

VOCABULARY AND SPEAKING

1a Add to the list of types of music below.

pop, rock, jazz, world music

1b How would you define the types of music in the list? Discuss with a partner and check your ideas in a dictionary.

2a In small groups, discuss the following questions.

- 1 What kind(s) of music do you like/dislike?
- 2 Do you think classical music is the most international kind of music? Why/why not?
- 3 Is classical music only for certain kinds of people?

READING

3 Read the press release quickly. What is its aim?

4a Scan the press release and find the following information in one minute.

- 1 When the orchestra was set up.
- 2 The total number of young people who participate in the system.
- 3 The maximum age of the performers in the orchestra.
- 4 When the orchestra last performed in London.
- 5 How often the young people in Venezuela go to music lessons.
- 6 How far you should travel to listen to this orchestra.
- 7 How many performers there are in the orchestra.

4b Why do you think there is so much numerical information in this text?

5 How many people are quoted in the text? Are the quotes similar in any way?

6 Underline all the positive words and phrases in the text. Why are there so many?

7 In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 What do you think about the Venezuelan system mentioned in the press release?
- 2 Have you got anything similar in your country?
- 3 Does/would it work in your country?

PRESS RELEASE

NEWS RELEASE

SIMÓN BOLÍVAR YOUTH ORCHESTRA OF VENEZUELA – RESIDENCY AT CARDIFF BAY CULTURAL CENTRE

To mark the tenth anniversary of the opening of Cardiff Bay Cultural Centre, we are pleased to announce that the exceptional Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra of Venezuela and its charismatic conductor Gustavo Dudamel will be in Cardiff 17–21 September next year for a special residency. To focus the residency at the Bay Centre, the Orchestra will give two showcase concerts.

First seen in London in 2005, the Orchestra returned in 2007, to produce electrifying performances bringing wide-spread critical acclaim. Dean Jones, Head of Music at the Bay Centre, said: 'This special residency offers an amazing opportunity for Welsh audiences to watch and listen to one of the most dynamic groups of musicians in the world. This orchestra has tremendous energy, passion and a sense of fun, but also great technical skills. They're very accomplished musicians. And, of course, Gustavo Dudamel is a phenomenon.'

At the end of a concert by this orchestra, you won't hear polite clapping. Instead, the audiences are on their feet, stomping and roaring, doing the Mexican wave, demanding encore after encore. The atmosphere is closer to a carnival than a traditional classical music event. The *Daily Telegraph* wrote: 'Music-making this joyous is in a class of its own. If you hear of the Orchestra coming within 500 miles of you, book straight away'.

Founded in 1975 by the musician and economist, José Antonio Abreu, the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra has, since its inception, striven to offer new opportunities for musical excellence in Venezuela, touring with its Music Director Gustavo Dudamel and working with other world-famous conductors. Heading a national system, the State Foundation for the Venezuelan System of Youth and Child Orchestras, known simply as El Sistema, the Orchestra comprises over 200 young musicians aged from 16 to 20.

These gifted young performers are all products of a system that is of equal social, musical and educational importance. Six afternoons a week, hundreds of thousands of youngsters from some of the toughest neighbourhoods in Venezuela have free music lessons, and are provided with free instruments, taking them off the streets of the shanty towns where they live and away from drugs, guns, gangs and crime. They are literally given a new life, and their classes become a new family where they learn not only music, but also respect, discipline and teamwork.

Around 250,000 musicians from across Venezuela are involved with El Sistema, playing in pre-school orchestras, over 90 children's orchestras, over 130 youth orchestras and over 30 professional adult symphony orchestras. Simon Rattle, Director of the Berlin Philharmonic, has said of the Venezuelan system: 'This is nothing less than a miracle. From here, I see the future for music for the whole world.'

