

# Ode to Joy

Britten Sinfonia making  
orchestral music with  
the residents and staff  
of HMP Whitemoor

Britten Sinfonia  
HMP Whitemoor  
Lemos&Crane  
Orchestras Live

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## Acknowledgements

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This report is written by Gerard Lemos and  
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## Introduction

TuningUp is a partnership between Britten Sinfonia, HMP Whitemoor, Orchestras Live and Lemos&Crane, with financial support from Arts Council England and Austin and Hope Pilkington Trust. Our goal is to bring orchestral music, repertoire and musicianship to the centre of the lives of the residents and staff of prisons – not only for its own sake, but also to harness the benefits of musicianship and collaborative performance in wellbeing and rehabilitation for prison residents.



In the visitors' centre at HMP Whitemoor, one of the UK's most high security prisons, nearly 200 people gathered on 24 October 2019 for a one-day festival of art and music for staff, residents and family members with the musicians of Britten Sinfonia, one of the country's most accomplished and well-known orchestras. Family

members visited for the whole day. In the morning there were music workshops, art activities and face painting for the children and families. In the afternoon, a newly formed orchestra of staff, residents and musicians of nearly 40 players, complete with a string section, a brass section, percussion, piano and woodwind performed a concert of new compositions by the residents inspired by Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and work of minimalist composer Steve Reich.

The title of this paper is taken from 'Ode to Joy', Beethoven's anthem, one of the most memorable parts of his Ninth Symphony and also, for different reasons, one of the most memorable parts of our concert, when the anthem was performed in German by one of the residents who had known the song and the words for years. Music can reveal surprising perspectives, illuminating the stories and lives even of those serving long prison sentences whose histories and individual identities too easily fade from view.

A group of about 25 residents and several members of staff had been working together with a musical facilitator, Jason Rowland, through the autumn of 2019 in a series of five workshops to form an ensemble with Britten Sinfonia, compose new music and rehearse for the performance. The response from the audience to

the performance on the day, delivered with great musical skill and exuberance by the players, was uplifting. Those in the audience were moved, surprised and inspired by the music they were listening to and the people playing it. As partners, we were delighted by the response both from participants and their families.

This one-day music festival and workshops in 2019 followed on from a successful smaller programme in 2018, also with workshops and a concert at HMP Whitemoor. The big difference in 2019 was inviting and involving the families on the final festival

day. In 2018 the audience for the concert had been almost entirely Whitemoor residents and staff. Involving the families was a big, risky step forward, requiring prison staff and management to undertake a complex logistical exercise in a high security environment, but the considerable effort by the prison's staff and management, way beyond the call of duty, was handsomely repaid by the enthusiastic response from the audience and the benefits for the men about which they gave heartfelt testimony. Many people present, both residents and family members, were extremely impressed and appreciative of the extraordinary efforts of the staff to make such an ambitious project happen and with such great spirit.

This evaluation seeks to allow participants, musicians, residents and staff, to speak for themselves without intrusive and extraneous commentary. I have also sought to tell the story of the project in pictures, which are, as ever, worth more than a thousand words.



Two of our band members have left. We are delighted they have moved on to less high security parts of the prison estate – a success for them in their rehabilitative journey, but a loss to our band! We hope their participation in TuningUp made a small but valuable contribution to their successful progress. The staff and management of HMP Whitemoor also report that residents who participated in TuningUp 2019 are more engaged and positive with life and activities in the prison after their involvement in the programme. In the context of a long-stay, high-security environment where maintaining morale and wellbeing are high priorities for people who are very unlikely to be released any time soon, these are invaluable positive outcomes in themselves.

The benefits are not all one way. Those of us involved have been moved by the respect and warmth shown to us by the men. We understand the seriousness of their offences and the debt they owe. We nevertheless feel deeply appreciated and a strong sense that our professional and personal convictions are validated and strengthened by possibly the most excluded people in our society.

You can listen to the music made and professionally recorded at the wonderful concert and festival in October 2019, as well as a podcast of interviews with participants, their family members, musicians and staff of HMP Whitemoor at [www.lemosandcrane.co.uk](http://www.lemosandcrane.co.uk)

You can also listen to the music made, and a podcast about 2018's programme at [www.lemosandcrane.co.uk](http://www.lemosandcrane.co.uk)



**"I had many concerns beforehand. Would there be enough participants? Would the event be a success? Would it work inviting families? What security concerns would there be? How could we get maximum attendance within the constraints of safety and high security prison conditions?"**

## Motivated participants

"I done a little bit of drums at school and a little bit of guitar, but I've never played the violin before. I wanted to try something different."

participant

"I was talking to one chap who played the violin when he was at school, only for a year or two or so and he said, 'the only thing I learnt was Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.' 'Right,' I said, 'let's learn it.' We set about learning it. It only took a couple of minutes but his sheer joy at having learnt that again was special. It was such a nice feeling to see his reaction on doing something which for us is quite simple to do."

Suzanne Loze, violin

"Several years ago, I was on D Wing which had just started treatment programmes for people who had been assessed as having a cluster of dangerous personality disorders. Myself and a colleague instigated and set up a music room which was kitted out with instruments, mainly guitars, keyboards and percussion. We ran creative music groups which became part of the men's group work sessions. I also facilitated a guitar group which was run in the evening association period. Small concerts were organised for the men, however nothing as grand as the Tuning Up event."

Peter Brotherton, Rehabilitative Culture Co-ordinator

"I had many concerns beforehand. Would there be enough participants? Would the event be a success? Would it work inviting families? What security concerns





would there be? How could we get maximum attendance within the constraints of safety and high security prison conditions? There have been small concerns at previous events which celebrate success, but none were proven on this occasion."

Cindy Henson, Head of Reducing Re-offending

"The opportunity to experience something new, work with peers they wouldn't normally associate with, develop social skills with each other and musicians and demonstrate community living. I hope they thoroughly enjoyed and value the experience and can use this opportunity to help their progressive journey."

Cindy Henson, Head of Reducing Re-offending

"They are smart. They were smarter than an awful lot of people I teach outside. Quick, and really good at intonation. Being a string player, it is quite difficult to play in tune, but they were really quick on that. Different hand positions, they were right on it all the time. They all seemed to have a good instinct; I think it's motivation."

Ursula John, viola



**"It's certainly something I have never done before, working in a prison. A great deal of intrigue, a little bit of trepidation. It was really interesting the first time we came here, fascinating and really engaging actually."**

## **Musicians' expectations and experiences**

"I was really excited. It's something I've always wanted to do but never come across it. I've done all kinds of things, stood up on big scaffolding towers, been blown up with water in boiler suits - off the wall things, but nothing like this. This is much more meaningful."

Ursula John, viola

"The high security nature of the prison made me feel scared as I didn't know how it might manifest for the men. They were all so lovely and respectful, so my worry was misplaced."

Rosie Bergonzi, percussion

"I was a bit nervous at first, but they were more nervous than us! It soon relaxed and I felt nothing but respect from them. I felt very comfortable working with them."

Suzanne Loze, violin

"I am doing different stuff every day of the week whether it's a pop festival or playing at The Barbican. It's certainly something I have never done before, working in a prison. A great deal of intrigue, a little bit of trepidation. It was really interesting the first time we came here, fascinating and really engaging actually."

Tom Wraith, cello

"I was excited to participate as a group member, hoping to make the music speak to the residents in a way that they could lose themselves in it and become simple, straightforward people for as long as possible."

Ursula John, viola

"For the first five minutes it felt very intimidating. The group was standing on one side of the workshop having tuned up and I thought I will just go and sit in amongst them. Immediately I felt much better. To be honest doing the work, they are so direct; they seem to be so happy to be there, so genuinely interested. It was really wonderful to help them out."

Ursula John, viola

"My main concern was that some of the visiting musicians probably didn't have a lot of experience working with high security prisoners. Experienced staff members know how a lot of prisoners can be conditioning and manipulating. I understand the visitors were given a training event to make them aware, but my experience was telling me it could still be a problem. During the weeks of sessions I did talk to three visiting musicians who made comments about how surprised they were at how nice and well behaved the prisoners were. I of course explained that it was great they were well behaved and display good manners however, it was far too early in their sentence to become nice."

Peter Brotherton, Rehabilitative Culture Co-ordinator

"I'm very aware that these men have committed potentially awful crimes but on the project we are a group/ensemble of musicians with one aim, the same aim that any amateur or professional group of players have. I feel that I build bonds and trust from these men which enables me to ask them to perform musical styles that they are not so familiar or comfortable with."

Jason Rowland, facilitator



**"It got increasingly intense. The thing that really struck me was by the end we were like we were playing in a band. It wasn't them and us, it wasn't we are the orchestra."**

participant

## The creative process

"The Britten Sinfonia people played a number of chamber pieces which were very good, very impressive and then we were introduced to various instruments. Then we were invited to choose an instrument. I initially chose the trumpet, not a good choice for me. I wasn't able to get anything out of it at all because I couldn't get my lips correctly positioned. On the third week they invited us, if we wanted, to change instruments, so I leapt at it. So now I'm trying to get something out of the violin. I am able to make a noise out of it, not necessarily one which one would want to hear, but it's quite enjoyable because I know what the notes are at least. They taught us a mnemonic for them - great danes are enormous: g, d, a, e. So, once you got that, you're halfway there."

Ursula John, viola

"It got increasingly intense. The first time you don't really know what to expect. It was really like an introduction and then when we came back the next time I had a word with Jason beforehand. I didn't really know what we were aiming for and then it started to take shape. The middle session is always a bit of a slump. The initial



thing has worn off. You are not quite focused on the final. The gig is still a long way off. Then the last one, which was three days ago - that is always very intense. Everyone wants to get it. The thing that really struck me was by the end we were like we were playing in a band. It wasn't them and us, it wasn't we are the orchestra."

Nathan Williamson, piano

**"Seeing the residents playing orchestral instruments and most of them really taking the project very seriously and wanting to achieve great things."**

"Trumpets have been very popular. And now they're playing 'Ode to Joy' which is absolutely amazing. They are doing all the notes. They can't read music, but they've learnt it off by heart, learning the fingering on the valve, so absolute credit to them."

Jeanette Bramham, staff



"Seeing the residents playing orchestral instruments and most of them really taking the project very seriously and wanting to achieve great things. A couple of residents really got to the point of being quite annoyed that not everyone was taking it as seriously as they were which to me showed how much they valued the project and the opportunity."

Jason Rowland, facilitator

"Being given permission to express yourself musically with the support of professional musicians who can turn your creative ideas into amazing music productions that you can share with your family, can be life changing."

Jan Ford, Senior Creative Producer, Orchestras Live



**"They explained that one of the pieces was from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and played the tune. At some point they tried to explain what it was about, and I piped up that I knew the words."**

## **'Ode to Joy'**

"A piece by Steve Reich and reacting to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. What we have been using is 'Ode to Joy' because, wonderfully, there is so much material in just that tune. A lot of riffs are based on that melodic sequence; a lot of rhythmic input, so you hear those melodic fragments going through all the pieces."

Paul Archibald, trumpet

"They explained that one of the pieces was from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and played the tune. At some point they tried to explain what it was about, and I piped up that I knew the words. That was it really, because the actual pieces have various riffs and variations, so they started how it was originally written and we took it from there."

participant

"I know it's a poem by the German poet Schiller. Beethoven used it as a framework of the last movement of his Ninth Symphony. I don't speak German. I just happen to know that verse, but I used to listen to it a lot when I was younger. The discs came with texts so that's the tune everyone knows, so I learnt that. All men being brothers. It's very moving and, even though I don't know what it means, the music and the words work together very well. Perhaps we should have it written above the prison gate or something. That would certainly lead to a more positive attitude I would say."

participant

"We were doing a workshop and we started doing the notes of 'Ode to Joy' and he was humming to himself and then he went really quiet. We went over to him and he started singing to it. He sang it with the pianist in the background and he said, 'Can I perform it on the day?' So, we've let him do it. Fingers crossed his nerves will be alright for him and he will hold up."

Jeanette Bramham, staff

"The violin, I'm part of the crowd and we have a professional violinist and viola player so that's fine, but here when you're by yourself it's not so good. I'm not nervous in the sense I can't touch my pitch when I start singing and also I go too fast so I have to slow it down but it sounds alright by the time I get to the end of it usually. If I've actually got a text to work with, be it a song or a speech or something like that, I'm fine because I can hide behind it but if I have to improvise, I'm hopeless. I really cannot, certainly not under pressure."

participant

"I'm really looking forward to the singing of 'Ode to Joy' in German because it really gets everyone going. It gave me goose-bumps. It meant that much. He's one of the residents as well, so credit to him. He will get a standing ovation definitely."

Jeanette Bramham, staff



**"Last year I was playing the keyboard. This year I'm playing the bass guitar. It's nice to explore new avenues, but I prefer the bass guitar to the keyboard. Hopefully next year I will try something else."**

## Musical development

"This is the second year we've been here. We'd love to come back. It's about developing their skills. A few of them said 'I want to do what I did before,' but a couple were definitely, 'No, I saw the cello and I want to have a go at that.' So, it was very interesting. They made that conscious musical decision to change."

Jason Rowland, facilitator

"When they said to me you've got to teach them violin my heart dropped because it takes years to learn the violin. There was incredible enthusiasm. They put everything into it, really wanting to make it good. We've created four pieces we are going to perform."

Suzanne Loze, violin

"I've taught the basics of violin playing but they've been experimenting as well and just discovering the instrument for themselves. It's not about technical ability. It's discovering. It's seeing how far they can go with it, getting their ideas and incorporating it all together. One of the fiddle players, he started doing fast bowing and he discovered tremolando. I said, 'that's fantastic,' and he just naturally did it. He then started experimenting with sliding up the violin with the left hand. I then said, 'Let's find some harmonics,' and he then sussed out how to do harmonics. He was away. That was it. He's put that into the piece, so he'll be doing some of that."

Suzanne Loze, violin

"Last year I was playing the keyboard. This year I'm playing the bass guitar. It's nice to explore new avenues, but I prefer the bass guitar to the keyboard. Hopefully next year I will try something else."

participant

"I think it's developed quite significantly. The music we are playing is much more sophisticated. A new thing for me is that I have five or six trumpet students here, so we have been creating our own riffs and they have had quite a significant input into that. They've been learning how to hold a note, different fingerings, produce a note, which is no mean challenge on a trumpet."

Paul Archibald, trumpet

**"I think it's developed quite significantly. The music we are playing is much more sophisticated."**

"It's quite unusual but at the end of the day we've all have to explore new avenues. It's come together quite nicely I believe."

participant



"It's wonderful to see there is support for them. There was one person, he was really, really good on the E string which is a really difficult string to make a nice sound. He was getting it straightaway. I said, 'You've got some talent' and he said, 'You're the first person who's ever, ever told me that.'"

Ursula John, viola

"There are many encouraging early signs of success in this programme and I wanted to highlight one from this year. D took part in the pilot project in 2018. He was polite, helpful and positive towards the experience but chose to play the drums and take a back seat. This year he wrote two songs, sang on his own and presented part of the concert. He is now completing his teacher training and next year wants to mentor residents new to the programme. That's the sort of rehabilitative culture we want to nurture."

Sarah Rennix, Creative Learning Director, Britten Sinfonia





**"I actually like the Beethoven more than Steve. Each to their own."**

## Many different musical genres

"Paul on the trumpet was doing 'Moon River' and they loved it. We were talking about introducing Beethoven and Steve Reich and whatever type of music they love which includes rap. I never imagined how it would work."

Suzanne Loze, violin

"The wonderful thing about minimalism is you have a riff, for want of a better word, that you repeat and it makes people feel comfortable and from there they go on to expand and bring in their own ideas."

Tom Wraith, cello

"A lot of what we are playing today is influenced by the kind of stuff residents are listening today in and day out and probably also what their parents listened to as a kid."

Tom Wraith, cello

"I actually like the Beethoven more than Steve. Each to their own."

participant

"I'm dreading it. I think I've only had four hours in the whole month. It will be interesting but overall brilliant. We're doing the Beethoven Ninth Symphony, a part of that, and the second one we're doing a genre of all kinds, reggae, jazz and it sounds good. There's some rap in there as well. You will be impressed!"

participant

"I was not sure how the residents would engage catering for all the different styles of music from classical to garage to rap to hip hop. I knew having a full audience which included their families and children and internal friends was a big part for the residents."

Jeanette Bramham, staff

"The impact on the musicians has been profound and has clearly impacted in their practice and the way they will approach their work in the future. Working in an unfamiliar environment – just dealing with the practicalities of getting themselves and their instruments into a prison was a challenge initially. The way they embraced musical ideas from different genres and developed them collaboratively, establishing a rapport with a diverse group of people with highly complex needs was outstanding."

Jan Ford, Senior Creative Producer, Orchestras Live





**"The feedback we've had, the prisoners explained they felt they were humans and not a number or a risk. That was really significant."**

## Music brings people together

"Music does bring people together. It speaks a lot. It can make you feel things. It can connect people"

sister of resident

"The feedback we've had, the prisoners explained they felt they were humans and not a number or a risk. That was really significant. They loved that the staff joined in. In particular, there were a few comments about the Governor joining in at the final performance. They loved that. One in particular focused on feeling that staff and prisoners were on a level, on an equal playing field."

Phil Bramham, HMPPS

"Music brings people together wherever you are from whatever has happened to you in life. We are all on the same level. We are all human beings. It is incredibly powerful stuff. It is coming together and not being any different as human beings. Music is the thing that has brought us together. These guys have already said to me, 'Thank you so much for giving your time. It means a lot to us. It's something to look forward to.'"

Suzanne Loze, violin

"Music is such a wonderful thing. The first two tunes that we are going to play today which the residents wrote really felt to me like folk music, which is that classic idea of people coming together and creating something and it has a lovely effect. Even though often folk music is in a slightly minor key, there is a really warm feeling to it."

Tom Wraith, cello



"Family and friends can see I'm doing something useful. These kinds of things build bridges with people."

participant

"Music is an art that the vast majority of people love. It can change a person's life just the same as a book can. To play music from scratch is also a good leveller and can give people confidence, pride, passion and a sense of achievement once they have learnt to play even a simple piece of music. Music can rehabilitate and give hope to people. Also, staff working alongside convicted criminals on level ground

helps to break down so many barriers such as the 'Them and Us' attitude. Also working with people from outside the prison system is very refreshing for both the prisoners and staff. This can build up trust. I believe the prisoners like to feel they are being invested in and valued."

Peter Brotherton, Rehabilitative Culture Co-ordinator

**"Humans are inherently creative. Why then are we surprised to find such a diversity of creative talent and potential behind prison walls?"**



"Humans are inherently creative. Why then are we surprised to find such a diversity of creative talent and potential behind prison walls? I know many of us were when this programme first began, and the uncomfortable truth is that it is easier for us to define these men by their crime than to find out the more complex story of who they are and how they ended up here. Projects like this offer residents a much-needed opportunity for personal expression and a great

sense of positive achievement but they are also meaningful learning experiences for the musicians. Many of the players that took part fed back to me that it has challenged their mindset, taken them on an emotional journey they didn't expect, and reminded them of the powerful role music can play beyond the concert hall."

Sarah Rennix, Creative Learning Director, Britten Sinfonia

"I think it's incredible that prisoners in a high security jail have the opportunity to play in an orchestra with very talented and well-travelled musicians. For most people this would be an experience of a lifetime. Many of the men at Whitemoor have had very poor role models in their lives and limited education. To have the chance to play a concert with a highly trained and experienced musicians is something that will give many hope and encouragement for the future."

Peter Brotherton, Rehabilitative Culture co-ordinator



**"It was a bit like an analogy with the no man's land in the World War where you got people on both sides not agreeing with each other and suddenly they are there in a totally free liberal space and it's simple, life is simple."**

## Human and humane contact

"When M got up to sing you could have felt the crowd's reaction. 'So, this is a prison officer, someone I have worked with previously.' The courage for her to get up there in front of other peers and the prisoners she is in charge of was great, but for her to support and help C, getting him up there and supporting him, that caused a lot of discussion among the prison officer group."

Phil Bramham, HMPPS

"C pulled out from performing. In the conversation I had with him just before he was about to start. 'No, I'm not doing it' and then he was freestyling. I was like, I don't know what you are doing but just carry on!"

Jason Rowland, facilitator

"You forget you are in a prison. I have had to remind myself a couple of times working here because the atmosphere is so relaxed. There seems to be a lot of respect all around. One of the guys offered to take my instruments to the car and I said, "that's really kind of you" and then suddenly thought, 'Oh damn, I forgot,' and he said, 'Well, I did try!'"

Suzanne Loze, violin

"It's been very good, I've liked it very much but it's very wearing because I'm not used to being in a big open space with lots and lots of people and actually in terms of exercising my social skills I'm going to be absolutely knackered by the time I get back. We're not used to it in this place."

participant

"It was a bit like an analogy with the no man's land in the World War where you got people on both sides not agreeing with each other and suddenly they are there in a totally free liberal space and it's simple, life is simple. I really felt that so deeply."

Ursula John, viola

"I felt that I got so much back from the prisoners from what I was able to give them. It was wonderful to be able to work with these men who had obviously had a troubled past and to put that aside and see us all work on the same level."

Suzanne Loze, violin

"It's quite hard because, when the session's over, it's over. The prison works on a timetable. You can't say, 'Can we have an extra 20 minutes?' or 'I will get the next train' or whatever. Boom! and you are out of the room. Suddenly I thought I will never see these guys again, but we've done this amazing gig. It's not like a compensation. It's not like it's good because we are in a prison or it's good because these guys are where they are from or, they've had the life they have had or whatever. By the end

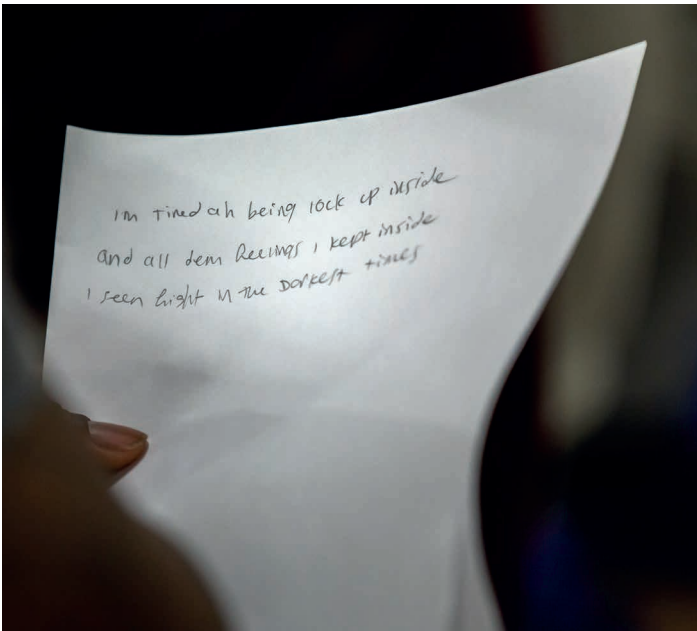


we are just rocking, we are just doing it, we are jamming. Now they've all got to go, and we've got to go and that's the end of it. It's hard."

Nathan Williamson, piano

"I would do it again, but it's not been easy from that point of view. The music and the process has been fine but it's not a comfortable thing you are left with, although you are glad to have done what you have done. I guess that's what being in prison is. Everything is cut off no matter what you do or what you dream or who comes to visit you. You just go back, and you are left with nothing."

Nathan Williamson, piano



**"On a personal note, I found it incredibly moving. I tried not to think of the reasons that led them to incarceration whilst working in prison and focus on the music."**

"On a personal note, I found it incredibly moving. I tried not to think of the reasons that led them to incarceration whilst working in prison and focus on the music but had plenty of time to reflect away from Whitemoor. I have to admit to an overwhelming sense of sadness at the waste of potential life/talent but at the same time it was inspiring to see the enjoyment they received and gave with music. I was constantly humbled by the politeness of the men throughout. The experience opened up huge debates with people I know. I'm sure many people's perceptions would have been changed if they had seen the performance."

Dawn Hardwick, piano

"It was a fantastic project which finished with a brilliant concert. It filled me with a sense of pride that so much was achieved in such a short amount of time with so many people. I felt that the visiting musicians had become my friends and was sorry to see them leave for last time after the concert. I had the pleasure of playing a cello for the first time in my life which I enjoyed so much I have purchased one to play at home. I'm not sure my wife is as enthusiastic though!"

Peter Brotherton, Rehabilitative Culture co-ordinator

"A deeply satisfying experience. A real sense that the residents I worked with were all positive towards the project and, I felt, were able to live in the moment. It was easy to feel connected with their spirit."

Ursula John, viola

"Working in partnership with HMP Whitemoor and Lemos&Crane has given us insight into criminal justice system and those living and working in it. Showing how the musical skills of orchestral musicians and the music of orchestras is relevant to everyone is what Orchestras Live does."

Jan Ford, Senior Creative Producer, Orchestras Live





**"I listen to classical music every day now. I just pop it on for half-an-hour. I sometimes listen to it while I'm doing yoga or just to relax. It's a totally different type of music and since I've been exposed to it, last year, I've taken it on board."**

## Growing interest in classical music

"Without doubt some were sceptical or uninterested to begin with. They were keen to participate in a music project but said at the outset they would have preferred rap or reggae."

Dawn Hardwick, piano

"The word 'orchestra' put off a lot of people, but many residents here have talent in music."

participant

"I've never listened to classical music but now I listen to it all the time. It's kind of grown on me. It's part of my everyday life. At night time, in the middle of the day I might put on Classic FM and have a little listen to it."

participant

"Introducing them to classical music enabled them to show and express creativity through their own ideas too."

Suzanne Loze, violin

"I listen to classical music every day now. I just pop it on for half-an-hour. I sometimes listen to it while I'm doing yoga or just to relax. it's a totally different type of music and since I've been exposed to it, last year, I've taken it on board. I do like it a lot now. I suppose it's about changing your mindset. I'm just looking forward to being a part of it as a group. It brings everyone together. That's the main thing."

participant

"It's good when you see anyone who is really, really, good at something. They communicate their enthusiasm for it. It certainly makes me appreciate the difficulty of playing, particularly classical instruments so when I hear something on the radio or watch someone on the television, like during the Proms for example, even without them being soloists, the fact that they are playing instruments at that level make me appreciate it all the more."

participant



"It's so heartening to hear that we've got people whose ears have actually been opened to classical music. It's not just about trying to be evangelical about classical music. It's really just about colours and sounds and becoming a little more aware about what is out there musically."

Paul Archibald, trumpet

"I've been incorporating some classical music into the beats that we use now for rap and it still has a hip-hop drum style to it, but we have a lot of violins and stuff in the background now. Male voices in the background just to add a different dynamic. It breaks up that kind of mundane thing you get in most rap music. It's the same kind of sound. It's just rubbish. You have to do something to catch people's ears and classical does that if used in the right way."

participant



**"I believe the residents felt invested in, encouraged and praised for their efforts. A definite feeling of trust and being understood. Feeling proud."**

## Continuity and sustainability

"Since I came in here I started singing in the chapel and just got into it, found my voice and it helped calm me down and relax me while I'm in here if that makes sense. I hope we have more of these throughout the year, different things. It's been brilliant."

participant

"Playing a trumpet is just blowing air through the instrument and trying to make a nice sound. The frustrating thing for the residents here is they can't do any practice, so literally we only get them to play when they arrive for the project. That's been a little bit of a frustration but bearing in mind they have only been playing for 5 or 6 weeks, it's extraordinary what they have achieved."

Paul Archibald, trumpet

"A couple of them have wanted to carry on playing the violin which is absolutely fantastic. They can keep the violins here, which is wonderful, absolutely amazing. I think a couple of them will continue, whether they continue to have lessons or just for fun for themselves."

Suzanne Loze, violin

"I believe the residents felt invested in, encouraged and praised for their efforts. A definite feeling of trust and being understood. Feeling proud. I know a few residents want to continue to learn their instruments."

Peter Brotherton, Rehabilitative Culture Co-ordinator

"I think another issue for us and for Britten Sinfonia and for staff here is how do we keep this as something that goes on a regular basis? That's always a challenge, because you can get the money for a one-off project but it's getting something really embedded."

Sarah Derbyshire, Chief Executive, Orchestras Live

"You have to think about the expectations that you raise. That is why I'm talking about sustainability because having started something in a place where people are probably going to be in for a very long time, you need to keep that impetus and for there to be some promise of something more to come. We all take that responsibility quite seriously."

Sarah Derbyshire, Chief Executive,  
Orchestras Live



"So, we pat ourselves on the back briefly...but, what happens after the festivities? Where can residents channel this new creativity? As soon as any organisation engages a group of people with complex needs they have an ongoing responsibility towards them. We must consider how to engage more participants on a regular basis, the progression routes available to them, and most importantly of all, reassure them that a long-term commitment is being made towards their rehabilitation.

That is why all the partners in this project are working hard to create a year-round programme. We hope to offer weekly music sessions will be offered to the men in the prison through the designation of nine new music rooms, one on each spur. These rooms will hopefully be resourced with a range of instruments and digital technology, supported by the in-house music teacher, musicians from Britten Sinfonia and resident volunteers. Our aspiration is that the next festival day will not only invite friends and families to be the audience, it will also offer them the opportunity to co-create material and perform alongside the residents."

Sarah Rennix, Creative Learning Director, Britten Sinfonia





**"I'm visiting my son.  
He started to learn the drums the  
last time, I know he's learning the  
trumpet. God knows what he will  
learn next!"**

mother of resident

## Family impressions

"I'm visiting my son. He started to learn the drums the last time, I know he's learning the trumpet. God knows what he will learn next! He's just said there's a few of them involved and the orchestra is here as well. I think he's going to be in between two good players. He always looks forward to whatever goes on in here."

"We've come to see our brother. He's singing two things today. I think he wrote the songs himself. It's exciting. I know he likes live music. This is a secret talent of his apparently. Not heard him yet though. It's been really fun."

sister of resident

"Self belief – pride – doing something out of their comfort zone – reminding them there is more to life than bars. I knew they would love to do something for their families to make them proud and I knew they would appreciate the support of someone from 'the other side', standing there with them – equal."

Melanie de Groot, prison officer

"Obviously there's lots going on and it's nice meeting people he's spent so many years with and interact on a more normal, social level with him. Nice and relaxing. Lots to do and see."

sister of participant

"It was good. Quite daunting but everyone got up and played their instruments. It was just a fantastic day. It's good to have family round us to share these things with us and show them what we can do."

participant

"Mixing with the families at the concert day was just lovely. I think that every resident introduced me to their family which felt like a very special thing to happen."

Jason Rowland, facilitator

"For the families, on this day they were able to forget the prison part of the day. The mums, dads, sisters and brothers, children, grandparents and cousins – they were able to share a day of fun, goodness and celebration. That's not an easy thing to achieve in an environment such as a high security prison, and at the end of the day every person involved today has made a profound difference to those around them."

Ruth Stephens, Governor

"Handing a tissue to a mother weeping as her son, serving a life sentence, sang and played the trumpet, made me remember watching my own children performing and how proud that had made me. Different life chances, but we're still mothers and believe in our children."

Jan Ford, Senior Creative Producer, Orchestras Live



**"I love music, I love people,  
I love rehabilitation and believe  
this is one way to unify everyone."**

## Staff impressions

"Fantastic, what a brilliant day it just makes all the difference. That's why I enjoy the job, to do things like this.

To see the guys with their families and the kids smiling and laughing - it's brilliant, loved it."

staff

"I've been part of it since the beginning, doing the rehearsals and that sort of thing, getting all the equipment down. It's been a logistical nightmare, but it's been brilliant; absolutely worth it."

staff

"We did an event last year which I took part in. We weren't allowed to have visitors in because of the location, so we decided to have this location where we can invite family and friends and official visitors and it's been the best day ever so far."

Jeanette Bramham, staff

"A lot of the staff have got involved this year again which is really good. It breaks that barrier down, because a lot of the staff have a lot of conflict with the prisoners in here, but if you find something they enjoy, they engage really well and they behave amazingly. They have been so courteous to the musicians. The musicians are absolutely outstanding."

Jeanette Bramham, staff

"I love music, I love people, I love rehabilitation and believe this is one way to unify everyone. Many of the residents asked me why I wasn't taking part - I didn't

know anything about it initially but jumped on the band wagon and gave my all as soon as I was made aware."

Melanie de Groot, prison officer



"This was just wonderful. Full of positivity, happiness, trust – helped the bonds get closer and our relationships with the residents better and more respectful – both ways. I love spurring people on and filling them with confidence and encouraging them to be a part of something I know they will end up being so proud of. I was proud... proud of them and proud to be a part. Better working relationships formed which is vital to my/our jobs."

Melanie de Groot, prison officer

"They got a little respite from the monotony of prison – a break from the same people, keeping up appearances etc... a chance to do things they haven't done before, work with people they wouldn't necessarily sit alongside and for some, a reminder of what they have done in the past, a talent they possess and something that should never be forgotten."

Melanie de Groot, prison officer

"The satisfaction of coming alongside staff and residents in a completely new setting. ... Participating in a quite (for me) unique format of composition. ... The enjoyment of working towards and delivering a 'performance'. As this was first time in participating I was simply amazed how much was achieved in so little rehearsal time. The tutors were excellent. The whole concept a brilliant idea. Well worth repeating if possible."

Clive Butcher, prison chaplain

"The wonderful and highly competent prison staff. It came across that they treat the residents well, they are looked after."

Ursula John, viola





**"My grandad did a domino and I painted it and I made it a butterfly – red and yellow. I like painting. I don't get to do it often though."**

## A visual arts dimension

"The concept is to get people to view the piece and put themselves in the picture somewhere, so it's a communal painting basically. It's all about the journey so it's more about applying your mark and placing yourself somewhere. People were thinking about the colours and looking out colour contrasts. I was trying to encourage people to interact with other marks already there. You end up with a piece of art, but it's more about the involvement. You see people latching into it and starting to get the concept of a shared piece between a father and a son and another shared piece between a father and a daughter. One of the inmates placed his initial on the piece and then his children painted colours around it and then his wife put her initial on top."

Dan Donovan, Art Facilitator of the Art Station

"My grandad did a domino and I painted it and I made it a butterfly – red and yellow. I like painting. I don't get to do it often though."

grandchild of resident



**"The atmosphere is absolutely amazing. Everyone is buzzing. Some people are saying it's the best event of their life in prison."**

## The festival day with the family

"We are in the Visitors Centre where the residents normally receive visitors and their families. The concept behind this was to bring the families in to share the achievements of the residents and so we have a huge, huge turnout of families and young children. They've been doing workshops this morning with Britten Sinfonia. It just demonstrates the skills those musicians can bring, not only compositional skills and playing skills, but also facilitating. Look! there's a child walking past with a trumpet. I don't know where she got that from, but that's brilliant!"

Jan Ford, Senior Creative Producer, Orchestras Live

"I saw two little boys run up to their dad this morning and that was magic to see that. They don't all have visitors, but it's an amazing occasion."

Suzanne Loze, violin

"Touch wood, everything is going smoothly. There are lots of people in here and it's very warm, but the atmosphere is absolutely amazing. Everyone is buzzing. Some people are saying it's the best event of their life in prison."

Jeanette Bramham, staff

"It's a really lovely atmosphere. It feels like a festival. It's really relaxed. Most people seem to be relaxed on the outside, inwardly maybe not. We've been coming in on a weekly basis and built a relationship with these guys. We feel we know them quite well. Then to see them with their families and for them to introduce us to their families, we realise how special this day is."

Jason Rowland, facilitator



"It was just lovely to have a successful performance because with these kinds of projects the process is just as important as the performance, but when the performance is really fun, that is really great as well. There was a buzz. No one could stop smiling. It was really lovely and really good energy from the players. We could feel from the audience that they were having a really good time."

Rosie Bergonzi, percussion

"Absolutely amazing. Everyone's playing a part. The band's going very well. It's really nice togetherness. This is very unusual. I feel that everyone has come together as a prison and people from outside. Britten Sinfonia has done an amazing job and it just shows from the music they will play today. I've invited five friends from the prison because my family couldn't make it today. Once they see one person doing it, they want to get involved in it. It has a knock-on effect, so it's all good.

There's no bad vibes nowadays. It's all pure rehabilitative culture. I think it helps prisoners in the day-to-day activities. Just keeping it together."

participant

"Yeah man, I loved it. Good vibes. It brought everyone together. And they took us out of prison for this moment. I would like to thank everyone for taking part and the staff for organising it and our families for coming."

participant



**"Absolutely amazing. Everyone's playing a part. The band's going very well. It's really nice togetherness. This is very unusual. I feel that everyone has come together as a prison and people from outside."**

helping these men be better versions of themselves."

Ruth Stephens, Governor

"Today has been a huge success for us we're really proud. Last year's event went phenomenally well, better than we could ever have expected. It was always our ambition to make this every bit as successful, but bigger and I think we pulled that off. Seeing the men enjoying their musical creations and everything they've achieved with their friends and family it's been wonderful. And as for the children, we had a few budding musicians who wanted to join the party. They've all fallen

asleep now that the day has finished. They've certainly been a handful for their mums and dads, but it's been lovely to see them being involved."

Ruth Stephens, Governor

"I was blown away by the response from the audience and built some really strong links with outside opportunities like theatre groups which would like to work with the residents here. Seeing the residents engage really well and having so much fun, such a proud moment for us all. It is still being talked about now months on. Quite a few staff have called asking for more events to take place and when is the next one."

Jeanette Bramham, staff

"It was exhausting, exhilarating and made me feel so very proud of what could be achieved."

Cindy Henson, Head of Reducing Re-offending

"The performance day was the real telling moment of the whole event for me. There was a real sense of festival and excitement in the room and the residents seemed very happy that they were sharing the performance with invited residents and families. They seemed very excited to be sharing their creations with everyone. In a learning sense they developed not only their musical skills but their teamwork and focus seemed to improve. One resident said how he had forgotten that they were in a prison as the day had taken him to another place, a happy place."

Jason Rowland, facilitator

**"Seeing the men enjoying their musical creations and everything they've achieved with their friends and family, it's been wonderful. And as for the children, we had a few budding musicians who wanted to join the party."**



“We have opened up a new world to the residents by working with world renowned musicians, shown them that you can learn to be different without losing the identity of self, established innovative partnerships and are helping these men be better versions of themselves.”

Ruth Stephens, Governor, HMP Whitemoor