

## All the fun of *Widcombe Fair*

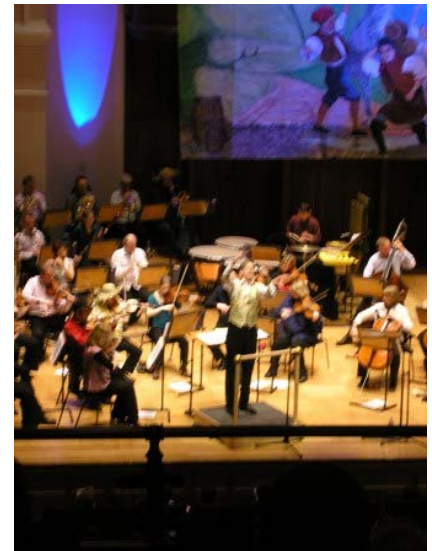
On 10<sup>th</sup> March 2009 nearly 2000 primary school children raised the roof singing alongside the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at Cadogan Hall in two sell-out performances of The Classical Road Show's dramatic concert *Widcombe Fair*.

Conducted by Hilary Davan Wetton and narrated by stage actors Annabelle Brown and Michael Rouse, the concert was a unique musical experience for the children involved. They not only experienced the thrill of hearing a live professional orchestra, possibly for the first time in their lives, but more importantly they were a central part of the performance, singing throughout from their audience seats, having learned the songs in advance at school.



Specially written for The Classical Road Show by Richard Brown, composer and musical director of the west end show *Lord of the Rings*, *Widcombe Fair* is a gripping tale of smuggling, wrecking and romance, set in the early 19th century on the Devon coast. The scene was set with the help of a spectacular backcloth painted by the children of St Bede's school and a highly professional performance from the *jumpup* dance school who illustrated the action on stage.

Since 1988 The Classical Road Show has given many thousands of children in London and the south west the unique opportunity to perform with professional orchestras in world-class concert halls. Our aim is to make top-quality classical music accessible through **participation**, so that children experience music not just through listening but through being part of a professional performance. Classical Road Show concerts bring huge benefits – children's self-esteem and confidence is boosted, and they leave the concert hall inspired. We produce cross-curricular projects to accompany our concerts, and we also run regular Song and Rhythm workshops for schools. We plan to expand our concert programming and introduce a new series of workshops in 2009/2010.



***"Yet another wonderful Classical Road Show. It was such a super experience for the children (and staff!). The songs were fabulous fun and I very much enjoyed singing along to them. We really appreciate being able to be part of such a great show."*** Emily Norman, St Matthew's School, Westminster

***"It was an amazing event, beautifully organised and A LOT OF FUN for everyone."*** Kate Casper, The Royal School, Hampstead