



STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 8.30AM 12 SEPTEMBER 2006

**SHORTLISTED ARTISTS UNVEILED
FOR FIRST EVER SCHOOLS TOP 10**

- Music industry and government launch first ever National Music Week
- Ten hot new UK acts descend on Pimlico School as music education gets a makeover
- Myleene Klass to reveal the breaking acts competing for first-ever Schools Top 10

Children at Pimlico School in central London experienced an assembly with a difference this morning, as 10 of the UK's hottest new artists descended upon the school for the launch of the UK's first National Music Week - which takes place over October 16-20 this year.

National Music Week is a joint initiative between the music industry and government, which aims to improve the standard of music education in schools.

As part of the campaign, the industry has launched My Music - dubbed a Mercury Prize for kids. Each participating pupil will get the chance to choose which of the 10 acts will emerge Number One in the first ever Schools Top 10 which will be announced on October 31.

The chart will be compiled from the choices made by up to 1.3 million secondary school children as part of National Music Week (NMW).

The shortlisted artists represent the cream of emerging British talent and are spread across a diverse range of musical genres including pop, rock, folk, jazz, classical and R&B.

To commemorate their achievement in making it to the final shortlist, each artist was presented with a framed silver disc by Myleene Klass who is backing the NMW and the chart.

"National Music Week is a fantastic initiative that will really put music in schools in the spotlight. The quality and diversity of the acts unveiled today just goes to show how much young talent there is in the country" said Myleene.

Throughout NMW students from participating schools will select their favourite track from the shortlist by exchanging a special token which will entitle them to one CD single and/or one download. The Official UK Charts Company will then compile the unique Schools Top 10 and the Number One will be announced on 31st October.

The Schools Top 10 is a cornerstone of National Music Week, a joint initiative between the Government-sponsored Music Manifesto campaign to improve music education, the Entertainment Retailers Association (ERA) and the British recorded music industry, the BPI. Its aim is to encourage young people to listen to a diverse range of music and develop their knowledge and understanding of all things connected with music and the music industry. Over 1700 secondary schools in England have already signed up and will receive comprehensive teaching packs taking in many areas of the curriculum.

BPI Chairman Peter Jamieson said: "The recorded music industry has long shown a commitment to music education in schools. While music is a successful British industry, it is important not to forget music's enormous cultural and educational value. To date most music education in schools has focused on teaching children to play instruments. National Music Week is about exposing young people to a broad range of music and helping them to improve their listening skills."

Steve Knott, ERA's chairman commented, "The phenomenal talent we have unveiled today shows what an exciting time it is to be involved in music. The Schools Singles Chart is a great way to help students discover music that they might not have otherwise been exposed to. That is exactly what National Music Week is all about."

Music Manifesto Champion Marc Jaffrey added "National Music Week is a really important collaboration between educationalists and the music industry and this first ever Schools Singles Chart is right at the heart of it. The response of both schools and pupils so far shows the incredible appetite there is for boosting the role of music within our education system."

Today's unveiling took place at Pimlico School in London. The school runs a dedicated Special Music Scheme designed for students aged 11-18 who have musical potential and want a school where they can make music an important part of their life. Students learn two or three instruments and take part in a rich and varied programme of musical activities fitted into an extended school day. The school is open to students throughout the London area.

- ENDS -

Notes to Editors

National Music Week 2006 is a new initiative designed to help young people improve their music listening skills, broadening their appreciation of a wider range of music.

In a unique link-up between educationalists and the music industry 11-16 year olds will be exposed to 10 new British artists covering a range of genres – including jazz, classical and folk – whose work will be woven into the National Curriculum in a one week celebration of new British talent.
<http://www.nationalmusicweek.net>

The Music Manifesto is a campaign for improvement in music education led by an independent Champion and Steering Group made up of leading music industry and education figures. It aims to provide greater opportunities for children and young people to develop their creative potential through music. It is working to ensure that all young people, whatever their background or abilities, have access to a rich and diverse range of musical experiences, both in the classroom and outside school.
<http://www.musicmanifesto.co.uk>

The **Entertainment Retailers Association** (ERA) is the trade association representing over 90% of the UK's entertainment retailers. It acts as a forum for the retail and wholesale sectors of the music, video, DVD and multimedia products industry
<http://www.eraltd.org>

The BPI (formerly British Phonographic Industry), represents the British recording industry and is the organisation behind the annual BRIT Awards.

Its membership comprises over 400 music companies including the four 'major' record companies, companies such as manufacturers and distributors as well as hundreds of independent music companies representing thousands of labels; over 90% of the recorded music market in the UK.
<http://www.bpi.co.uk>

The Official UK Charts Company is a joint venture between ERA and the BPI. It compiles all the official UK music charts broadcast on the BBC and published right across the UK media.
<http://www.theofficialcharts.com>

About the Artists

All Angels – Songbird

Four very different teenage girls with one shared passion for music, All Angels, the world's first female classical supergroup, are a unique vocal quartet for the 21st century.

All Angels, Melanie, Laura, Daisy and Charlotte - all aged 16 and 17, bring a fresh new sound and a bright new look to classical crossover, with a repertoire spanning classical, choral, opera and pop.

Only a few weeks ago the girls were planning their summer holidays as they waited for their exam results. Instead they became busy recording their debut album in London.

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Betty Curse –Girl With Yellow Hair

From a love of Nick Cave, The Cure, The Cramps, 80s Matchbox B-Line Disaster, Vivienne Westwood, Edgar Allan Poe and 50's poster girl Betty Paige, comes a musical talent unlike any other at the moment.

At only 19, Betty Curse may sound innocent enough with the sweetest of pop rock cuts, but she reaches into the deepest parts of teen psyche with her words.

Signed to Island Records, with labelmates Nine Inch Nails, PJ Harvey and The Mars Volta, Betty brings us an unflinching bridge between Voice Of The Beehive and Siouxsie And The Banshees.

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Keisha White – Just Don't Understand

Keisha is one of those rare artists who appeal to all ages, genres and tastes. She treads the fine line between cutting-edge verve and all-encompassing appeal, embracing pop and rock while retaining her R&B roots.

With an astonishing voice far belying her tender years and an impeccable ear for melody, this 19-year-old North Londoner's luscious vocals bring a breath of fresh air to the UK music scene.

Having come to the attention of Warner Brothers Records after featuring on Paul Oakenfold's 'The Harder They Come' and Desert Eagle Disc's 'Bigger Better Deal', Warner signed Keisha after she overwhelmed an audience at the label with a live acoustic set.

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Lil' Chris – Get Delirious (Album Version)

A familiar face to viewers of Channel 4's 'Rock School', 15-year-old Chris has already been bigged-up by everyone from Jo Whiley to The Sun.

Growing up listening to Blink-182, Iron Maiden, The Undertones and Blondie, Chris decided that being a musician would be a bit of a laugh, so he learned to sing, play guitar, drum and write songs.

In his GCSEs, Chris scored an A* in drama, performing a segment from Theseus & The Minotaur. "It was a bit weird," he notes, "but better than doing a scene from EastEnders."

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Matt Willis – Ex-Girlfriend

Having achieved multi-platinum album sales, sold out Wembley 11 times in 2004, and scored 4 number ones as part of Busted, Matt Willis has returned with an album which might well surpass even these mighty achievements.

The as yet untitled debut is a full-on, balls-out monster of a record, a "stadium pop" sound invoking images of Robbie, Green Day and Van Halen jamming underneath a firework display.

Written and produced with Jason Perry and Daniel P Carter, formerly of A, and their friend Julian Emery, this is an awesomely confident album that will make Matt Willis one of the defining stars of 2006 and beyond.

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Mr. Skillz & His Crazy Girls – I Know U Like Me (Medley)

Producer, and rapper Mr. Skillz, first tasted international success in 2002 after conceiving and launching Big Brovaz – the six-piece urban group that went on to win three MOBOs while enjoying major chart success with hits such as *Nu Flow*, *Favourite Things* and *Baby Boy*.

After writing and producing their successful debut album, creative differences led him to step away from the group and concentrate on his solo career.

Now back in the UK for his latest project: Mr Skillz has teamed up with London-based all-girl group Crazy Girls who he clicked with immediately following a writing session at the end of last year.

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Natasha Marsh - The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face

Soprano Natasha Marsh has already wowed critics with her dazzling performances

in La Boheme, Idomeneo, The Magic Flute, Fedora, and Jane Eyre in which she originated the title role.

This October sees her debut release, 'Natasha Marsh' which was recorded at Abbey Road studios and produced by the prolific classical, rock and jazz producer, Craig Leon.

The album features a wonderful array of beautiful classical tracks from Satie to Verdi, Rachmaninov to Delibes, and a smattering of contemporary classics such as the theme from the film 'Il Postino' and Roberta Flack's classic song, 'The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face' which was written by Ewan MacColl.

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Seth Lakeman – Kitty Jay

Those who label Seth Lakeman's work as 'folk music' may find themselves having to redefine the widely perceived meaning of the term. Maybe he's the new face of folk for the 21st century; more likely he's just a great new singer songwriter.

Though his music is inspired by, and sometimes infused with, the folk scene he grew up in, one listen to his new album, "Freedom Fields", and you realise it does not sit easily in any generic straight jacket.

Lakeman's looks and style are as far away from any woolly jumper folk stereotype as you can get. And while there are elements of the traditional in his music (in the sense that he uses acoustic instruments) he delivers a rhythmic, contemporary sound and vivid lyrical imagery, fusing the energetic performance ethic of punk or rock with the heartfelt emotion of blues and soul.

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Soweto Kinch – Old Skoolish

Born in London, England in 1978 to a Barbadian father and British-Jamaican mother, Soweto Kinch is one of the most exciting and versatile young musicians to hit the British jazz scene in recent years.

Soweto is essentially a self-taught musician who has supplemented his musical education by gathering information from books and transcribing jazz recordings.

He has also been fortunate to attract the attention of two of the most important jazz luminaries in Britain, saxophonist Courtney Pine OBE and double bassist Gary Crosby, both of whom are now key mentors. In addition to the alto saxophone, Soweto plays soprano, tenor and baritone saxophones, bass clarinet, and piano.

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Trinity Stone – Ayo!

Trinity Stone are Jade (19), Azi (22) and Cherri (22) - three extremely talented ladies on a mission to record quality songs with stunning vocal harmonies and infectious melodies.

Jade and Azi were working with Grammy Award-winning producer Brian Rawling while he was producing material for soul legend Mica Paris. Paris' niece Cherri, in the session helping out with backing vocals, got to know Jade and Azi, and the group was formed.

Since then, Trinity Stone spent the last six months co-writing and recording their debut album for Brightside Records in London and LA with such music luminaries as Soulshock & Karlin (Toni Braxton, Whitney Houston, Brandy), Cee Lo (Gnarls Barkley), and Brian Rawling (Lemar, Enrique Inglesias).

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