



Musical Magic

School Proms 2007

- The Royal Albert Hall hosts Music for Youth's 'School Prom'
- 3,000 inspiring young musicians come together to celebrate Britain's impressive musical talent

Music for Youth is an educational charity with a world-wide reputation for its work in music education. It provides free access to performance opportunities for all kinds of young musicians through its annual programme of festivals and concerts. Music for Youth believes that performing

in front of live audiences is a vital element in spurring on young people to greater achievement. More importantly this magical experience will play a major role in the development of their creativity, self-confidence and their emotional growth.

The world's most famous concert

hall; **The Royal Albert Hall**, was brought alive by Britain's pure young talent between **12th-14th November** with the acclaimed 2007 **Music for Youth School Prom** which celebrated its **33rd anniversary in 2007**.

This incredible concert brought together over 3,000 inspiring young

musicians, singers and dancers from every corner of the country and celebrated the outstanding breadth and quality of the youth music scene in the UK today. The achievements and individual artistry of all the young performers who took part was a tribute both to them and to the excellence of the teachers who fostered and developed their talent.

The Schools Prom is a national celebration of the wonderful work taking place in and out of schools and clearly demonstrates the breath and diversity of youth music-making in the UK.

Audiences were treated to performances by 34 carefully selected groups who have proven their talent earlier this year at the National Festival of Music for Youth where Brent Holder judged the Steel band category. The breathtaking line-up included talent ranging from near professional orchestras, jazz bands, music theatre groups, steel bands, soul singers and many more, representing nearly every possible genre of music.

Music is alive and well in the schools and educational centres of the country and the Schools Prom underscores and celebrates this

Pimlico School a multi-ethnic inner city comprehensive in Westminster has Visual and Performing Arts status and boasts a wealth of very musically gifted students. The school is currently going through the 'special measures' system, having been identified by OFSTED as a failing school. Massive change has occurred with new management and new staff that have obviously been very disruptive for the pupils. Music has been the one consistency throughout the school through a special music course that sadly they are fighting to save. With some very disruptive, deprived pupils in the school, music has really enabled some pupils to find their feet and this has been evident through the improvement in their school work.

Pimlico Steel Band is made up of pupils from two year groups and has been together for 2 years. This hasn't only been their first School Prom but the Music for Youth Festivals are the first time they have ever performed outside of Pimlico School. There are two sets of twins in the band all of whom are boys. One set are identical

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and the others aren't and the older identical twins act like mentors for the younger members. They are led by their musical tutor, Chris Storey – the musical arranger for the Pantasia steel orchestra that has firmly established themselves as a leading orchestra in the UK steel band community.

In fact, Chris was also musically responsible for the Haringey Young Musicians' Steel Orchestra appearing on the first night of the 2006 Schools Prom, they opened the second half of the concert with an exciting and vibrant performance of two pieces arranged especially for the orchestra by Chris. This was not the first time the orchestra of twenty 9-19 year olds had been invited to play at the Schools Proms, but it was in fact returning to the Royal Albert Hall after a rapturously received performance at the Music for Youth Primary Prom in October 2006.

Every day of the Proms a magnificent massed choir performed, bringing together 500 stunning voices a piece – a feat that was immensely enjoyed by all attending patrons. In addition, each concert climaxed with a spine-tingling finale of fireworks, balloons and a rendition of the passionate and patriotic "Land of Hope and Glory". The events were hosted by acclaimed lyricist

Richard Stilgoe, composer Howard Goodall and Classic FM presenter Lisa Duncombe who joined the audiences in supporting the future of Britain's music industry.

The Schools Prom 2007 was sponsored by Music Industries Association, Youth Music, Department for Children, Schools and Families and Classic FM. The Proms was supported by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Garfield Weston Foundation, Musicians Benevolent Fund, Trinity Guildhall, Department of Education, Music for All and Music Manifesto. In addition numerous friends and donors make this event possible ensuring that the youth of the country is afforded this platform to showcase their amazing music skills and talents.

**Photos By Andy Howes
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