



Impact report by Orchestras Live

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CLASSICALLY YOURS IMPACT REPORT

APRIL 2016 – MARCH 2020

Classically Yours is a multifaceted creative and participatory programme of orchestral music activities taking place in the East Riding of Yorkshire. It was conceived in 2016 by Orchestras Live (OL) in partnership with East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) to help more communities, especially those in rural and coastal areas, participate in, experience and enjoy high quality, live orchestral music on a regular basis. Working with numerous artistic and community partners, our ambition was to enable communities who believed culture happened elsewhere to enjoy and participate in creative music making with professional orchestras.

As the programme evolved, projects with communities involving professional orchestras, musicians, composers and conductors became more participatory and were co-created with communities who increasingly wanted to be at the heart of them. The skills of musicians in the locality were developed, enabling work to continue to grow even when the orchestras weren't present. From the music and performance created by learning disabled theatre company Wolds Wonders and Stamford Bridge Community Choir with Sinfonia Viva and James Redwood in Pocklington, to Manchester Camerata's last concert in Withernsea in March 2020 including Kate Pearson's monumental *Bluebeard of Withernsea* composed with and performed by young people from 5 local schools, and Richard Taylor/Janet Fulton's *Pictures of the Mind* composed with 8 care home settings and performed with the Withernsea Ladies Choir, they have two things in common: authenticity and quality.

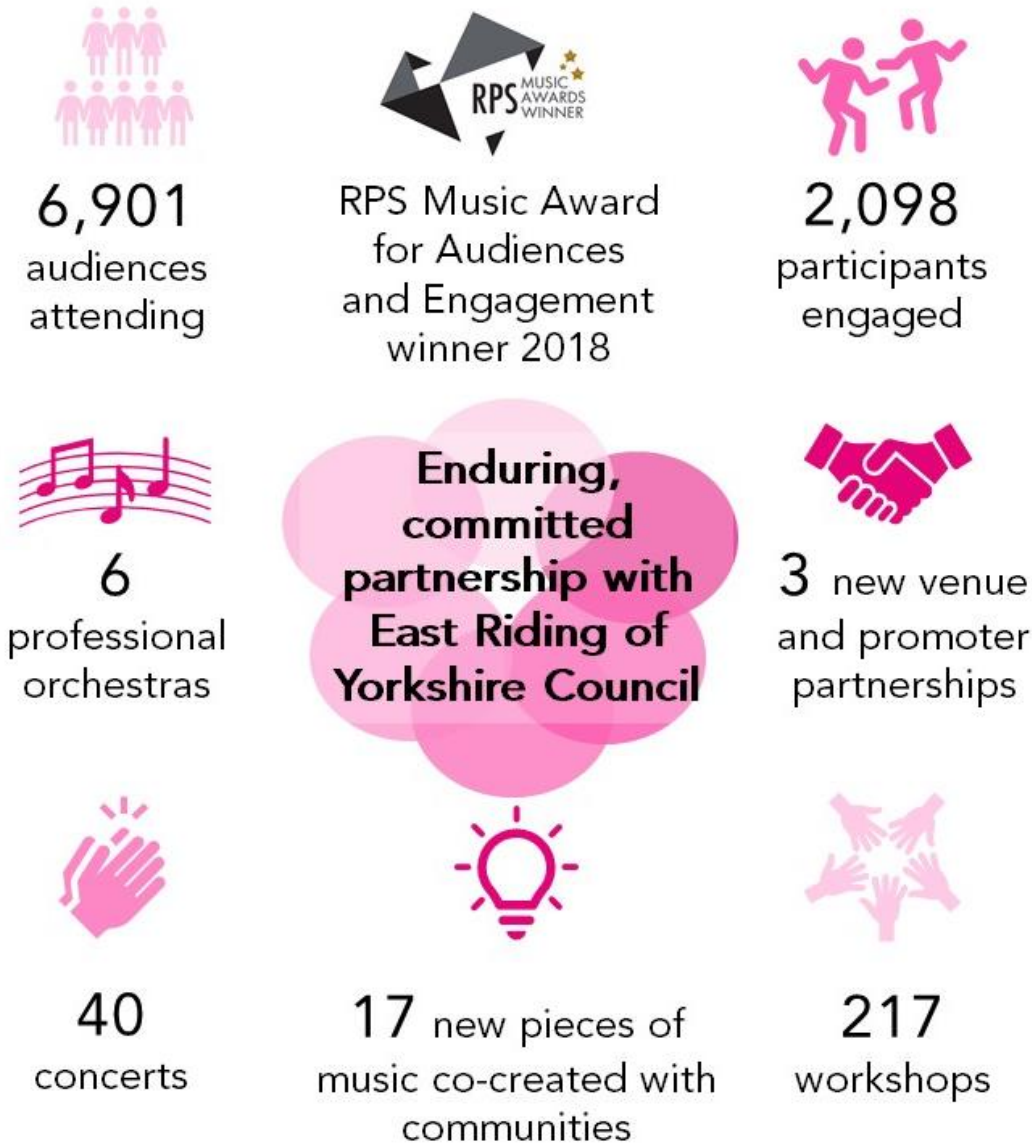
The outcomes have been numerous and varied, sometimes unexpected, as this report details. Not only have new audiences been established and grown for orchestral music of all kinds but communities are now co-designing and co-curating the programmes with them. Local people have had the opportunity to develop their own musicianship through new opportunities to encounter different orchestras and their work. Partnerships with non-cultural organisations such as care homes have been established and these have brought young and old together across a large rural county to create and perform music. Orchestras have developed too. Both lead chamber orchestras have significantly developed their approach to long term place-based working away from their home cities over the last four years.

Classically Yours has reinforced the value of culture in the East Riding, resulting in increased investment from the local authority in large-scale orchestral events for families at Bridlington Spa. We have seen orchestras adapt and develop new ways of working and establish enduring relationships with communities through developing a long term place-focused approach.

We have found the *Classically Yours* community-focused and co-creative approach has resonated widely and are exploring how the learning from this approach can support the development of new partnerships across the north.

Classically Yours goes forward into its sixth year undaunted by the challenges of Covid-19. In the next phase of *Classically Yours* we intend to reach even more communities in more places across the East Riding with orchestral music because orchestras do want to go there, and they are for everyone.

Jan Ford
Senior Creative Producer, Orchestras Live
December 2020



- *Classically Yours* increased musical opportunities for people across the East Riding, from two orchestral events per annum prior to the project to 40 over the last four years.
- The orchestral programme included concerts of varying scales, a family events strand and opportunities for people of all ages to participate in collaborative music making and perform alongside orchestras of all sizes.
- East Riding of Yorkshire Council and Orchestras Live engaged with a range of local organisations and ambassadors, who supported events to reach new audiences.
- Three chamber orchestras have underpinned the *Classically Yours* programme across all four years, with three symphony orchestras providing large-scale family events at Bridlington Spa and site-specific events with young musicians in Beverley.

WHAT WE SET OUT TO ACHIEVE

Project aims

- reach new audiences: those least engaged/ first time attenders/ families
- work with a wide range of participants: young people, older people, those with disabilities, local music making groups with a focus on participant involvement/curation
- develop the music leadership skills of East Riding-based musicians
- develop programming and marketing skills of East Riding venues
- change/ adapt orchestras' approaches to work with communities in rural areas
- develop new partnerships

Classically Yours developed as part of a long-standing partnership between Orchestras Live and East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC). Prior to 2016, the partnership's activity was limited to two annual co-produced concerts in Beverley and Bridlington. Working with Orchestras Live and artistic and community partners in rural, coastal and isolated areas, ERYC's ambition was to enable communities who believed culture happened elsewhere to enjoy and participate in creative music making with professional orchestras.

The project took as its starting point the notion of an 'orchestra in residence' and changed it to 'orchestras being resident' in the East Riding of Yorkshire year-round and accessible to people in any number of ways, not just formal concerts. The idea of 'cultural entitlement' and consultation, offering a wide range of people the opportunity to engage in a variety of ways, was, and remains, at the heart of the project.

Classically Yours set out to engage new audiences by addressing the inequalities of opportunity to access high quality live orchestral music in the East Riding of Yorkshire – a monocultural area characterised by dispersed communities, limited public transport and minimal cultural infrastructure, with cultural engagement rates in the lowest third nationally.¹ The nearest city is Hull, which is not part of East Riding of Yorkshire Council and their City of Culture year in 2017/18 coincided with *Classically Yours*. The East Riding consists of a series of small market towns over a large rural area, from the Humber estuary in the south up to the border with York in the north and east to a series of coastal towns. Key characteristics of the East Riding from their population profile are²:

- Approximately 93% rural by area
- Approximately 44% rural by population
- A low population density of 1.4 people per hectare.
- A larger percentage of the population is over 65 than the wider Yorkshire and Humber region and England.
- Ethnic diversity is much lower than the Yorkshire and Humber region, with 96% of the population white British.
- Bridlington, Withernsea and Goole are in the 10% most deprived areas according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation

¹ Active Lives Survey, published 2018

² Data on East Riding's population profile, <https://intel-hub.eastriding.gov.uk/east-riding-profile/>

Classically Yours aimed to develop the capability of venues to promote orchestral music and attract new audiences and worked with professional orchestras to develop relevant work for audiences to participate in and engage with. Through *Classically Yours*, OL and ERYC worked with other partners in the county including East Riding Music Education Hub, East Riding Youth Dance, Pocklington Arts Centre and Bridlington-based Remarkable Theatre Arts to extend the reach of professional orchestras and their skills.

The target audience were living in isolated coastal and rural areas where there is a tendency for people to believe that culture happens elsewhere and not where they live.

WHAT WE DID

The *Classically Yours* programme included the following strands delivered by a variety of orchestras:

- Orchestral workshops and performances designed for families
- Longer term creative projects with large scale participatory culmination concerts
- *At Home* programme focused on older people

The programme was underpinned by Manchester Camerata and Sinfonia Viva, who provided a consistent level of activity across the four years to enable them to focus on developing longer term engagement. The core programme was enhanced by a range of different activity from four other orchestras, Britten Sinfonia, the Halle, Multi-Story Orchestra and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.



We went back to basics and we started at the very, very beginning and they loved it... We involved them with writing songs, composing music and that side of it they absolutely loved, they've all got a lot out of it.

June Mitchell, Community Arts Officer, East Riding of Yorkshire Council



Manchester Camerata focused exclusively on activity in the Withernsea area, with a range of participation projects and concerts in local schools and the *At Home* programme in care homes. Withernsea had little cultural infrastructure and no venue with an established audience. *Classically Yours* was a very new cultural offer that required building an in-depth artistic approach to reach a new audience.

Sinfonia Viva's participatory programme began in Pocklington, where the local Arts Centre was transitioning into joining the Arts Council England NPO portfolio in 2018. From 2019, the focus moved to the Bridlington area to engage new groups and schools. They have also performed a series of their family events in Bridlington, Beverley and Pocklington.



The mix of orchestras has been a strength of the project. Without *Classically Yours* and the funding this isn't something we could have dreamed of doing in this area.

June Mitchell, Community Arts Officer, East Riding of Yorkshire Council



Participatory work took a ‘with’ not ‘for’ approach and consultation with partners and community groups informed project planning and development. Activity ranged from workshops for families and early years settings to introduce musical material before a concert to longer term workshop series in particular settings to co-create new music with an orchestra. Music co-created with participants formed a key part of artistic programming for concerts and events across the four years, with participants often working with musicians to curate the repertoire to frame their piece in the final concert.



In the finale of year two of the programme, Manchester Camerata and Sinfonia Viva joined forces at a celebratory concert in Bridlington Spa, where they brought their participants together to share the results of their collaborative music making. This high-profile event raised the profile of *Classically Yours* and was a key factor in winning the RPS Award for Audiences and Engagement in 2018.

In years three and four, the programme diversified further, bringing Multi-Story Orchestra’s (MSO) unique offer to Flemingate Shopping Centre Car Park in Beverley (the only multi-story car park in the East Riding), working with young people from East Riding Youth Orchestra. This was the first performance for MSO in the north of England and it included their Living Programme Notes format, which introduces the music to the audience in person before it is performed.

“

Went to see you [MSO] on a whim last year in Beverley where you played Schumann 2nd. I’d never been into classical music and had never listened to a symphony. It really awoke a passion for classical music and I’ve been listening to all sorts since. Schumann 2 is still my favourite though, maybe it’s because you taught me the ‘lyrics’!

Audience Member

”

OUTCOMES

1. Developed a new core audience

New audiences for orchestral concerts have been consistently reached across the four years as *Classically Yours* promoted orchestral events in new places and engaged 35 community groups/schools in creative music making and performance. ERYC have established a new mailing list and social media presence which continues to grow. Their booking data demonstrates that repeat booking levels have consistently remained higher than in year one, indicating the development of a core audience who attend multiple events.

Partners have undertaken 11 audience surveys. There has been a consistently positive reaction to programming and the quality of performance, confirming that the audience view *Classically Yours* as bringing high quality work to their place.

“ So great to have local live music of such wonderful quality. ”

Audience member

“ The musicianship was amazing. ”

Audience member

“ This was a fabulous concert, it gave me a real feeling for classical music. I am 11 years old. ”

Audience member

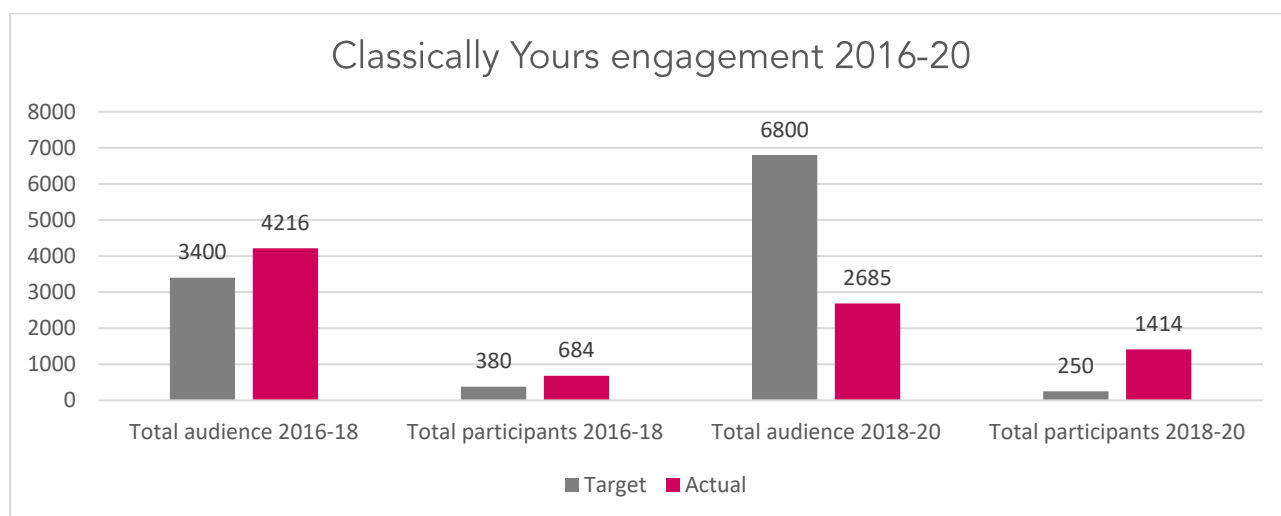
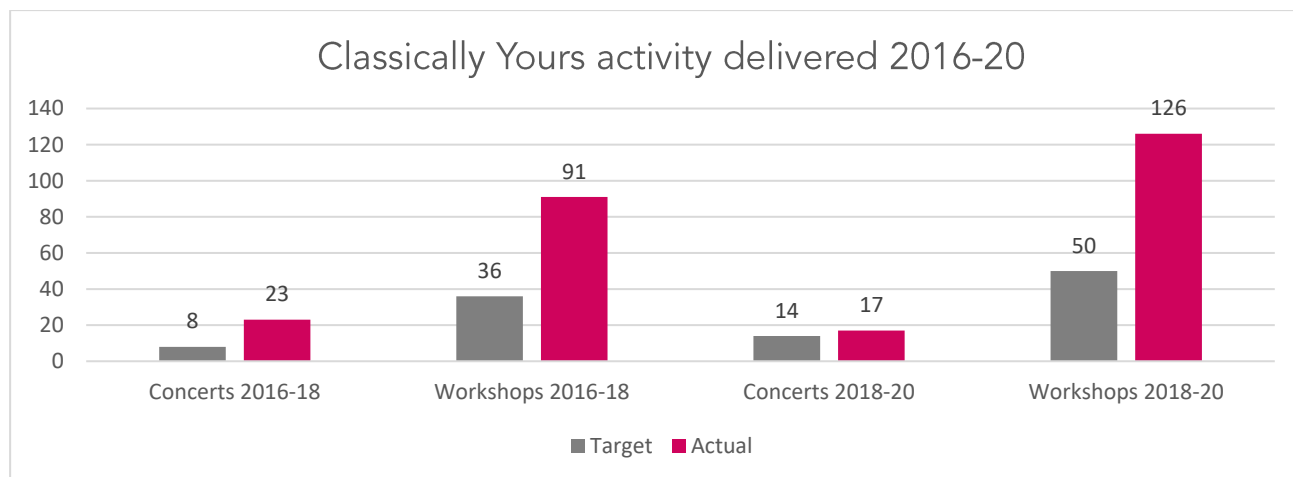
Surveys show that initially audiences were very local to the venue, **with 50% travelling less than 5 miles to events** in 2016/17. Subsequent surveys show **audiences increased the distance they were prepared to travel within the Ridings**, which correlates with the increasing profile and audience recognition of the quality of the *Classically Yours* programme.



Royal Philharmonic Orchestra Family concert at Bridlington Spa.
Photo credit: Jan Ford

2. Reached a wide range of participants

As *Classically Yours* developed, the importance of embedding participation opportunities across the programme to widen opportunities and reach new audiences became increasingly evident. Targets for individual participants and numbers of workshops were significantly exceeded, indicating a clear appetite for these opportunities that enabled *Classically Yours* to increase its reach significantly. **43% of groups engaged more than once**, indicating growing confidence in the value and quality of *Classically Yours* projects.



“ They [children] enjoyed learning about the different instruments and felt important when they performed with the orchestra. This is something that many of our children would not be able to be involved in without this opportunity. ”

Teacher, Withernsea

“ Seeing this level of creativity, allowing all children to have a part and seeing the benefit for SEN children was amazing. Many children have few opportunities to see live professional musicians and to have their input and support. This really inspired the children. ”

Teacher, Martongate Primary School

Classically Yours qualitative project evaluations identified the following significant outcomes for participants involved in creative music making:



17 new pieces of music have been co-created with participants and performances ensured that these were a central part of the programme. Audience data has demonstrated that it is the inclusion of community pieces in performances that is key to attracting an audience, particularly in new places such as Withernsea. The MSO concert with East Riding Youth Orchestra was also particularly effective in attracting new audiences to *Classically Yours*, with the different style of presentation welcomed by audience and participants alike.

Multi Story Orchestra Living Programme Notes performed with East Riding Youth Orchestra at Flemingate Car Park. Photo credit: Jan Ford



“

The interactive part [at the MSO concert] was a great surprise, me and my girlfriend came to see something different and that was fun.

”

Audience member



Multi Story Orchestra performance at Flemingate Car Park. Photo credit: Becky West

“

That was brilliant. Would like more of this local to Withernsea. Inclusion of the primary school class was a lovely touch.

”

Audience member

3. Built shared community experiences

Projects have contributed to building a sense of community and supporting community cohesion through bringing different groups together across a large rural county. Qualitative feedback has demonstrated how much this is valued and particularly how bringing schools together has been a very positive experience. Anecdotal evidence shows this enhanced sense of community has continued after participants' involvement in *Classically Yours* projects, particularly with community choir members volunteering with other local groups.

“

I have now had the privilege of being involved in several concerts in Withernsea. I am always blown away: not only by the quality of music making that the collaborative work (be it with schools or residential homes) has produced, but also by the enthusiasm, warmth and appreciation with which the wider community embraces the concerts.

”

Manchester Camerata musician

The inclusion of members of the Withernsea Ladies Choir in workshops as well as performances of the community pieces has supported volunteering in the wider community. Bringing young and older people together to perform their community pieces has also helped support community cohesion in the town.

“It has brought a lot of joy to elderly people in their care homes and to people with learning disabilities, they all loved the music and all the instruments we used - so did we.”

“I found it to be a very satisfying and moving experience. And making friends with the residents and staff was really good.”

Members of Withernsea Ladies Choir



Manchester Camerata performing with Withernsea Ladies Choir and local care home residents.
Photo credit: David Roberts, Moonstone photography

4. Supported wellbeing through increased music making in care settings

Manchester Camerata's ongoing *At Home* programme in care homes in the Withernsea area has been particularly effective in supporting residents' wellbeing and social connection, with a consistent number of participants taking part in sessions across each project. Four settings have continued to be engaged over the four years and four new settings joined the programme in year 4. Staff have been provided with training and resources to support them to continue regular music making with residents between musicians' visits. The long-term nature of the project and consistency of the Camerata delivery team has given staff space to develop their musical skills and confidence within their supportive professional relationships with the musicians.

“Most of our clients have to be supported by staff. Not only [have the workshops] made [the residents] more confident – but it has helped the staff become more confident in supporting these residents.

”

Care Home staff member



Manchester Camerata 'At Home' workshops. Photo credit: Jan Ford

Evaluation shows that the vast majority of residents:

- took an active part in sessions
- displayed movement
- expressed joy/happiness
- many residents actively moved to the room where the music was taking place without prompting
- many residents actively looked forward to the next visit

The sustained professional development for care home staff has helped to embed music as part of the culture of the care home with staff telling partners *“They like to get together and play [music] together”, “most have carried it on, singing around the home and banging on things like drums.”*

5. Participants increased confidence and musical skills

Participating in *Classically Yours* projects has provided local people with the opportunity to develop their own musicianship through new opportunities to encounter different orchestras in their work. As a result of taking part in *Classically Yours* since March 2018 membership of the Withernsea Ladies Choir has doubled and their conductor reflects that working alongside professional musicians has increased confidence and levels of musicianship, with the work in care settings giving added purpose to their singing.

For East Riding Youth Orchestra, working with MSO introduced them to new performance concepts and repertoire. **More than 75% of participants reported feeling more confident** in their performing, composition, improvisation and general musicianship skills as a result of taking part.

“It was a completely different way of performing that was refreshing in a sense. Members of MSO were encouraging and supportive. I think that in the future I'll try to engage more in unusual and different styles of performing.”

East Riding Youth Orchestra Member

“Students went from being quite subdued at the start to having the confidence to lead the audience in activities through directing the living programme notes. I think there was some skepticism at the start of the project. After the students had spent time workshopping there was a much more enthusiastic and open approach.”

Peter Walker, East Riding Music Education Hub

“A number of children have started learning an instrument after these workshops and many already having lessons said they learnt lots of new techniques. It was lovely to see the team work, creativity and confidence of the class grow whilst they were having lots of fun!”

Teacher, Martongate Primary School



Royal Philharmonic Orchestra 'Noisy Kids' workshops in Bridlington. Photo credit: Jan Ford

6. Developed local cultural infrastructure and orchestral links

Classically Yours has contributed to ERYC's corporate objectives (maximising our potential, supporting vulnerable people, reducing inequalities, promoting health, wellbeing & independence) over the last four years and the Council's commitment to culture has increased. With increased programming confidence at the main ERYC run venue in the East Riding, Bridlington Spa following a sell out orchestra show, ERYC now solely promote the symphony orchestra summer family concert, although it remains branded as part of *Classically Yours*.

In Withernsea, the Meridian Centre and High School have been developed as venues. Bringing the High School on board as a venue in 2019 has enabled partners to present large scale events successfully in the town, with space to bring both schools and residents of the care homes together with the orchestra to perform.

Classically Yours has provided both lead chamber orchestras the opportunity to develop place-based practice over a four-year period, finding ways to embed themselves in a community and forge long term relationships, including with ReMarkable Theatre Arts. ReMarkable practitioners have benefitted from professional development opportunities. Partners planned a placement for a ReMarkable trainee, who has gained new knowledge of orchestral music and benefitted from the opportunity to develop group teaching skills whilst being mentored by an experienced music leader.

The programme was developed to sustain community engagement opportunities through the embedded participation work and avoid the 'drive in, perform, drive out' mentality. Over time, participants have got to know individual musicians they have worked with, which has enhanced the orchestra's relationship to the local community. In autumn 2020, members of Stamford Bridge Community Choir responded to Sinfonia Viva's call out for singers, keen for the opportunity to work with the orchestra again two years after their project was completed.



Celebrating the RPS Music Award win. Photo credit: Stamford Bridge Community Choir

“Working on *Classically Yours* has really solidified our belief that you can have a strong long-lasting relationship with a community, without actually being based in that community. If the relationships are built on solid ground through a strong project which invites people to work closely together, with a completely consistent team, then the relationships remain strong long past the end of the project.”

Marianne Barraclough, Deputy Chief Executive, Sinfonia Viva



East Riding Youth Dance County Company, choreographed by Dawn Holgate, performed new work inspired by the orchestral repertoire at every large-scale event at Brid Spa. Photo credit: Andy McNaughton

7. Developed orchestral practice

The programme has given all orchestras involved the opportunity to refine and develop different formats to present orchestral music. Outcomes have included:

- Manchester Camerata have developed small scale 'orchestral' ensembles and arrangements.
- Multi-Story Orchestra created a Living Programme Notes project with East Riding Youth Orchestra, where the young people created and delivered Living Programme Notes with MSO at the concert, as well as performing their own piece, which was a new concept for their participation work.
- Royal Philharmonic Orchestra refined their family concert format, to include the East Riding Youth Orchestra who led audience participation activities in the concert
- Manchester Camerata and Sinfonia Viva delivered a joint culmination concert with both orchestras and participants at Bridlington Spa in 2018. Bringing two artistic ensembles together to perform was challenging and resulted in significant learning on collaborative event production.

“[The Living Programme Notes project] enabled us to expand our musicians' skill sets as well as expanding our work as an organisation.”

Kate Whitley, Artistic Director, Multi-Story Orchestra

“The *Classically Yours* programme in East Riding has been significant for us at Sinfonia Viva as it has provided substantial evidence that the way to build a successful relationship and partnership is through understanding the local need, listening to the communities and working in those communities over a sustained period. Respecting the contribution from the local people is vital and helps create truly special work, unique to the place. I would hope we have become an Orchestra truly in the community, for the community.”

Peter Helps, Chief Executive, Sinfonia Viva

LEGACY

Giving the community a stake in the cultural offer, effectively showcasing local talent and using music to bring a community together has reached new audiences as well as supported community cohesion. Indeed, without this strand of work, the programme arguably would not have achieved the audience reach it has. This approach will continue to inform the artistic development of *Classically Yours*.

There is a clear peak in audience numbers in 2017-18, which correlates with local observations of a 'Hull City of Culture effect' increasing cultural attendance across the county that year. Partners will need to develop a focused audience development plan for future work to support retaining audiences alongside continuing to embed participatory opportunities to reach new audiences.

“There's a lot of places still to reach. We do need to do more work in the places we're in, as we're still at grassroots level.

June Mitchell, Community Arts Officer, East Riding of Yorkshire Council

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For participants, qualitative feedback has consistently shown that taking part has increased confidence, developed skills and broadened musical horizons. Without *Classically Yours*, these types of musical opportunities are simply not available to people in the East Riding and the positive participant and audience survey feedback demonstrates that these opportunities are needed and valued by the community.

During 2020, this has been demonstrated through the response of the Withernsea Ladies Choir to partners asking them how they would like to continue engaging with Manchester Camerata to support their music-making through lockdown. Members of the choir took part in an online consultation workshop to shape the project where they explored creative themes and fed back on how the online experience worked. Participants then had the confidence to perform in a completely new way in order to realise their creative ambition and perform their new piece.



Unlocked Voices final work sharing via Zoom. Photo credit: Manchester Camerata

Both lead chamber orchestras have significantly developed their approach to long term place-based working away from their home cities over the last four years.

“ Projects like this [*Classically Yours*] are some of the most important work we do, inspiring us to think differently about the social impact we can make, and how we might support and collaborate with other communities such as Withernsea in future. ”

Bob Riley, Chief Executive, Manchester Camerata

Collaborative partnership working can at times be challenging, but these first four years led by OL and ERYC have laid strong foundations with partner orchestras. Over time the level of collaborative production, promotion and communication has increased and this will be increasingly important to effectively support future audience reach. The next phase of *Classically Yours* will involve the library service, building a participatory and co-creation programme with new community groups in new places supported by library staff. Alongside this new creative focus, partners will continue to develop a programme of activity with existing communities.

Through their northern strategy development, Orchestras Live have found the *Classically Yours* place focused and co-creative approach has resonated widely. OL are currently exploring how the learning from this approach can support the development of new partnerships in the north of England.

“ Our projects in Withernsea have certainly helped me realise why I do what I do. I have been humbled to witness the impact live music and creativity can have on children, young people, parents, teachers and the elderly – in fact everyone. Music is for everyone; participation should not be based on a postcode lottery or financial position. These projects prove what is possible when someone is given the chance. ”

Robert Guy, Conductor

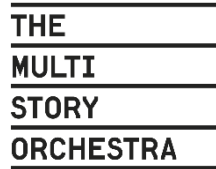
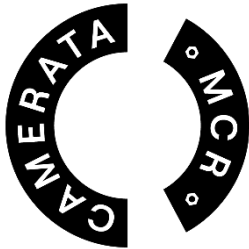


Orchestral Extravaganza performance with the combined orchestras of Manchester Camerata and Sinfonia Viva. Photo credit: Andy McNaughton

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Partners and supporters

Our thanks go to our artistic and funding partners who have supported *Classically Yours* 2016-20.



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FOYLE FOUNDATION

Bridlington Spa

East Riding Music Education Hub

Flemingate Shopping Centre, Beverley

Meridian Centre, Withernsea

New Paths Music, Beverley

Pocklington Arts Centre

ReMarkable Arts

Toll Gavel Church, Beverley

Withernsea High School

With thanks to all the Classically Yours participant groups:

Bleak House, Patrington
Eastfield Farm
Granville Court, Hornsea
Meregarth Housing Scheme, Hornsea
Queens Care Residential Home
Stuart House, Hornsea
Tamarix Residential Home
Willerfoss House
Cascades Living Solutions
Remarkable Rock Choir
Stamford Bridge Community Choir
Withernsea Ladies Choir
Wolds Wonders

East Riding County Youth Orchestra
East Riding Youth Brass
East Riding Youth Dance
Bugthorpe Under 5s
Cliffe House Nursery School
Nursery Rhymes, Bridlington
Bay Primary School
Bugthorpe Primary School
Burlington Infants School
Burton Pidsea Primary School
Easington Primary School
Keyingham Primary School
Martongate Primary School

Our Lady & St Peter School
Patrington Primary School
Pocklington Primary School
St Martin's School, Fangfoss
St Mary & St Joseph's RC Primary School
Stamford Bridge Primary School
Withernsea Primary School
Withernsea High School
Kingsmill Special School