



Case Study: Watercycle

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Wiltshire Music Centre, Bradford on Avon

Watercycle is a site specific orchestral journey through the urban and rural landscapes of England.

The [Wiltshire Music Centre](#) (WMC) joined forces with the [Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment](#) (OAE) Education programme to present the Watercycle 3-day residency in April 2015.

Using the noise, movement and flow of water as inspiration, this project captured the imagination of local communities to experience new musical opportunities and have a better understanding of our landscapes.

There were 4 performances at WMC over 3 days for schools, young people, families and local community using known repertoire, The Watercycle Song and two new compositions written especially for the residency.

This collaborative project has community at its heart and is centred on WMC and OAEs joint vision of celebrating local talent and finding the music in everyday life and extraordinary places.

Arts Symposium—17 November 2015



New compositions

- **Digital Overture** which included a poem and found water sounds written and captured by local contributors. Then using a booth, the voices of the local community, project attendees and visiting OAE musicians were captured responding to the poem. A local composer and videographer brought these elements together to create a [sonic/visual masterpiece](#) which was performed three times in the residency.
- **Concerto for Bradford on Avon**, using the lines of the winning poem as inspiration, was created by local school children through composition workshops with OAE musicians.

Schools involvement

- An interactive schools concert held at Wiltshire Music Centre presented water inspired songs learnt and created by 240 primary school children in OAE led workshops. Through a CPD evening and [teacher resources](#), teachers were able to support the children between the workshops and the concert.
- Secondary pupils through an intensive workshop with OAE musicians also created a response to the poem, which was performed alongside the OAE ensemble in the schools concert and at the community concert.

Performances

- **Tots concert** - a playful and interactive in-the-round OAE concert on a watery theme aimed at children aged 2 to 5 years.
- **The Night Shift** - a late night OAE classical music concert including music by Baroque composers Handel and Purcell, followed by a screening of The Digital Overture in the auditorium.
- **Community concert** - brought together the residency with a full evening performance by the OAE of Handel's Water Music and Vivaldi Four Seasons and included the Digital Overture, the Concerto for Bradford on Avon and performances from local pupils and choir.



Achievements, outcomes and reflections

- Engaged with all ages in the communities, both within and outside of the education sector.
- Provided new opportunities for communities to access professional musicians, orchestra and venue in a way that they wouldn't normally do.
- Provided the community with opportunities to engage with a variety of musical experiences.
- Enabled the Music Centre to explore future recording of professional ensembles and musicians.
- Increased music participation and team working skills for all involved.
- The recording and filming of the project is available for promotional purposes.
- Increased musical knowledge for the local composer, videographer and poet
- Participating schools incorporated learning the songs and music into their regular classes, which prepared them for the schools concert, and gave them a sense of ownership and engagement outside of the individual workshops.
- OAE provided a supportive and non-intimidating progression route for participants from learning songs to performing with and watching a professional orchestra in a professional concert venue.
- It was a fully inclusive and interactive experience for all participants including the adults in the Tots concert and will continue to inspire music making. *"The performance actually inspired me to write my own song."* Secondary school participant.
- Provided learning opportunities to explore and understand the significance of water.

Watercycle recording

- Following the project's success, the Watercycle song has been recorded for iTunes.

Commissioners, key project partners and stakeholders:

Wiltshire Music Centre · Dawn Gorman, poet · Dan Thomason, Composer · Oliver Brown, Videographer · St. John's Primary School · Grove Primary School · Christ Church Primary School · St Laurence Academy · St Augustine's College · Community of Bradford on Avon · Paragon Singers
Cost: £14,000