



“Feel the Music” at a Glance

What is “Feel the Music”?

“Feel the Music” is a project series run by the Mahler Chamber Orchestra. In selected cities across the world, the MCO invites hearing-impaired children into the world of the orchestra, encouraging them to discover music on their own terms. In interactive workshops at schools for the deaf and at the concert halls, children and musicians explore how music can be experienced with all their senses.

The programme was developed as part of the *Beethoven Journey* (2012-2015) with Leif Ove Andsnes, tying in with Beethoven’s hearing loss. Since then, projects have been carried out in 9 countries across Europe and in Asia. With *Feel the Music* we aim to set an international example for inviting and integrating deaf people into the music world. We hope to inspire many more musicians, ensembles and promoters to create such opportunities for the deaf.

How it works

“Feel the Music” is carried out with schools for the deaf on selected concert tours of the MCO. Each project is divided into three workshops.

1. **School workshop:** The first workshop takes place in school. Together with deaf musician Paul Whittaker, four orchestra musicians visit the children, introduce their instruments, and invite them to discover sounds, vibrations and other sensations in music. Through rhythm games and by trying out the instruments, the children have the opportunity to make music themselves.
2. **With the orchestra:** A few days later, the children visit the concert hall, where the day starts with a warmup session of games or with a short session with the soloist. Afterwards, the children meet the full orchestra and take their seats amidst the musicians on the stage. While the orchestra plays selected music, they physically feel the vibrations and sounds – the vibration of the double bass or the sound waves of a wind instrument. They get the opportunity to play the timpani or even to conduct the orchestra. Following this session, the children get a tour of the concert hall, before attending the evening concert with their teachers and families.
3. **Painting workshop:** At the end of the project, the children work with local arts facilitators to express their experiences with the orchestra and with music in a final painting workshop. The MCO takes the resulting images on selected tours to exhibit them in concert halls and raise awareness of music education for the deaf.





MAHLER CHAMBER
ORCHESTRA

Partners

Artistic Partners: The MCO invites soloists and conductors to get involved in the projects on their joint tours. On the tours of the “Beethoven Journey” (2012-2015) Leif Ove Andsnes led sessions with the children at the grand piano and with the orchestra on stage. In 2013, Alexander Lonquich joined in for sessions at the grand piano and with the orchestra on stage. Since 2015, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Thomas Söndergard, Daniel Harding and Jakub Hrusa have been partners for Feel the Music projects.

Venue Partners: The MCO carries out Feel the Music in collaboration with European concert halls and promoters.

Paul Whittaker is a deaf musician and founder of the British organisation “Music and the Deaf,” which has been carrying out musical activities with deaf children in England for more than 20 years. With his expertise and long-term experience in this field, Paul Whittaker acts as adviser and coach for the MCO. He leads and accompanies the musicians in the school workshops.

European schools for the deaf: Partner schools and teachers are involved in the preparation and implementation of the entire project.

Local visual artists and arts facilitators lead the final painting workshops.

Facts and Figures

Since May 2012, 15 projects took place in ten countries. 300 hearing-impaired children participated in these projects. 50 of these children reunited with the MCO at the Beethovenfest Bonn in 2014 for a big Feel the Music Festival project. The MCO is planning further Feel the Music projects with schools for the deaf across the world.

“People think that deaf people can’t do music – so now we can do it,
and we can show them we can do music.”

Aimee (Student at St Mary’s School for Deaf Girls)



Feel the Music Projects 2012-2016:

2012, May: Brescia
2012, November: Cologne
2012, November: Brussels
2013, May: Prague
2013, November: London
2013, November: Dublin
2014, May: Bergen
2014, November: Lucerne
2015, May: Hong Kong
2015, July: London
2015, October: Macau
2016, May: Katowice
2016, October: Dortmund
2016, November: Berlin

Feel the Music Festival:

2014, September: Bonn

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