



Listening Activity Performance DVD

Hear Our Voice

For details of performers see the programme included in this pack.

Hear Our Voice

Jonathan Dove and Matthew King

Libretto – Tertia Sefton-Green

The music for *Hear Our Voice* is set to a libretto compiled from extracts of poems, diaries and letters written by children living through the Holocaust, many of whom did not survive. It was composed through an extensive music education project in which over 400 children drew on their own emotional and artistic responses to the writings to explore ways of setting them to music. The final piece set in three languages was performed by students from London, Prague and Nürnberg in all three cities.

Watch the DVD of the London Premiere.

- What impact does the piece have and how is this created?
- The film, which serves as a backdrop for the performance, was made by students in Prague. What impact does the film have upon the performance? Which images work best for you and why? Which are less effective and why?
- Discuss the importance of the adult role of the Survivor. What is added by having an adult performing in a piece, essentially by children, musically and dramatically?
- What choices has Clare Whistler (the Director) made about staging the work? How have the three choirs from the different countries been used dramatically? What choices has she made about whether the work should be naturalistic or stylistic? Discuss the use of choreographed movement (especially hand gestures) and identify

places where this was particularly effective. Think about when the movement was illustrative (e.g. catching fleas, drawing a yellow star, writing a letter home) and when it was emotive.

- What choices did the librettist make about the structure of the work? Which texts worked best and were most memorable?
- How did the music serve the words? How effective was it at scene-painting, capturing the emotional content of the words and retaining their simplicity? What does the music add to the words to give it another dimension? How easy was it to understand when there were passages in Czech and German – did it detract and make it more difficult or did it enhance, or not make much difference?