

*Evaluation Report –  
“Bach Alive”  
Education Project*

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## **1. Introduction**

This is a report of the evaluation of Music Network's "Bach Alive" schools project, which took place between October and December 2000.

This report is intended to serve a number of functions: to outline the project's aims and objectives; to describe the project; to describe the evaluation methodologies used; to measure outcomes against the initial project objectives; to discuss the project's impact amongst all participants and as a means of broadening access to music, and to make recommendations for similar projects which may be undertaken in the future.

## **2. Aims and Objectives of the Project**

The aim of the "Bach Alive" project was:

- *To develop a new education model, linked to Music Network's touring programme, in order to add value to a specific concert tour.*

The project's objectives were:

- *To develop a self-contained school-based project, based on a theme relevant to Barry Douglas' concert tour (late November - early December 2000);*
- *To work in partnership with local music promoters involved in the tour, in order to deliver the project at local level;*
- *To broaden the model to involve members of the wider community (probably focusing on participating students' parents);*
- *To evaluate this project's impact among all participants, in order to inform the development of future tour-related education projects.*

It was intended that the project would be of benefit to Music Network, to participating schools and promoters in the following ways:

- *That it would serve as a means of generally raising awareness about the forthcoming concert tour among people who may not normally be interested in concerts of this nature;*
- *That it would present a means of fulfilling Music Network's policy of increasing access to high quality music experiences;*
- *That it would present participating schools with a high-quality, fun and educational experience of music in the classroom;*
- *That it would help to forge new relationships or further existing relationships between participating promoters and local schools;*
- *That, by involving students and their parents in the model, promoters would be given an opportunity to market the forthcoming concert through special offer deals to project participants;*
- *That promoters would be enabled to attract into their venue a constituency who might not usually attend arts events.*

## **3. Methodology and Data Collection**

The evaluation used qualitative techniques, and was based on the ideas and opinions of the key personnel in the project: the facilitators, the students, the class-room teachers and the promoters, as well as the parents who attended the parents' evenings.

Data was primarily gathered through written questionnaires which were distributed to each of the personnel listed above at the end of the project. In addition, more informal reactions to the project were given by some participants, mainly promoters and facilitators, via telephone conversations after the projects' completion. One project facilitator provided a detailed report of his experience of the project.

A total of 280 tailored questionnaires were distributed; thirty student questionnaires and one teacher's questionnaire to each school (in the end, a total of four schools participated in the project); fifty parents' questionnaires to each venue; one questionnaire to each project facilitator, and one to each promoter. Out of this, a total of 70 completed questionnaires were received: 56 from students (46 from primary school students; 10 from secondary students); 3 from teachers; 3 from facilitators; 1 from a promoter, and 7 from parents at one of the parents' evenings.

#### ***4. Background and Brief Description of the Project***

The project was planned to take place in three locations featured in the Barry Douglas concert tour: Letterkenny (in partnership with An Grianán Theatre); Clifden (in partnership with Clifden Community Arts Group), and Tralee (in partnership with Siamsa Tíre Theatre and Arts Centre). The project would last a total of four weeks, and would take place during the run-up to the concert.

In keeping with the theme of the new primary and secondary school music curricula, Music Network's previous work in the area of formal education has taken a participative, creative focus which has involved children and teachers working alongside professional music facilitators in order to come up with participative, original compositions. It was decided that this project should take on a similar emphasis.

Barry Douglas' tour programme included Bach's celebrated "Goldberg Variations" as the feature work. It also included "The Ill-Tempered Klavier", a newly commissioned work from Belfast-born composer, Stephen Gardner. This latter piece took a fragment of Bach's Goldberg theme as a musical starting point from which to create an original work, entirely contemporary in its sound-world. Taking this approach a step further, it was decided that the education project should similarly take inspiration from the "Goldberg Variations" in some way, in the creation of new music. As a result, it was decided by Music Network that the concept behind the project should be the theme and variations form.

Each of the three local promoters identified one primary and one secondary school in their area with which they wished to work. The intention was that these would be schools where music activities were already taking place (e.g. schools with a history of producing music concerts or shows; schools where some or many of the students have access to instrumental tuition or, in the case of secondary schools, schools where music is offered as an examination subject). The principal reasons for this decision were logistical, resting on the facts that, based on previous experience, Music Network felt that such schools are often more open to this type of project, and tend to have access to more music resources. Given the short time-frame and limited resources of the project, these considerations were seen to be key to the success of the project. Non-exam classes were suggested for the secondary school strand, and fifth or sixth class in the case of primary schools. Ultimately, however, the decision regarding the participating class or classes was left up to the schools themselves.

Music Network appointed three project facilitators: one for each location. Each facilitator was given the brief of designing the project content for their two schools. They were given the option of either: basing their work on the Goldberg theme; using a locally relevant or other existing theme, or composing their own theme in collaboration with the students. Project dates were set in consultation with the facilitators and schools, on the basis that each school would have access to four half-day workshops. Facilitators were encouraged to make phone contact with the schools in advance of the first workshop, to find out issues such as the level of musical experience of the participating class(es); workshop space available within the school; instruments available to the school. Additional percussion instruments were provided by the facilitators themselves, and through the IRMA Trust instrument bank.

In order to draw parents into the model, a parents' evening was scheduled to take place on the evening of the final (fourth) workshop in the concert venue. The intention was that this event would take place roughly one week before the concert performance.

The parents' evening was intended as an opportunity for:

- promoters to explain the background to the project;
- facilitators to explain the process used and some background to the resulting composition;
- students, teachers and facilitator to perform the new composition;
- promoters to offer special discount and family tickets to Barry Douglas' performance for families involved in the education project.

## ***5. Findings and Analysis***

### ***5.1. General***

The response to the project by all of the key participants (facilitators, teachers, students, promoters) and by parents attending the parents' evenings was generally very positive, and in some cases extremely enthusiastic. There was agreement that the project had impacted favourably on the participating schools, and in some locations, this had fed through to influence the audiences attending the performance by Barry Douglas. Students and teachers expressed admiration for the project facilitators. Many participants expressed an interest in taking part in similar initiatives which may be offered in the future.

### ***5.2. Implementation***

As mentioned above, the project finally took place in only four out of the planned six schools. This was due to a number of factors, the main one being industrial action by secondary school teachers, which seriously affected time-tabling the workshops. In the end, three primary schools (one in each location) and only one secondary school (in Clifden) were involved in the project. Even the Clifden secondary school only had access to a total of three half-day workshops rather than the intended four. This meant that the secondary school students were insufficiently prepared, and therefore unable to perform their work during the Clifden parents' evening. During those workshops that did take place in the secondary school, the industrial action adversely affected the organisation of the project within the school, and communications between the school and the organisers.

The facilitators were given a project structure and loose guide-lines to assist them in planning their projects' content. The three facilitators all interpreted the brief in a different way. Each of these different approaches was appropriate to the specific environment in which the facilitators were working, and the nature and ability of their given group(s).

Each promoter succeeded in organising a parents' event, as planned. In the case of Letterkenny, this took place during an afternoon, a decision which was reached jointly by the school and the promoter. In both Letterkenny and Tralee, the parents' event took place in the concert venue where Barry Douglas would be performing, although only in An Grianán did it take place on stage in the auditorium. This seems to have added a very special dimension to the performance in An Grianán, adding greatly to the sense of occasion and the ultimate sense of achievement among participants. In Clifden, the parents' evening took place on the participating primary school's own premises.

### 5.3. Promoting Access to Music

One of the over-riding reasons for Music Network's initiation of this project was in order to develop a means of working which would enable it, as the national music development organisation, and locally based partner-promoters to jointly promote access to music in schools and within a related community (i.e. parents).

Currently music provision within schools is inconsistent, and in many schools the subject is given low priority. Many class-room teachers (particularly in primary schools) are faced with a lack of adequate training and resources and therefore feel ill-equipped to fully and successfully implement the requirements of the music syllabus featured within the new curricula. Therefore, offering school-based projects which assist teachers with new, useful and non-threatening ideas regarding the implementation of the music curriculum can boost teachers' confidence levels, encourage them to experiment more with music in the classroom, and directly enhance music provision in participating schools. In addition, there is great value to bringing professional musicians into the classroom, thereby allowing pupils to experience high quality music within their own learning environment. By actively involving local promoters in the model, it was hoped that this might encourage future collaboration between the promoter and school, independent of the project. This could result in a lasting relationship which could have beneficial effects beyond the duration of the project.

Although, as previously stated, promoters were asked to select schools which they felt had a strong focus on music, in practice this was not altogether the case. Each facilitator remarked that many of the participants were limited in their experiences of music. By involving these children in the project, it would seem that the project had a direct role in promoting access to music within these schools.

This assumption is backed up by the feed-back received in questionnaires. Of the students surveyed in Letterkenny, 41% said that the part of the project that they enjoyed most was playing the instruments. Given that 71% of the participants previously played no instrument, this is an indication of the project's impact in increasing access to music. Of this same group, 100% said that they enjoyed the project, and 100% also said that they would like it to happen again in their school. Moreover, 83% said that the project gave them an interest in a new type of music. Although all participants in the Tralee school already played an instrument (tin whistle), 54.6% of the students cited "learning about new instruments" as their favourite part of the project, and 86% felt that the project had given them interest in a new type of music. Again there was a 100% enjoyment rate in the Tralee school. In Clifden, responses were gained from 10 of the participating secondary students, who did not get a chance to complete the project due to industrial action. By and large, their responses were positive, with 70% feeling that they had learned something new from the project, and with only 10% stating that they did not enjoy participating in it. (Please see appendix 1 for complete survey findings.)

Although the parents were only involved at the very end of the project, the concept of the parents' evening was always seen as a vital element in the model. This was the aspect which was most

immediately pertinent to the promoter, in terms of building an audience for the concert by Barry Douglas, and other future classical music events. Promoters were encouraged to offer special discounts and/or family tickets to those attending the parents' event. Two of the three promoters seized this opportunity, and this had a notable effect on the make-up of the audience at the final solo piano performance. The promoters in Letterkenny and Clifden both remarked on this, and even the soloist noticed the prevalence of families and children in the audience. Only in Tralee were parents' questionnaires returned. Of these, 100% stated that they enjoyed the parents' event; 100% said they would return to attend future events in the theatre, and 100% also said that the experience would encourage them to attend future music events as a family.

*"It's nice to see the children enjoy playing the instruments."*

*"It helped the children to appreciate all musical instruments and music. They just might listen a bit more to classical music."*

*"It's great to see one's own children perform - especially when one can't play a musical instrument oneself."*

Parents attending the parents' evening in Tralee

#### 5.4. Content and Nature of the Sessions

Due to the brevity of the project, the main focus of the workshops was to prepare the piece for the final performance. The initial workshop tended to be spent on introductions: of personnel and participants; of the concept behind the project; of the "Goldberg Variations", and of the instruments. From workshop two onwards, each facilitator tended to begin preparations for the parents' event.

As it became more and more difficult to schedule around the secondary school teachers' industrial action, it was decided in each location to focus more on the primary schools. As a result, in Letterkenny, the facilitator was enabled to devote three and a half full days to the primary school project; the facilitator in Clifden spent four half-day sessions with the primary school and three with the secondary school, and the facilitator in Tralee spent three and a half full days with his primary school group. In Clifden, where the facilitator had least time to spend with his primary school group, he was heavily reliant on the class-room teacher to work with the class in-between his visits, in order to ensure that the piece would be ready for the final performance. It was fortunate that this teacher was confident and skilled enough to carry on this work by herself, but such levels of musical confidence from teachers cannot be taken for granted in future projects. In the two projects where the facilitators had three and a half days with their group, it was felt that this was the minimum time needed in order to be adequately prepared for the final performance.

Facilitators used all of the musical resources available to them in the course of the project. These tended to comprise mainly voices, body-percussion, and untuned percussion. Within each school, resources tended to be very limited. Most children had access to tin-whistles, but aside from these, very few had other instruments which could be used. Some schools had a few pieces of hand-held percussion, and one had a piano. By and large, however, facilitators depended on their own kit of instruments and/or those which were provided through the IRMA Trust Instrument Bank (the latter of which were primarily hand-held, untuned percussion). One facilitator had access to some very good quality tuned percussion instruments (glockenspiels, chime-bars and bass chime-bars). This same facilitator also had access to drums which were on loan from the local samba group. The melodic, harmonic and rhythmic scope which was opened up by these additional instruments

greatly added to the finished piece, and enriched the experience for the participants and audience alike. Two of the three facilitators are themselves professional performers. They used their own instruments to add to the pieces where appropriate, but both were conscious of not allowing their playing to dominate the music. One of these facilitators brought with him a synthesiser, which also greatly added to the overall performance, and gave the students a certain confidence and sense of security in their performance. Students receiving extra-curricular instrumental tuition were encouraged to use their instrumental skills to add extra melodic and timbral effect to the work. Unfortunately, there were few such instances of student instrumentalists participating in the project.

Where possible, facilitators broke the full class into smaller groups in order to explore different aspects of the theme or to work on different sections of the piece. This form of small group work, and the possibility it brings for peer review is generally seen as a very positive form of educational practice. However, with it comes implications of physical space. Some of the facilitators indicated that they were stifled by inflexible spaces which were too small for the nature of the work. Ideally, workshop facilitators should have access to one large space (such as a school hall) and several smaller spaces for small group work. In small schools such as those which were involved in this project, this is not always possible.

One of the most interesting aspects of the project is that each facilitator took a completely different approach to their brief. All three of the final pieces were extremely well received by their respective audiences, and yet all three were entirely different in their sound-world, style and genesis. It would seem therefore that by giving a broad conceptual brief to the facilitators, they are enabled to use their creativity and own particular musical strengths to the project's best advantage. In Letterkenny, the project facilitator chose the theme of *The Seasons* as a stimulus for the project. The piece was based around a textural theme which was composed by the children and facilitator together. This was taken as a starting point for extemporisation relevant to each individual season of the year. In contrast, the piece produced by Convent of Mercy Primary School in Clifden was directly influenced by work which was already ongoing in the school, based on the musical "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dream-coat". In this instance, linking passages were composed, which were based on an existing theme from the musical. Finally, in St. John's Parochial School, Tralee, the Goldberg theme was used as a source of inspiration for a multi-cultural piece entitled "The Global Variations". This piece contained six variations, each of which transported the theme through a different stylistic treatment, including reggae, samba, traditional Irish, and African song.

Participating teachers in primary schools were pleased that the project bore direct relation to the new music curriculum. The main components of the new curriculum are listening, composing and performing. It was generally felt that the project encouraged all three aspects. One teacher commented that:

*"It definitely went hand in hand with the new curriculum, as Mark encouraged the children to be creative, and to improvise...It was of great benefit to the children and also to the teachers".*

All of the projects involved cross-curricular aspects. In Letterkenny, students contributed pieces of creative writing and art to an exhibition which was on display at the parents' event on the theme of the seasons; in Clifden, students designed and painted costumes and wrote narrative pieces for the final performance, while in Tralee there was a strong emphasis on geography, culture and language, in keeping with the global theme of the project.



### 5.5. Participants

Schools were told that the maximum size of the participating group should be 30. In practice, groups averaged 25. Some of the primary school groups were made up of a number of different classes taught together. Thus in Tralee, the facilitator worked with a group which comprised 4th, 5th and 6th classes; while in both Clifden and Letterkenny, the groups comprised 5th and 6th classes.

In each case, the facilitator requested that the classroom teacher be present throughout the duration of the workshops, in order to help with discipline and group management matters; to advise on students' levels of musical experience; to allow for exchanges of ideas regarding thematic content, and to involve teachers in the activities to an extent which would enable them to work on the project between the facilitator's visits. In each of the primary schools, the teachers were present at all times, but in the secondary school in Clifden, the music teacher was only present for 30 minutes out of each 2 hour workshop. The Clifden project facilitator felt that this was a major obstacle to progress in the secondary school project.

Within each group a range of musical abilities was represented. Facilitators quickly discovered which members of the group already played instruments and drew on their instrumental abilities in the final piece. On the other hand, those students who were less experienced and/or had difficulty with aspects of music were allocated roles with which they would feel more confident (narration or movement, a different type of instrument, etc.). An interesting situation arose in the secondary school Transition Year group, where the facilitator felt that, although the class contained a number of instrumentalists, many of these were reluctant to perform on their instruments for the rest of the group. The facilitator explained:

*“It is my impression that there can be inherent difficulties working with transition year groups in general. I feel that these groups can often be left to their own devices, thus creating a lack of focus, literally being in transition, a year to mature perhaps. This lack of focus can manifest itself in workshop situations in terms of student commitment and participation”.*

### 5.6. Facilitators

The three project facilitators, although each highly experienced musicians and educators, all came to the project from different backgrounds.

Elaine Agnew, project facilitator in Letterkenny, is a professional composer and music educationalist who has, for many years, worked on participative, composition-based schools projects at both primary and secondary levels in Northern Ireland and the Republic. Paul Roe, who facilitated the Clifden project, is a professional clarinettist and qualified in 2000 from the University of Limerick MA in Community Music degree. Mark Bradley, project facilitator in Tralee, is a professional trumpet player (specialising in classical and jazz) and former secondary school music teacher from Strabane in County Tyrone.

These varying backgrounds and interests contributed towards three very different approaches which were taken in the course of the project. Elaine's approach was to compose a new theme upon which to base the set of variations, while both Paul and Mark chose existing works as the impetus for their groups' work (including, in Mark's case, the Goldberg Theme itself). The subsequent treatment of the chosen theme in each location depended not only on the facilitator's own experiences, but also on the ideas and input of the participating students and teachers.

All three facilitators had, prior to the commencement of the “Bach Alive”, taken part in Music Network's Continuing Professional Development programme. This programme aims to equip

musicians with relevant skills to enable them to work in non-traditional performance situations, such as this. Areas covered within the CPD course which were of direct relevance to the “Bach Alive” facilitators included: planning participative projects; working with groups; encouraging creativity; structuring participative compositions, and encouraging flexibility in performance/building improvisation skills. Although each of the three facilitators was already experienced in doing work of this type before, Music Network feels that offering project-specific training and networking opportunities, the CPD course can assist in developing and supporting a pool of expertise for projects of this type.

All facilitators had to travel long distances to participate in the project. Elaine Agnew is based in Larne, Co. Antrim, and travelled to Letterkenny en route back to Larne from work on another project in Sligo. Both Mark Bradley and Paul Roe are based in Dublin. Both had to make specific weekly trips to Tralee and Clifden respectively, in order to work on the project. Although, for the purposes of short projects such as this, long distance travel was possible, a project of longer duration could not have been sustained with such huge distances involved. All three facilitators found the travelling very exhausting and time-consuming, and access to their own transport was essential. Although it would obviously have been preferable to employ facilitators who were based more locally, such skilled personnel are in short supply, and therefore this was not possible.

In responding to the post-project evaluation, the facilitators each stated that their participation in the project had impacted on their work as a musician. Facilitators pointed out that each project they work on acts as a developing portfolio of experiences which should be analysed and used for refining their project approach and workshop technique. One facilitator felt that the project’s short, intense time-frame forced her to be more prepared than usual, while another felt that the project had forced him to alter his perceptions of what to expect from children in terms of their musical achievements in a short project such as this. This same facilitator felt that he had learned that it was important to persevere with children who may have very limited experience of music, or low levels of musical ability, in order to achieve an end result.

All three facilitators felt that their project had been successful and believed that, once they became aware of what was required of them, the students had risen to the project’s challenge. They were happy with the pieces that the students co-created, and with their final performance at the parents’ events. From the schools’ perspectives, all were extremely complementary regarding the facilitators, both on a personal and professional level, and expressed their gratitude to them.

One facilitator suggested that the presence of an additional facilitator or musician might have helped, given the brevity of the project. Perhaps if this extra person was a professional instrumentalist, it could open up new compositional possibilities to the facilitator. This would, however, have significant cost implications.

An interesting point was raised by one a teacher from one of the participating schools, who is also the school principal. He felt that, aside from the quality of the work carried out, the presence of external facilitator itself had a positive impact:

*“As a teacher I found I learned a great deal about the pupils I was teaching by observing them with an outside facilitator”.*

Through participation in projects such as this, teachers can discover a different side to their students, and students can gain confidence through working in groups and contributing as part of a team towards a final goal. Incremental qualitative aspects such as this added to schools’ perception of the project as being worthwhile.

### 5.7. Project Organisation and Administration

Although this project was initiated by Music Network, as with all of the organisation's programmes, the notion of partnership with locally based organisations/groups was key within its planning. Therefore the local promoter was seen as having a number of responsibilities in ensuring the project's success.

The project was planned to take place in November/December 2000, and Music Network's Touring and Education & Healthcare Managers both met with each local promoter to discuss the project in June 2000.

At these meetings, provisional dates were set for the project, and Music Network outlined the project's aims and structure, and the various roles of each partner (Music Network, promoter and schools).

These roles were outlined as follows:

#### *Music Network's role:*

- planning project's structure and content;
- securing funding for the project;
- securing additional instruments from IRMA Trust;
- appointing and briefing facilitators, and liaising with them during the project;
- coordinating evaluation (including drawing up and distributing questionnaires to all participants);
- looking after publicity/PR.

#### *Promoter's role:*

- liaising with/selecting schools (to telephone primary schools before summer holidays, to moot the idea) re. scheduling the project, outlining its aims and structure, and making sure the schools were prepared for the facilitator's first visit;
- finding out about available resources/instruments in the school/community which could be used;
- planning and presenting family deals at the parents' event;
- assisting with evaluation from their own perspective (i.e. filling out a promoter questionnaire); distributing parents' questionnaires at the parents' event;
- providing venue for parent's evening.

#### *Schools' role:*

- selecting group/class and teacher to participate (max.30);
- providing workshop space;
- writing to/liasing with parents before/at start of project to let them know what's going on, and to invite them to parents evening (joint letter from promoter and school);
- making available any music resources open to them for use during the project.

It was therefore intended that the promoter would act as an intermediary organiser between the schools and Music Network, the aims being to enhance the sense of local ownership over the project, and to open up channels of communication between local promoters and the participating schools, which could be revisited independently through future, locally organised schools projects.

While all promoters did succeed in making initial contacts with schools in their area, the local liaison often did not take place to the extent which had been intended during the set-up and project implementation stages and, in some cases, it was left to Music Network to do the rest of the pre-project schools liaison from Dublin. In one instance, the local promoter had been asked on several occasions to confirm project dates with the school, so that these could be passed on to the project

facilitator well in advance of the project's start date. In the end, the project schedule was not confirmed until the last minute, with no notice being given to the facilitator. As a result, the first workshop was missed, and children, facilitator and teacher had to work extremely hard to prepare the piece for performance within a shortened time-frame. In instances such as this, opportunities for local music development/future collaboration were reduced, and the project facilitator and school became frustrated with the organisers (local and national). However, when the projects did get up and running, the presence of the facilitator, and their direct communications with Music Network did help the projects to progress more smoothly. A pre-project visit to the schools by Music Network, the local promoter, and the facilitator could help to reaffirm each partner's roles and responsibilities, and assist communications, for future projects.

Within secondary schools, the industrial action by the ASTI meant that communication with schools were particularly difficult. Workshops had to be cancelled at short notice, and in two of the three secondary schools, it became obvious that there was no point in trying to proceed with the project. In the Clifden secondary school where the project did go ahead, the school principal felt that it had been a very worthwhile venture, even though the students did not have the opportunity to complete the project. It would seem therefore that, under different circumstances, the project had potential to work well at both primary and secondary levels.

## **6. Discussion and Recommendations**

### 6.1. Discussion

In comparing the project's outcomes with its initial objectives (see section 2) it would seem that, by and large, the project achieved what it set out to do. The theme and variations concept presented a flexible frame-work from which facilitators and schools could work, and facilitators managed to combine creative work on a new composition with contextual work which informed participants about the "Goldberg Variations", Barry Douglas, and the forthcoming concert.

The project was delivered in partnership with local music promoters and schools, all of whom rose to the occasion during the final parents' event. Although some communication problems were encountered along the way, in the end, schools were pleased with the outcome; parents enjoyed the parents' event, were impressed with what had been achieved, and stated that they would attend music events in the local venue again; two out of three promoters (both of whom offered special family tickets/special price offers) noticed a direct impact in the make-up of their audiences at the Barry Douglas concert, as a result of the project.

The project facilitated access to high quality music experiences among participating students, teachers and parents. 93% of those students who responded via questionnaire enjoyed working on the project, and 85.7% felt that they had learned something new from it. Teachers felt that the project directly enhanced the music component of the new curricula.

Promoters and schools met face to face at the parents' event, and also had varying degrees of liaison with each other in organising the project. Although the level of local partnership was not always as strong as it could have been, it would seem that new relationships were built or existing relationships strengthened as a result of the project, which may have longer term effects.

Out of the seven completed parents' questionnaires received (all from Tralee), all seven had previously attended arts events in Siamsa Tíre, therefore there is no direct evidence to suggest that the project enabled promoters to attract a new audience into their venue. However, all seven parents also said that the parents' evening would encourage them to attend future music events with their family. This could, in the longer-term, help to build a new audience for music among

younger people.

## 6.2. Recommendations

- A broad conceptual basis should be maintained for projects such as this, on a theme related to the forthcoming concert programme. This broad remit can allow facilitators to be creative in their planning of the project; to include cross-curricular elements, and also to bring in an element of research or discussion related to the theme (for example by looking into the historical profile of a featured composer).
- For future projects, a pre-project visit should take place within each school, well in advance of the project's start date. This should involve the school principal and participating teacher, the promoter, the facilitator and Music Network. The meeting should be an opportunity for all parties to clarify and discuss the aims of the project, to clarify each partner's role and responsibilities, and to sort out practical issues such as scheduling, space implications, available resources, etc.. From this point, each individual partner should take responsibility for passing on information about the project to other relevant people within their constituency (e.g. other staff within arts centre/theatre; participating students, parents and other staff members within schools).
- Future creative projects with schools which focus on the production of a finished piece should allow facilitators to spend a minimum of three and a half days with each participating group/class, in order for a piece to be sufficiently prepared.
- The presence of an assistant musician (even for one or two of the workshops) could enrich the project, offering support to the facilitator and added musical interest to the workshops.
- Schools should give careful consideration to the group/class(es) they choose to participate in projects such as this. Given its short duration, it would help if students were prepared for the project in advance of its commencement. If within the participating group, there are students who play a musical instrument, the school should actively encourage these students to bring their instruments along to the workshops. From this point, it should be the facilitator's and teacher's responsibility to instil confidence among the students, to encourage them to fully and actively participate in the project.
- Ideally, workshop facilitators should have access to one large space (such as a school hall) and several smaller spaces for small group work. In order to avoid disturbing other classes in progress, these facilities should be in a quiet area of the school. The designated space(s) should be available throughout the duration of the workshops, so that no interruptions are caused to the work being done. If no adequate space is available within schools, workshops may need to take place within the local promoter's venue.
- Schools should make every possible effort to dedicate a teacher to the project who would be present in the classroom throughout its duration. Where possible, this teacher should be familiar with the group/class involved, and should be aware of any special requirements necessary in terms of discipline.
- Access to good quality tuned percussion instruments should be facilitated for future projects, as the added melodic, timbral and harmonic interest that such instruments can lend can open up new possibilities for facilitators, and can result in a more exciting project for students. If possible, these instruments should be housed in the schools for the duration of the project, to give the students and teacher an opportunity to practice.

- Where possible, facilitators' travelling time should be kept to a minimum. This may involve attempting to employ facilitators with appropriate skills who may be resident in closer proximity to the project location. Alternatively, projects may need to be run over a shorter, more intensive period of time (e.g. over 4 consecutive days).
- Facilitators should make every effort to involve the teacher as much as possible in both the planning and the delivery of the project (either by involving them directly in the music activities, or by encouraging them to organise cross-curricular activities relevant to the theme, which could be presented alongside the newly composed piece, at the parents' event).
- Where possible, if a final student performance is to be held, this should be held in an actual performance space (e.g. on stage in the local theatre). This can encourage participating students and their families to pay repeat visits to the venue (encouraging audience development for local promoters) and can also add greatly to the sense of occasion on the day/night of the students' performance.
- The model could benefit from the provision of a basic recording kit, whether from a local source (e.g. if one were available to the school or promoter) or a national source. Video recording of the parents' events would be a useful means by which to document the project for all of the partners involved.

*Appendix 2:*

*Sample Facilitators', Promoters' and Parents'  
Questionnaires*

**“Bach Alive” Project Evaluation - Facilitators’ Questionnaire**

*Thank you for taking part in this brief survey - it should only take 5 minutes to complete. Your ratings and comments are valued as part of the feedback which we need to improve the design of similar programmes in the future. Please return this form, using the Stamped Addressed Envelope supplied.*

**1. Schools’ Location:** Did you find the travelling involved in the project problematic?

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**2. School environment and liaison:** How did you find working in the school(s)? Were you made welcome? Was it easy to contact the school if altering visit details? Did the teachers join in the workshops and/or help out, if required?

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**3. Your role as a musician:** Has this project had any impact on your work as a musician?

Yes  No  Don’t know

If so, how?

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**4. Organisation:** Was the project well organised, at local and national levels? Is there any way in which the organisation of the project could have been improved?

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**5. Overall success of the project:** From your perspective, did the school visits achieve what they set out to do? Were the aims clear from the outset? What, if anything, prevented you from achieving these aims?

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**6. The future:** How could this model be improved?

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*Thank you for your help!*



**“Bach Alive” Project Evaluation - Promoter Questionnaire**

*Thank you for taking part in this brief survey - it should only take 5 minutes to complete. Your ratings and comments are valued as part of the feedback which we need to improve the design of similar programmes in the future. Please return this form, using the Stamped Addressed Envelope supplied.*

1. **Did you feel that co-organising this project was a worthwhile venture for you?** Yes  No  Don't know

Please explain:

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2. **How did you find working with the school(s)? Have you done much of this type of work before?** \_\_\_\_\_

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3. **Has this project had any impact on bookings for the forthcoming concert by Barry Douglas?** Yes  No  Don't know

If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. **Was the project well organised, at national level? Is there any way in which the organisation of the project could have been improved?**

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5. **From your perspective, did the project achieve what it set out to do? Were the aims clear from the outset? What, if anything, prevented the project from achieving those aims?** \_\_\_\_\_

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6. **As a promoter, would you be interested in participating in similar education/outreach projects with Music Network in the future?** Yes  No   
Don't know

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7. **How could this model be improved for the future?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**“Bach Alive” Parents’ Event, St. John’s Parochial School  
Parents’ Questionnaire**

1. Did you enjoy the parents’ music evening?  
Yes  No  Don’t know

2. If yes, why/if no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you attended music/arts events in Siamsa Tíre before?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. If so, what type(s) of events/If not, why not?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you and/or a member of your family play a musical instrument?  
Yes  No

6. If so, what instrument(s) do you/they play?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What music do you normally like to listen to?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you think this event will have any influence on your musical preferences?  
Yes  No

9. If so, how?  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you think you will attend future events in the theatre?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Would this experience encourage you to attend future music events as a family?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. Any other comments? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your help