

Arts Centre Manager's Report to the Annual General Meeting
Monday November 28th 2016

2015 -16 was once again a very busy year for the Centre and I would like to echo Barbara's thanks to the staff and volunteers without whom we couldn't offer such a busy programme.

Statistically, over the 2016-17 year we mounted 26 concerts, 19 exhibitions and fairs and also offered an average of 15 classes per week, plus a further 8 offered by independent provider. We continued to be co-organisers of the Teddington Village Fair, being responsible for the entertainment and event health and safety, which involved a great deal of detailed paperwork and liaison by Tim Cannings with Richmond Council parks department. We also hosted events in the Richmond upon Thames Music and Drama Festival

Artistic Programme:

During the 2015-16 year, we continued to steadily build the folk strand within our concert programme. We are now attracting major artists in this field and built relationships with a number of important agents.

Notable events in a busy year included hosting The Musical Brain's first public event which explored how singing affects our brain; Piano Out There & Piano In Here where we placed pianos in public locations and invited the public to record their interactions with them. Piano In here saw the pianos brought into the Centre for a one-off improvised performance involving poets, musicians and dancers based on material contributed by the public.

Education:

New workshops included papercutting, Flamenco dance, music reading and sight singing. Taster workshops were offered for the first time at the Contemporary Textile Fair in partnership with the Royal School of Needlework. Also Josie is currently working on a family art trail linked to the building which will be free to use and hopefully will encourage more families to drop into the building.

During the year both our choirs took part in festivals off site. The landmark Sound were selected to sing at Hampton Court Palace as part of the Palace's 500th anniversary celebrations. Although strictly speaking not in the year under review, recently the Landmark Singers won the very first Richmond Sing Off competition. Needless to say we are very proud of both choirs and their tutors for what they have achieved.

Website

The website is currently being re-designed, including a complete overhaul of the content and site navigation. The new site will be fully responsive. Meaning it can be used over a range of devices i.e. mobiles, tablets, laptops etc.

Piano Appeal

Just under £18,000 raised so far. Still no news about our applications to fundraising bodies and so I am pursuing a tentative enquiry from a private donor who might make up the deficit. I'm sure that members will understand that I cannot give further details at this stage.

We were indebted to The Gosling Foundation for their generous grant of £5,000 towards community arts projects during 2015 -16. The funds were used to support Piano In There in January and the Between The Lines community events. I am delighted to report that The Gosling Foundation granted another £5,000 for the current financial year which will support the Festival of Song and the landmark Stories Festival. As an unsubsidised charity this support has been critical to allowing us to take some artistic risk and without it we would not have been able to commit to six projects over the past two years.

Teddington Cycle Quietway

Members living in Teddington may be aware that the council propose to remove all the parking outside the Centre on ferry Road and also along the High Street up to Marks and Spencers. Should this go ahead it would have a massive impact on us, particularly at fairs and when community orchestras perform. It is hardly practical to bring your painting for an art fair on the bus! I appeal to members to object and to encourage their friends too as well. The Teddington Society is leading a campaign against the proposals, so we are far from alone in our views.

Lesley Bossine November 2016