



City of London Sinfonia biography | Participation
30 Years of Transforming Lives through Music

City of London Sinfonia (CLS) is the orchestral home to over 40 outstanding professional musicians who come together in the shared belief that music has the power to transform the lives of people across all areas of society.

The Orchestra places equal value on everything they do, whether performing in world-famous concert halls and opera houses or sharing musical experiences with residents in care homes and hospitals. CLS brings a distinctive, 'seriously informal' style that removes the barriers between musicians and audiences, along with a warmth of music-making from musicians sharing a wider range of experiences together beyond the concert platform.

In the 2018-19 Season, CLS celebrates 30 years of transforming lives through music in its reputable Participation programme, which now reaches over 10,000 people every year in the UK. CLS continues to build upon strengths in mainstream education, visiting schools where social background often creates a barrier to creativity and ambition, and in wellbeing, at hospitals for young people with challenging conditions and with older people dealing with loss of loved ones and memory.

CLS was one of the first UK orchestras to establish a year-round, permanent programme of participation activity in 1988, and the programme has been running continuously ever since, with more than 150 days of activity in the UK every year. The Orchestra's education work has also spread as far afield as Mexico, Japan and South Korea in recent years.

Music-making aids the healing process and is an invaluable creative outlet for people with life-limiting physical or psychiatric conditions. City of London Sinfonia musicians – unusually committed to using music as a means of transforming people and communities – are catalysts and drivers of the projects, and work with skilled workshop leaders and animateurs to make music in a broad range of settings.

For over 20 years, CLS musicians have visited major NHS Trusts in London, including Evelina Children's and University College London hospitals, providing respite and emotional relief to young children and their families on hospital wards. Most recently, CLS has begun a three-year residency at Bethlem and Maudsley Hospital School, in which they work alongside young people who have severe mental health conditions to create their own music, often responding to the Orchestra's artistic programmes.

CLS's creative primary projects give young children the chance to experience the joy and fun of live music for the first time, firing their creativity and boosting their learning. Education partners include music education hubs such as Tower Hamlets Arts Music Education Service and Harrow Music Service, and artistic partners such as Orchestras Live, with whom CLS also celebrate the tenth anniversary year of Lullaby Concerts this Season.

In its 30th year of Participation, CLS is developing its practice in longstanding projects, including its series of care home performances in partnership with Jewish Care, and through new partnerships such as Headway East London. The Orchestra is also working with leading research institutions, such as King's College London's Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, to measure the impact of their projects and therefore further develop a pedagogy in the Orchestra's health and wellbeing work.

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