



ROYAL
OPERA
HOUSE

THURROCK

MAY 2015

Beacon Hill Academy, a Royal Opera House Trailblazer Pathfinder School, visits the Tower of London

Students from **Beacon Hill Academy** visited the Tower of London recently as part of **Royal Opera House Thurrock's Trailblazer Pathfinder** project.

Beacon Hill Academy is one of many Thurrock Trailblazer schools taking part in the *Time Explorers Challenge*, a new teacher CPD project offered by the Learning & Engagement team at Historic Royal Palaces, the independent charity that cares for the Tower. Each year, this project empowers teachers and their students to explore a different story at one of the palaces and facilitates a broad range of cross-curricular learning across KS1-2. This year the project explores the early years of Anne Boleyn's reign as Queen, following her marriage to King Henry VIII and elaborate coronation ceremony at Westminster. The project offers professional development for teachers, a range of resources to use in the classroom, and a visit to the Tower for students.

Beacon Hill Academy has created Tudor sensory stories in class and the visit was a great opportunity to increase their knowledge and experience the story in its original setting. Through looking at historical artefacts and listening to Tudor music as well as meeting some famous Tudor characters. The students were able to get a better understanding of Anne Boleyn and see where she arrived for her coronation and learn more about her history through costumed interpreters who brought her story to life.

For all Royal Opera House press releases visit www.roh.org.uk/press

The cross curricula aspect of the project means many different types of schools can take part as they can take as much or as little of the story as they wish and they can adapt the story for their own needs, in Beacon Hill's case they are creating a sensory story for their pupils.

Beacon Hill teacher Jacqueline Drew said “We had an amazing time. It was a wonderful experience for all our students, a very well thought out session covering a variety of aspects that we had covered during the term.”

Elsa Brittain, Junior Learning Producer at the Historic Royal Palaces said, “*Time Explorers Challenge* is a great way of supporting teachers to deliver stories in their own classrooms. Working with schools in Thurrock has been a great way of widening our audience and has helped to connect them with the Tower and its stories.”

Thurrock Trailblazer

Thurrock Borough Council is transforming education in Thurrock and Royal Opera House Thurrock is delighted to be delivering the Cultural Entitlement Pathfinder Initiative, **Thurrock Trailblazer**. The programme uses involvement in the arts to inspire and engage young people, raise aspiration and improve educational attainment.

The Learning and Participation Team is building on its strong partnerships across Thurrock and the wider cultural sector locally, regionally and nationally creating an exciting programme of activities for pupils and teachers in the 21 Trailblazer Schools across Thurrock. It has developed targeted offers for schools to take part in activities in Covent Garden and Thurrock and form new relationships between schools and other cultural providers.

For more information about **Thurrock Trailblazer**, please go to www.roh.org.uk/learning/learning-in-thurrock/thurrock-trailblazer

ENDS

CONTACTS

Jules Easlea

Julie.easlea@roh.org.uk

Tel: 07941 502577

Notes for Editors

Royal Opera House Learning and Participation in Thurrock

Royal Opera House Learning and Participation in Thurrock has been offering innovative and creative projects and programmes in schools, colleges and across communities in the Thames Gateway for the past six years. In 2010, more than 1000 people from Thurrock, young and old, took part in creating and performing the spectacular Purfleet Opera: *Ludd and Isis*, the third large scale ROH performance created with communities in Thurrock. As a result of this work a Thurrock Community Chorus has been created with over 140 members of all ages. For further information, please go to: www.roh.org.uk/learning/learning-in-thurrock/community-chorus. RM19, a new Youth Chorus for 11-25 year olds was started in 2012: www.roh.org.uk/learning/learning-in-thurrock/rm19-youth-singing-group.

Public and educational tours of the state-of-the-art Bob and Tamar Manoukian Production Workshop where the sets and scenery for the Royal Opera House stage in Covent Garden are built are now available. Please go to www.roh.org.uk/visit/tours/thurrock-tours for further details.

The High House Production Park is supported by a unique partnership including Arts Council England, Creative & Cultural Skills, the Royal Opera House and Thurrock Council: www.highhouseproductionpark.co.uk

Historic Royal Palaces

Historic Royal Palaces is the independent charity that looks after the Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace, the Banqueting House, Kensington Palace, Kew Palace and Hillsborough Castle. We help everyone explore the story of how monarchs and people have shaped society, in some of the greatest palaces ever built. We raise all our own funds and depend on the support of our visitors, members, donors, sponsors and volunteers. These palaces are owned by The Queen on behalf of the nation, and we manage them for the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Registered charity number 1068852. For more information visit www.hrp.org.uk

Learning and Engagement at Historic Royal Palaces is expanding with a new programme that aims to enable the widest possible audience to discover, explore and enjoy the stories of the palaces. The new approach is making learning even more central to how all audiences experience the royal palaces - onsite, offsite and online.

www.hrp.org.uk/learning