Delaware Primary School

3 sessions with Helen Porter and Andy Baker

Delaware was slightly problematic for us initially. Our first session got off to a swinging start with very enthusiastic, lively and creative children. The second week we were informed the school had accidentally double booked us with a creative writing project, so we could not work with year 6 again. We agreed to continue working with year 5. Although they only had two sessions with us, they worked extremely well. The acting head sat in on one session. She told me later that she had written to her board of directors that evening, to say what a positive thing was happening in the school. They are dealing with many difficulties at present, and she wanted to give the board 'good news'.

Only a handful of the children turned up to perform, but that included one of the most talented young singers I have ever come across. He could have performed quite happily on his own, so in the end it wasn't a problem there were less children from Delaware. The parents of year 5 had not been aware of the project, and having to change the year group at the last minute was the problem.

"It's just nice to give the children a positive and real music experience with professionals. Frances the teacher said how good the session was. That class is also particularly keen on performing, so nice to see."

Louise Owen, teacher, Delaware School

"The Jazz singing workshops held by Helen Porter and Andy Baker at St Dominic CE School were a huge success, everyone's feet were tapping from the start of the session. It enabled the children to experience the lively Jazz and blues style at a professional level whilst having great fun. Both musicians were so encouraging, enabling the children to achieve a high standard musically. These kinds of events make happy and confident children."

Li Selman, class teacher, year 6.

The project was a huge success on many counts, and the jazz festival would like to involve the local primary schools again this year, and are hoping that they will now be willing to contribute funds to the project. Our sincere thanks go to the Ernest Cooke Trust for funding this first project.

Helen Porter

Budget

INCOME	
From Ernest Cook Trust (carried forward from Love Letters project)	766,70
From Counteparts MTA	£933,30
TOTAL INCOME	£1700
EXPENDITURE	
Workshop Fees Andy Baker and Helen Porter	£1700