Author Andy Stanton makes trumpet debut to support young musicians in challenging circumstances

Friday 8 November, 2019

Orchestras for All, the innovative music charity which gives 11-18 year olds with complex lives the opportunity to access the life-changing experience of ensemble music-making, brings its fundraising event **Musical Chairs** to **Westminster School** in London on Saturday 16 November. For one day, only members of the public who have taken on the challenge of learning a musical instrument in just eight weeks, will rehearse and perform alongside young musicians from the National Orchestra for All. Putting the novice players through their paces will be internationally acclaimed conductor and Head of Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music **Sian Edwards**.

North London-based children's author **Andy Stanton** – creator of the popular *Mr Gum* series, will be joining participants from all over the country preparing to play in a real-life symphony orchestra, this year learning the trumpet from scratch. Andy has been busy practicing and fundraising to help the organisation reach a record-breaking £20,000 in celebration of their fifth year of the event.

Andy said "Helping young people to experience the joy of music-making – and giving them the confidence to just go for it – is absolutely invaluable. Music turns lives around; opens people's minds; makes available entire new galaxies of opportunity and hope. I can't wait to blow my horn loud and proud for such a good cause!"

Musical Chairs raises money for Camden-based **Orchestras for All**, one of the most innovative young charities in the UK today. Since Musical Chairs started in 2015, it has raised over £65,000 for the work that Orchestras for All does in providing access to ensemble music-making for young people with challenging circumstances, including disabilities, socio-economic deprivation, rural isolation or physical health conditions.

Executive Director Stuart Burns said "Every year Musical Chairs has grown bigger and better, and this year for our fifth anniversary, we're very excited to be performing in the beautiful setting of Westminster School. All of our 48 participants have worked so hard, getting to grips with their instruments, learning their music and fundraising. The extraordinary young people from the National Orchestra for All will become our experts for the day, supporting our novice participants for the day. We're so grateful to everyone taking part and can't wait for what is likely to be a rather unique performance!"

Orchestras for All believes that music has the power to change lives and wants music to be accessible to all young people aged 11-18 whatever their circumstances. The charity provides opportunities for young people with complex lives to rehearse and perform in a unique national youth orchestra (the National Orchestra for All) completely free of charge and without audition. It also runs a national schools programme and provides ensemble leadership training across the country for teachers and community music leaders. Since 2011 the charity has worked with **over 2,000 young people**, supported **over 75 music teachers** and community music leaders and created **over 25 arrangements** of specially-created music for mixed skill level ensembles.

Tickets to see Andy and the Orchestra perform are available free of charge, and available on our website at www.orchestrasforall.org/music...

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Orchestras for All

T. 0207 267 4141
E. info@orchestrasforall.org
W. https://www.orchestrasforall.org

Additional Contact(s):
richard.dinnadge@orchestrasforall.org

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