

The I3 Outreach Programme October-December 2006

For the I3 project, musical compositions by two student composers from Newcastle and Durham Universities respectively were selected for performance by the Northern Sinfonia. Felicity set up a short series of sessions in Gosforth High School with the Head of Music there, Michael Baxter, in which GCSE and some A level music students were introduced to these pieces in electronic and notated form. The compositional styles and content were discussed and explored in practical activity with Felicity, and then over an ensuing period, the pupils composed their *own* pieces using these same musical ideas. Subsequently, the two students, Matthew Rowan (Newcastle) and Kelcey Swain (Durham), visited the school to work directly with the pupils, listening to and reflecting upon the latter's' works, and offering further insight into their own pieces. The final stage of this project was constituted by the Northern Sinfonia rehearsal and performance of these pieces (and other recently composed works) to which the school pupils were invited.

In this way, complex musical ideas were made accessible 'from the inside' to the pupils, who were then able to appreciate the transformation from written score and electronic rendition to live performance on real instruments far more deeply than might otherwise have occurred.

This pilot educational programme was successful in several ways;

1. The school pupils expressed a positive response overall, and a thoughtful interest in the students' compositions, and for those who came to the final performance, the range of works performed there.
2. The Head of Music at the High School felt that the programme offered a relevant, lively and indeed exciting glimpse into a novel musical world, and he is now interested in further such co-operation with the CETL projects.
3. The students themselves expressed their own positive response to the work with the pupils, and again, their interest in further such work.
4. An indirect result of the contact established was the ensuing visit by music students from Durham University, under the leadership of Dr Martyn Harry, to perform their collectively-composed opera 'Big Hungry Animal' at Gosforth High School. This was attended by a large number of school pupils, and a further group of Newcastle university students from the Teaching Methods course there. The opera was very well-received.

Further such educational elements of the CETL projects are in planning from 2007, initially in the I3 and the World Music projects. It is hoped that an increasing number of school pupils in the region will be able to take part in these, thereby enriching young people's experience both of contemporary classical music, and of the classical music of another culture, and also fostering potentially creative and mutually beneficial relationships between the schools and universities involved.