

# End of Year 5 Report

2012/13 was a landmark year for Sistema Scotland, with further consolidation of the Big Noise programme in Raploch, Stirling and the launch of our second centre in Govanhill, Glasgow. This year also heralded the introduction of a four year investment by the Scottish Government into the work of Sistema Scotland and a commitment from Stirling Council to support Big Noise Raploch over the next five years. Grant funding from the Scottish Government departments Children and Young People, Culture and External Affairs, Education and Lifelong Learning, and Health and Social Care recognises the cross-cutting nature of the outcomes that Sistema Scotland aims to deliver. These public grants mean that the work of Sistema Scotland is currently half funded by the public sector and half from private trusts, foundations and individuals.

In June 2013, Big Noise Raploch marked its fifth birthday with a performance in the Macrobert Arts Centre. The concert featured a wide range of ensembles and orchestras from the youngest members of the Purple orchestra through the Brass and Percussion Ensembles to the Rinconada and the Symphony Orchestras as well as The Noise, our adult orchestra. A capacity audience celebrated how far this community and these children have come since the programme was introduced in 2008.



A few days later, audiences totalling 1,000 welcomed the introduction of Big Noise Govanhill with two performances in a huge marquee in Govanhill Park. All 400 children from Primary 1 and Primary 2 attending the four local schools - Cuthbertson, Holy Cross, St Bride's and Annette Street Primary School - performed along with the Big Noise Raploch Symphony Orchestra; the Raploch children providing excellent role models for the next generation of Big Noise musicians.

**For the first time we are making a Big Noise about achievements across two centres!**

## Big Noise Raploch

We remain resolutely committed to further developing our flagship programme in Raploch and making it a centre of excellence which will continue to evolve and inform our other centres of operation as our oldest children grow through their teenage years. Stirling Council and Sistema Scotland have signed a Partnership Aspirational Plan, agreeing the aims and the partnership-working required for successful development of Big Noise Raploch over the next five years. Under this plan, Stirling Council commits annually to contribute towards the costs of Big Noise Raploch and Sistema Scotland's core costs, in part from the Council's core funds and in part by partnership funding raised in collaboration with Stirling business and community partners.

- Our dedicated team of musicians now delivers the core programme four days each week in the Raploch Community Campus.
- We work with all 131 Primary 1 and nursery aged children from Raploch and Our Lady's Primary schools and Raploch Nursery as well as all 12 children with special educational needs attending Castleview School (aged 3-11).
- All 228 children from P2-P7 attending Raploch and Our Lady's Primary schools experience Big Noise, either participating in the after-school programme and receiving individual instrumental lessons or receiving general music lessons during school time.
- 29 children who live in Raploch and attend secondary school (S1-S3) are committed members of the after-school programme.
- Baby Noise works with 28 babies/pre-nursery children and their parents/carers each week.
- There are 33 committed members of The Noise, our Adult Orchestra including parents, grandparents, volunteers and members of staff from the community campus.



The delivery and development of the programme is constantly reviewed to ensure that it is as effective as possible. This year the decision was made to introduce the teaching of stringed instruments in Primary 2 rather than in Primary 1. We believe that by joining the after-school programme at the end of P2, when the children are more developed and more confident, they will make quicker progress. All P1s and P2s now receive two Big Noise sessions each week in curriculum time.

Over the last year, Big Noise Raploch has seen a significant increase in the level of engagement by the children and the wider community. Commitment to the after-school programme has greatly increased and attendance is regularly recorded as 80%. The hard work of the children and the support of their families have resulted in 10 children being accepted into the National Youth Orchestras of Scotland (seven in the Junior Orchestra and three in the String Training Orchestra) and 12 in the Stirling Area Choir of the National Youth Choir of Scotland. Two children now attend Saturday morning sessions at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

These experiences gained outwith their immediate community have a knock-on effect to the wider community, raising aspirations and the sense of what is possible for all. The end of term prize-giving ceremony at Wallace High School saw a number of Big Noise Raploch children receiving recognition for their contribution to the school as well as for musical achievements.

### **Big Noise Govanhill**

In April 2013, our newly recruited team of outstanding musicians started working with around 400 Primary 1 and Primary 2 pupils from the four local schools in Govanhill, Glasgow.

After a 10-week programme working with the children, during which the Primary 2s were fast-tracked onto stringed instruments, we officially launched Big Noise Govanhill with two public concerts in Govanhill Park. The Primary 2s were then invited to join the Big Noise Summer School which operated four days each week for five weeks over the school holidays in Forsyth House, our newly refurbished premises. 87 children signed up and we welcomed an average of 42 children through the door each day, each child attending, on average, 50% of the time. Fourteen languages were represented including Arabic, Hindi, Romanian, Malay, Punjabi, Slovakian, Swahili and Urdu.

Following the summer holidays, the full programme is now up and running, reaching around 700 children and families in the local community:



- We are delivering the programme to approximately 200 Primary 1 and 205 Primary 2 children in the four local schools during curriculum time.
- Around 70 children (who are now in Primary 3) are enrolled and regularly attend the after-school programme at Forsyth House, joining in walking lines from their schools to our centre.
- We are reaching around 220 children in the local nurseries.
- Our recently established Baby Noise class is attracting around five babies with their parents/carers.

We have been welcomed enthusiastically by this community, which is one of the most diverse in Scotland with multiple faiths and over 50 languages spoken. Huge credit must go to Govanhill Housing Association and Govanhill Community Development Trust who campaigned hard for our arrival. We have also been overwhelmed by the welcome and assistance we have received from the four local schools.

### Mentors and Role Models

Passing on the gift of music to the next generation of musicians is a fundamental tenet of the *El Sistema* methodology. We brought life to that in Scotland during the year with the mentoring and ambassadorial role played by members of Big Noise Raploch in the establishment of Big Noise Govanhill. As part of the initial community engagement programme in Govanhill, Raploch children performed in each of the four primary schools. The Big Noise Raploch Symphony Orchestra then performed at the Govanhill launch concerts, providing excellent role models for the next generation of Big Noise musicians. During the concert a Big Noise Raploch musician presented a Venezuelan ‘medal’ to a Big Noise Govanhill musician (above), a touching and symbolic gesture, welcoming the children of Govanhill into the wider Sistema family of musicians.



Our programme could not be delivered without the outstanding leadership, musicality and hard work of our team of musicians. Above all, their commitment to the wellbeing of every child in the programme is key to its success. Recognising the increasing scale of our work, we implemented a new management structure with a Team Leader responsible for each Big Noise centre reporting to the Director of Music and supported by an Operations Manager. We believe this provides enhanced leadership and support to the music teachers. All musicians also receive regular, structured training to ensure that we continually improve standards.

We have continued to benefit from the passion and commitment of exemplary mentors and role models from outwith the organisation. Our Board member and musical Big Sister, **Nicola Benedetti**, made further inspirational visits to the programme, performing for and teaching the children. Two children from Big Noise Raploch performed a specially composed Raploch Air with Nicola at the Stirling Albert Halls as part of her Silver Violin Tour.



We are also extremely grateful to our BBC Buddies from the **BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra**, who continued to visit Raploch and mentor the children.

Our relationship with our partners in Venezuela continues to thrive and we welcomed the **Venezuelan Percussion Ensemble** for a residency in Raploch. The children worked intensively towards a community concert and a percussion masterclass which was open to other ensembles to participate.

A total of 29 volunteers (including parents from the Raploch and Govanhill communities and others from elsewhere) have provided invaluable support over the year. Offering between eight and 390 hours each, the volunteers have committed over 2,650 hours to the organisation in roles such as supervising the walking lines in Govanhill; looking after the Raploch music library, the stock of instruments and the practice reward scheme as well as assisting in the daily task of transforming Raploch community campus into the equivalent of a Venezuelan *nucleo* – and back again! All volunteers receive training in child protection and an induction into the methods and ethos of Sistema Scotland.

## Big Noise in Performance

With The Big Concert in June 2012 reaching a global audience, Big Noise performances are in huge demand! Performances during the year have included:

- a Christmas programme at the Church of the Holy Rude, Stirling filmed by the BBC for broadcast;
- a Big Noise Christmas Concert in the Community Campus;
- a 'side-by-side' with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in Glasgow City Halls, involving a 90-strong orchestra ensemble;
- performances at local care homes and at Stirling Castle, a Glasgow Centre for Population Health event, the Stirling Business Awards and the Scottish Brass Band Competition.



## Trips and Residential



Trips, excursions and residential courses are a key feature of the Big Noise experience, in-keeping with our mission of transforming lives.

A number of groups attended performances ranging from the Nursery visit to Monster Music with the RSNO to a party of 170 who attended Nicola Benedetti's performance in Perth.

During the year, the Red Orchestra and the Woodwind, Brass and Percussion sections attended residential courses in Inversnaid. In July 2013, we took 69 children to Castle Toward for four days of intensive rehearsals and outdoor activities. This was a magical trip, with the Scottish sunshine and scenery being matched only by the quality of the music making!



## Looking Ahead

### The Big Trip!

On 21 June 2012, the Big Noise Raploch Symphony Orchestra (under the direction of our Patron, Gustavo Dudamel, and playing alongside the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela) officially launched the London 2012 Festival at The Big Concert. In recognition of the success of this collaboration, Maestro Abreu, founder of the El Sistema movement, invited the children to Venezuela. Extensive preparations and risk analyses are under way for what we have named The Big Trip which will take place in January 2014.

The Big Trip will see around 55 children from the Big Noise Raploch Symphony Orchestra travel to Caracas for the musical and cultural experience of a lifetime. They will take part in a four-day musical *seminario* with local children, including working with our Patron, the inspirational Gustavo Dudamel, and look forward to rekindling friendships with members of the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela. We know that this will be a truly life-changing experience for everyone involved.

## Evaluation

Measuring the impact of our work is an intrinsic and ongoing element of our practice. An evaluation of the impact of Big Noise Govanhill was commenced with a baseline study and a commitment by Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH) to continue the evaluation until at least 2015 (and thereafter subject to funding). The research team also includes a member of staff seconded from Audit Scotland to continue the evaluation of Big Noise Raploch, also overseen by GCPH and a study into the economic impact of the work by Glasgow Caledonian University.

## Making a Big Noise in other places....

The Board of Sistema Scotland is committed to bringing the benefits of Big Noise programmes to other communities when the time is right and detailed discussions are being held with a number of candidate communities.

## Thank you!



From this...



.... to this in just five years!

2012/13 has been another exceptional year for everyone involved in Sistema Scotland and our Big Noise programmes. The children have achieved so much and made fantastic progress both socially and musically; we have ever more thrilling adventures to look forward to in the year ahead. But none of this would have been possible without the commitment of every one of our supporters. We are enormously grateful to each funder, each trust, foundation and individual for the belief you have shown in our work through your continuing support. **Thank you!**

### For further information please contact:

Nicky Pritchett-Brown  
[nicky.pritchettbrown@sistemascotland.org.uk](mailto:nicky.pritchettbrown@sistemascotland.org.uk)  
Tel: 0795 160 8898

**Sistema Scotland**  
90 Drip Road  
Raploch  
Stirling FK8 1RN

[www.sistemascotland.org.uk](http://www.sistemascotland.org.uk)  
[www.bignoise.org.uk](http://www.bignoise.org.uk)

November 2013