

Performing Arts Report Term 6

13th July 2010

compiled by Josie Williams, Community Arts Development Officer

www.commonwealarts.co.uk

Term six has been a whirlwind of activities, most of which are highlighted in the summer edition of Commonweal Matters and on our arts web site. I would like to say thank you to everyone who took part and helped. There are too many to list individually, but we have had a whole range of folk from students, teachers, parents, governors and patrons, all pulling out the stops to ensure these events have been tip top, in terms of performance, publicity and attendance. I have highlighted some of this terms events. Thanks also to the Swindon Advertiser, BBC Radio Wiltshire and Swindon 105.5 for their continued support. I can also confirm that Robert Buckland, MP for South Swindon has agreed to be a patron to the performing arts. Welcome aboard Robert and thank you for offering your support. Partnerships are key to a successful event and below.

Salsa Fitness in the Park was a partnership event between ourselves, SBC Parks Department and Claudia Stroud our community partner. Claudia teaches Salsa Fitness in our dance studio every Tuesday and Thursday evening and the class is open to the wider community. For three Sundays in June Claudia delivered sessions in the Old Town Gardens Bowl and many local folk attended. The event was publicised in the media and we leaflet dropped to areas in Old Town as well as targeting Claudia's dance classes. Claudia will deliver a dance workshop at our Salsa Evening on Wednesday 1st December. This is the second time we have held a Salsa dance at the school and last year it was a sell out and a great atmosphere complete with food and a live 5 piece South American band, so get the date in your diary!

Creative Switch Anti Smoking Film in partnership with NHS Swindon, SBC and Create Studios, Healthy Schools and Smoke Free Swindon. This was an opportunity for a selected group of Yr 9 and Yr 10 Peer Educators to get creative! The students learnt about the dangers of smoking and two teams each made a short TV advert to dissuade young people to begin smoking. The Yr 9 piece was very powerful and depicted a woman in hospital and her poorly baby with the punch line being that it is her choice and which choice would you make? The other film is about the amount of money that is wasted on buying cigarettes and items such as Ipods and mobile phones are destroyed to make the point! The films, along with those made by other schools in the area, will be shown later in the year at the Arts Centre and a winner selected. This will then be used as part of an education pack which will be sent to secondary schools in Swindon.

Old Town Festival: I sit on the festival committee and this year Commonweal were once again given the opportunity to stage a performing arts marquee. This was held on The Lawn on Saturday 26th June and featured over a dozen local dance and music organisations. This year we extended the time slot from 1 – 8pm so that we could include more acts. The tent was packed all day and we received many thanks and good wishes from parents and members of the public. Our section of the performance was in music and then dance and was the culmination of work students have compiled during extra-curricular clubs.

We have also run **Yr 6 After School Clubs** this term in dance, drama, art and tennis. Open to our feeder schools, the clubs were well attended and gave the children the chance to get to know the school and some of the teachers. Another highlight was the **Yr 6 Dance Festival** where dance groups from our feeder schools came up to our dance studio and showcased their work to one another. Dance Leaders from Commonweal School started the warm up and performed to inspire Yr 6. Dance Leaders have worked in our feeder schools all year and Ella Workman and Lauren Martin (Yr 11 who have just left) have ran an after school dance club at Lethbridge School all year. The girls have thoroughly enjoyed doing this and their sessions have been showcased at various events this year. **Yr 6 Drama Day** was also a great success. Students from our feeder schools came up to Commonweal and took part in workshops with our drama specialist on work around *The Tempest*.

Some of our dance students were invited to take part in the **Secondary Schools Dance Platform** which was staged at New College. This was a great opportunity for our students to share their work and also get a glimpse of life at New College.

The Big Hat Cabaret held at the Arts Centre, Devizes Rd on 9th July was a sell out! This is the end of year show for the Big Hat Arts & Disability Network where students and adults take to the stage to showcase their talents. Many thanks to the Mayor Rex Barnett and his lady wife for attending and for his kind words of encouragement. This is a fine example of partnership pooling their resources to make a great project happen. The Big Hat Network consists of our school, Swindon Dance, Reach Inclusive Arts, Music Alive, The Upham Rd Centre, Crowdy's Hill and St Luke's Schools, Adult Placement Services and the Swindon Advertiser. At our next meeting we will be putting a programme of workshops together to help folk develop their skills and confidence. Hopefully many will then go on to perform at next year's Big Hat Cabaret.

Swindon Big Arts Day I have been on the planning committee for this event since its concept. Thanks must be given to Helen Miah, Head of Culture and her team for once again raising the profile of Swindon. There is so much happening in our town and such a plethora of talent! We sponsored and ran the Youth Music Tent with the help of Swindon Music Service's Paul Ashman who runs their rock school. The marquee was packed all day and we had many compliments and thanks from

parents and members of the general public. Performing were some of our rock bands, The Fab Four and rock school bands.

“Another hugely successful year & I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved for their commitment to the Performing Arts at Commonweal and their significant contributions. Each year seems to get busier and even with the new build disruptions, the number of school and community events/projects and number of students involved in the arts continues to grow. All events and projects have once again been meticulously organised, well documented and evaluated by Josie. I invite you all to peruse the performing arts website and the Commonweal Matters along with this final report of, as they both give an added insight into what has been a tremendous year.

The mapping of events for 2010/11 is now complete and we can all look forward to another busy and exciting year of Performing Arts,” Sue Derrick, Head of Performing Arts.

Forth coming events

Barcelona trip music an PE 17th – 24th July

Extend Yr Summer School 26th – 30th July