

# LIQUID HISTORY

## MMF'S FLAGSHIP ROYAL ALBERT HALL PROJECT 2018-19

**LIQUID HISTORY** is a massed community music project using the theme of rivers to explore relationships and communication between young people in Merton with its rich, diverse mix of ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds. The River Wandle runs through the borough; to the west are highly affluent wards whilst to the east are some of the poorest wards in the country. The project will bring together young people from across the borough to work collaboratively, share their life stories and help break down perceived barriers, to form new friendships and promote better understanding within the youth community.

The project has 3 distinct schools strands:

- 1 THAMES TALES:**  
A new choral commission by Pete Churchill and Adam Saunders with a script by Andy Alty. Culminating in a performance at the Royal Albert Hall in March 2019.
- 2 SNAP!**  
A photography and video project.
- 3 LOCATION, INTONATION!**  
An opportunity for school choirs to sing accompanied by the street pianos at a number of London and Merton locations.

ALL Merton primary and secondary schools will have access to the London Song Pack, by Adam Saunders, through the MMF website ([www.mmf.org.uk](http://www.mmf.org.uk)), to use throughout the year, free of charge.



# 1. THAMES TALES



**THAMES TALES - a new choral commission by Pete Churchill and Adam Saunders, with script by Andy Alty. To be performed at the Royal Albert Hall on Wednesday 20th March, 2019.**

As the heart and soul of the river, Old Father Thames has seen and heard it all...

For the last ten centuries he's patiently listened, watched and shared in the triumphs and tragedies, the joys and sorrows of countless generations - and the years have finally taken their toll. He's tired and weary now and at last it's time to retire; to relinquish his crown to someone younger and more energetic. Unfortunately, however, his grand-daughter isn't sure she wants the job! She needs to discover her own 'song of the river', to lead the Thames, with its rich heritage and wealth of life stories, forward into the future. In order to persuade her, he has to take her on one final journey and the people she meets on the way show her that the story of this river is *our* story- who we are and who we want to become...

Thames Tales is a new 50-minute choral piece which will explore the River Thames and its place at the heart of London life. The piece will be scored for massed primary schools choir and community harmony choir, accompanied by the Merton Youth Jazz Orchestra, strings and folk band. Young 'mudlark' narrators will guide us through the story, providing us with 'eyewitness accounts' of specific events and characters, echoing the constant rhythm and flow of the river as it travels through time and place.

1,000 KS2 pupils from Merton primary schools will receive a series of 6 half-day choral workshops, between October 2018 and March 2019, to learn the songs, improve their vocal and choral skills and explore the art of song-writing and composition. The massed choir will also include an intergenerational harmony choir with members drawn from youth choirs and community singers from across Merton.

## **SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT**

The project is aimed at whole classes of KS2 pupils, however, schools may wish to put forward smaller groups (ie. choirs), or select children they feel will benefit most from participation. In some cases, Y4 will be considered.

Schools must ensure that all places they reserve are filled and that those pupils and their families will fully support the final Sunday rehearsal and Wednesday evening performance.

The school will facilitate attendance at the series of Thames Tales choral workshops:

- October 2018: a 75-min introductory choral workshop at each individual school (dates TBC)
- November 2018: cluster workshop 1 (dates TBC)
- January 2019: cluster workshop 2 (dates TBC)
- February 2019: cluster workshop 3 (dates TBC)
- Tuesday 12 March 2019: large cluster half-day workshop 4 ( with rhythm section and soloists)
- Sunday 17 March 2019: large cluster half- day DRESS REHEARSAL ( with jazz orchestra, actors and soloists)
- **Weds 20 March 2019: FINAL PERFORMANCE at the ROYAL ALBERT HALL**  
(schools arriving from 1.45pm, performance: 7pm – 10pm)

**Participation fee: £300 per class (up to 30 children)**

## 2. SNAP!



**SNAP! - a video and photography project for primary school children (Spring Term 2019).**

Groups of KS2 children from up to 10 primary schools will undertake an exploration of their immediate local area, through photography and iPad videos. The footage will help to bring to life their school, community and family stories and champion the most positive aspects of their location. Schools will be paired with one from the opposite side of the borough (where possible across the Wandle divide). Each school will host a visit from its partner school, to share their films and photos and act as 'ambassadors' for their area. The project will conclude with a massed singing games and picnic event on the banks of the Wandle, in Morden Hall Park (May 2019)

### **SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT**

- Fri 11th Jan, 2019: one day CPD session for all supporting staff, delivered by photographer and film-maker Rebecca Cresta
- Jan-Feb 2019: one day workshop for pupils led by Rebecca Cresta
- Feb/Mar 2019: reciprocal visits between partnered schools to share their research
- Week of 20th May, 2019: attendance at the final 'Sing Outside' song share and picnic in Morden Hall Park

**Participation fee: £150**

## 3. LOCATION, INTONATION



**LOCATION, INTONATION - an opportunity for school choirs to sing accompanied by the street pianos at a number of London and Merton locations (April - May 2019).**

Groups of singers from Merton Primary schools will prepare a specially arranged set of London themed songs by Adam Saunders, to perform around one of the street pianos at London locations including St Pancras and Clapham Junction stations. 3 pianos will also be placed at Merton locations in the east and west of the borough. The group size and age of singers is entirely up to each school. Schools will be provided with a comprehensive set of resources (lyrics, scores, backing and performance tracks and rehearsal notes), so they can prepare the songs in advance of their performance. These will be available from September 2019 via the MMF website.

### **SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT**

- Preparation of the London Song Pack (and any other material that each individual group would like to perform). The singers will perform, by arrangement with MMF, at a designated location and time slot, accompanied by a professional pianist.
- Attendance at the final 'Sing Outside' song share and picnic in Morden Hall Park (week of 20th May 2019)

**Participation fee: £100**