

TASMIN LITTLE, VIOLIN

www.tasminlittle.org.uk

'THE NAKED VIOLIN' – GRAMOPHONE AWARD WINNING SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMME

'No musician has ventured down this path before – not even the rock band Radiohead'

The Independent, 16 January 08



How it started

Regarded as one of the world's leading violinists and international soloists, Tasmin Little has performed with many of the world's great orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony, Hallé and the New York Philharmonic. Born in London, she started playing violin at the age of seven and continued her studies at the Yehudi Menuhin School and the Guildhall School of Music.

Tasmin made international news in January 2008 when she initiated a pioneering project entitled The Naked Violin. The concept occurred to her while giving a private recital to Coutts Bank client and employees. "Some people there thought that they hated solo-violin music, until they actually experienced it. That made me think about tackling these prejudices on a wider scale." Tasmin recorded a new CD to be made available for free download from her own website - www.tasminlittle.org.uk. Including spoken introductions to each work, this recording of Bach, Patterson and Ysäe was devised to provide a free opportunity for anyone, anywhere in the world regardless of age, colour, creed or social status to experience the huge range of styles and expressions that a single, unadorned violin can produce.

The project achieved phenomenal success after its release and was hailed as 'revolutionary' and 'inspiring'. Within days of the release of The Naked Violin there were over 250,000 hits on Tasmin's website and a further 6,000 international websites linked to it. Major articles and radio interviews on the project began appearing in The Times, The Guardian, New York Times, Le Monde, The Age to mention but a few. It kick-started the whole debate about the place of classical music in today's society. Tasmin and the project became the subject of a

television documentary by the South Bank Show and in September 08 Tasmin received the prestigious Classic FM Gramophone Award for Audience Innovation.

'The Naked Violin' has created demand to see Tasmin perform this project live. Schools, communities, prisons, rock festivals began to write directly to Tasmin asking her to bring her workshops and performances to them. The Naked Violin and Tasmin's outreach workshops 'No Strings Attached' have now reached over 12,000 schoolchildren and thousands more adults in the last 12 months alone. Tasmin brings her workshops and performances to America, Ireland and China this year

Tasmin is an Ambassador for The Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts and in October this year she will be awarded with the Gold Badge Award by the British Academy of Composers and Songwriters for her outstanding contribution to Britain's entertainment industry. Tasmin will present four programmes on 'The Naked Violin' for Classic FM later this year.



Bringing Tasmin to your school and community



"Classical music, for some reason or another, has this reputation that you need a certain kind of education to listen to it, you need to be a certain colour or live in a certain place and I'm a bit fed up with that. I wanted to take away any possible barrier and see if it makes a difference"

Tasmin Little, The Times
January 08



After the phenomenal public response to 'The Naked Violin' Tasmin embarked on a personal mission to, at an affordable cost, give children and adults of all ages the opportunity to come into direct contact with Tasmin allowing them to interact with her and hear violin playing of the highest level.

Her 'No Strings Attached' Workshops are 30 minutes in duration. Six workshops can be offered to a school/local community in a single day. The ideal number of workshop participants is 30 but Tasmin has played and spoken to groups of over 250 in one workshop alone. Where workshops take place in schools parents are also encouraged to attend and an end of day assembly can be arranged for the whole school and parents.

Tailored to the age and needs of each group, Tasmin plays a variety of pieces of solo violin music, introducing its history and background information and explaining the work's basic form. Tasmin engages with her audience talking about the violin and classical music in general, involving the groups in a variety of activities to engage interest and promote group creativity.

Violin students are encouraged to bring their violins along so that they can have direct experience of working on pieces with her.

Incorporated also is a hugely popular question/answer session where any questions may be asked. Tasmin's irrepressible sense of fun ensures that this part

of the proceedings is a huge success and allows a rare glimpse into the world of a solo violinist.

Older children and adults participating are encouraged by Tasmin to take her *Three Step Challenge* after the workshop:

1. Listen to my free recording and download the CD
2. Take some time to listen and get to know these pieces. Then write to me and tell me what you like (or don't like) about each piece.
3. Go to a concert, listen to a piece on the radio, buy a CD or write and tell me what barriers still remain to prevent you from wanting to do any of these.

Tasmin has given workshops up and down the UK in schools, church halls, concert halls, festivals and in more extraordinary places such as on a bus, in prisons, in homeless shelters, in an industrial powerstation, on a boat around an oil-rig and even in a tipi.

If you are interested in Tasmin coming to your school and community either for a half day or a full day we would love to talk to you about it and explore ways in which we could make this work for your school and community.

Please contact Sinead O'Carroll.
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Notes from abroad.....China, June 09



China, June 24 2009

I am sitting in the aeroplane on my way to Guangzhou and taking the opportunity to write a few lines as so much has happened in the last 36 hours and it has been a wonderful part of the trip.

When I last wrote, I had finished my first day of workshops at the British School of Beijing, and we began our Tuesday morning by listening to Years 3 & 4 play their violins and cellos to me. I picked up my violin and played with them. Our final session was to a very small group of music scholars. They were full of interesting questions and dilemmas about performance and practice and it was a terrific and stimulating session. After the three final sessions with the children, it was time for a quick lunch break and then back to the school for a one-hour media call, talking to various radio stations and members of the press. There was just time to dash back to the hotel and grab a couple of hours rest before heading back to the hall to rehearse and play our evening concert. We were thrilled and delighted to find that our capacity audience were so obviously excited about our concert that they were clapping with alacrity before we had even played a note!

The following day John and I visited a migrant school. These schools have sprung up in order to help educate the children of the migrant workers who are extremely poor. The schools receive no state funding at all and have very few facilities but the British School of Beijing are helping to support this particular school by donating equipment and by visiting and providing events. We were given nothing less than a Royal Welcome. It turned out that the children had been waiting in the baking heat

(37 degrees) for half an hour before we arrived, waving colourful flowers, and chanting at the top of their voices "Welcome to our School" in Chinese. As we walked into the playground, their radiant smiles and barely contained excitement was so touching and it was quite hard to keep back some tears as they lined up in front of us to sing a carefully prepared song in Chinese which, roughly translated, said "Take our song away with you, but leave behind your smile".

An upright piano had been brought in by the British School of Beijing especially for our visit. Our first group were very voluble and had dozens of questions so my lovely interpreter Maggie was kept on her toes! Their gasp was huge as I explained how old my violin was. And the gasp was even louder when one child asked how long I had been playing and I said "38 years"! As for the music, every piece we played was greeted with thunderous applause and when we decided to play the first movement of the Bach sonata, a hush came over the group as they let themselves be calmed by the peace and tranquillity of the music. The whole event was very moving and more than one member of our group had to leave the room, fighting back tears as these young people witnessed live music for the very first time. All too soon, the time to go had arrived and we were on a tight schedule and could not stay longer. I presented the Headmaster with a CD of Partners in Time and we were inundated with cards and letters from the pupils which had been made with such love and care. It was a visit I will never forget and I am still feeling filled with admiration at the staff in the school who battle against so many odds to make education available for these young children.

With best wishes to you all

Tasmin



TASMIN LITTLE
'No Strings
Attached'

For all information
on The Naked
Violin and 'No
Strings Attached'
performances and
workshops please
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'What she is doing is
revolutionary'

The Times, Jan 08



Letters...

*What a morning we had! It was just inspirational - 2 of our 6th form students even went straight into Bracknell and bought some of Tasmin's CD's, so there is a result! These are the sort of visits which stay with the students for life. **Ranelagh School, Bracknell***

*All of the children and young people were thrilled, not only by your playing (although this was such a treat), but also your lovely manner during the presentation. The question-time was very much appreciated, as was the rendition of 'Titanic'! So many of them went away buzzing with enthusiasm for music, and in particular, the violin. **Rugeley Music Partnership, Staffordshire***

*Tasmin was marvellous and the visit had a huge impact on everyone who heard her play. The children were enthralled as she showed her violin and demonstrated the many techniques of playing. Of course they were spellbound once she began to play. **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Somerset***

Emma's father was absolutely over the moon about his daughter being so engrossed in Tasmin's performance. It was a real step forward for Emma. And we'd love

*more than anything to have Tasmin back in the future if she was able to! For us, Thursday will always be Tasmin Little Day (that's what the children sang for her at the end of her visit). **St Martin's Garden Primary School, Bath***

*Can you please also say to Tasmin that her playing was inspirational conveyed in such a very warm and welcoming way with the public - ALL members of the public. **Jackie Gray, West Berkshire Council***

*It was a real treat to have Tasmin and John with us these days. They were everything we had hoped for and more. **Stewart Fry, British School of Beijing***

I just had to send this this mail to say what a wonderful half an hour it was to listen to you play the violin.

*It was very much a talking point in our house that evening. Thanks for that you were wonderful **The Davenport family.***

*Where has Tasmin Little been all my life? I have no hesitation in declaring that this is one of the supremely great violinists of our time. **Bernard Jacobson, musicworld international, Seattle***