

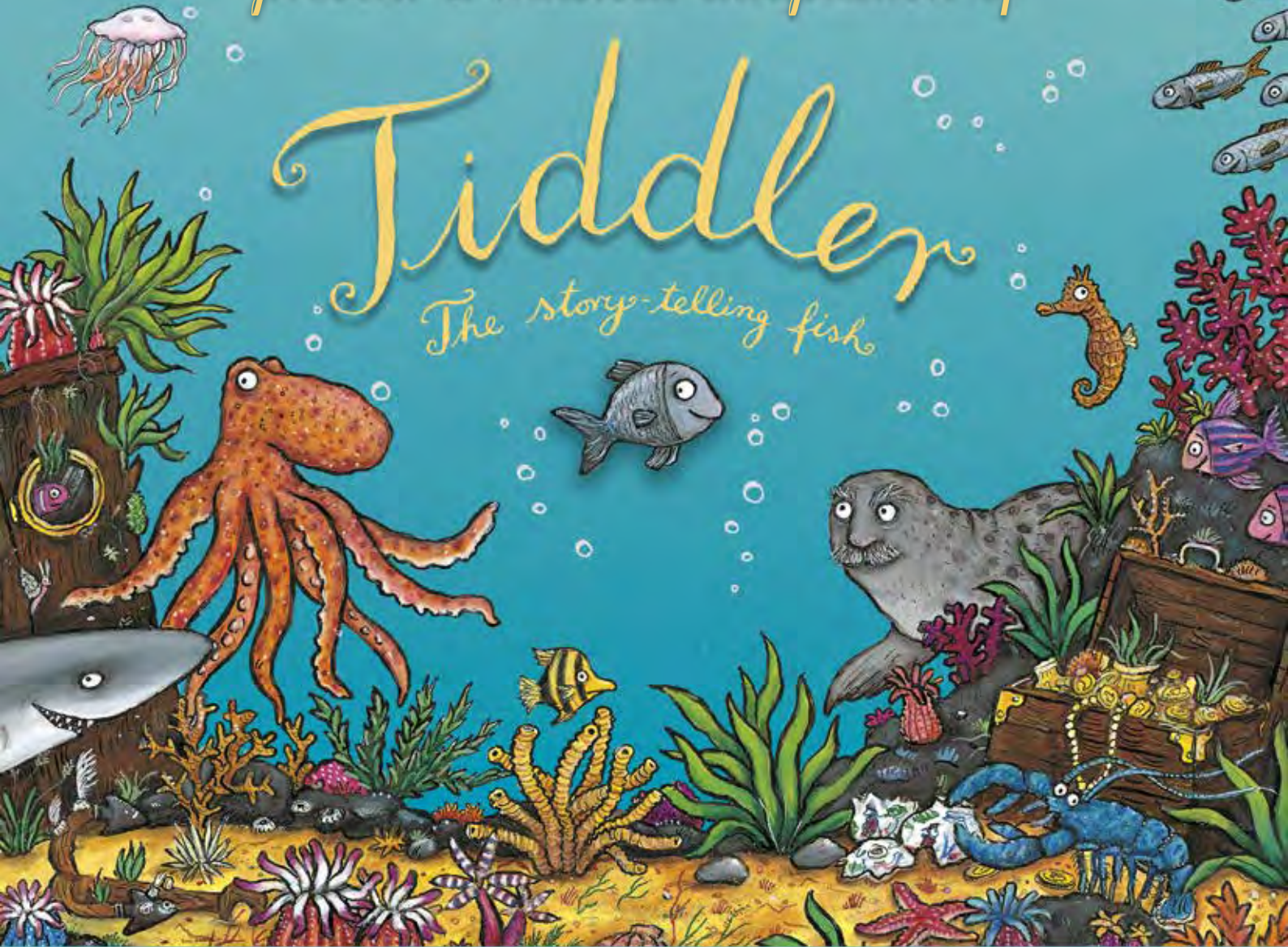
WORLD
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'Concerteenies Harp'
Louise Thomson (Harp)
&
Dolly Ives (Narrator)
present a musical adaptation of

Tiddler

The story-telling fish



Written by

Illustrated by

JULIA DONALDSON * AXEL SCHEFFLER

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PRESS RELEASE

‘Concerteenies Harp’

Louise Thomson: *Harp*

Polly Ives: *Narrator*

Exciting new collaboration and project
for immediate release, March 2020

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Concerteenies: Harp

Louise Thomson: *Harp*

Polly Ives: *Narrator*

'Concerteenies: Harp' is a unique and highly-engaging musical experience for very young children (0-4 year olds) and their grown-ups. It combines well-loved harp repertoire with creative story-telling, alongside movement and singing.

Louise and Polly have created their own musical version of the well-loved children's story ***Tiddler, the Story-telling Fish*** written by Julia Donaldson and illustrated by Axel Scheffler.

The beautifully rhythmic and descriptive words are intertwined with music by Smetana, McKay, Tchaikovsky, Tournier, Fauré and Gershwin.

This special underwater journey also involves bubbles, scarves, fabrics, toy-fish, watery lighting and percussion along the way.



Young people are not given nearly enough credit for how early they can understand, learn from and be touched by classical music.

Music and education is so important, and is a vital tool to better our children's education, upbringing and futures as well as developing their cultural roots.

Concerteenies inspires creativity, builds confidence, stirs emotions and develops language skills. It also exposes the very young to the amazing, unique and incredibly special instrument, the harp, providing a powerful vehicle to inspire imagination.

Polly Ives is a pioneering story-telling musician, who has previously worked with award-winning author Julia Donaldson, presenting her stories including *The Gruffalo's Child* and *Zog* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. She is hugely passionate about making musical stories accessible to all and about using music to develop speech and language.

Louise and Polly have collaborated on numerous education projects, engaging thousands of young children. They plan to develop a whole series of Story Concerts with Harp for 0-4 year olds, including recordings, videos and resource packs.

Louise Thomson: Harp

A photograph of Louise Thomson, a blonde woman with shoulder-length hair, smiling and wearing a black blazer. She is standing next to a large, ornate golden harp. The background is a dark, textured wall.

A versatile and experienced musician, Louise's playing has taken her to prestigious concert venues around the UK including the Royal Albert Hall, St David's Hall in Cardiff and Bridgewater Hall in Manchester. It has also given her the opportunity to perform with some of the country's most respected ensembles: the Hallé Orchestra, Manchester Camerata, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra and Manchester Concert Orchestra. She has been invited to perform live on BBC Radio 3, and made her television debut performing live on BBC 1 for the Heaven and Earth show with soprano Katherine Jenkins. Some of Thomson's early notable successes included winning the Harp Finals at the world renowned Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales Competition in 2003 and performing as a Finalist in the London International Harp Competition in 2005. In April 2007 she was short-listed to audition for HRH The Prince of Wales for the position of Royal Harpist at Clarence House and performed for HRH Queen Elizabeth II and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh at The Royal Variety Performance in the same year.

Louise was awarded a place at Chetham's School of Music in Manchester to study with Eira Lynn Jones. During this time Louise won the Ida Carroll String Prize for outstanding musical achievement, and was subsequently awarded an entrance scholarship to study at the Royal Northern College of Music.

Completing her undergraduate course in 2005, with a First Class BMus (Hons) degree, and her post-graduate diploma (PGDip) with Distinction in Performance in 2006, Louise went on to complete a Masters Degree (MMus) in 2007, again with Distinction in Performance. She concluded her time at the RNCM by winning the Concerto Competition. After graduating, Louise was immediately invited onto the Live Music Now Scheme (founded by Yehudi Menuhin) which involved extensive touring around the country giving solo recitals and educational workshops to an enormous range of audiences. In addition to her solo work, Louise recently launched a new collaboration with up-and-coming vocal ensemble the New Oxford Consort, featuring programmes of music for upper voices and harp.

Louise also takes great pride in her harp teaching and has built up a highly vibrant harp community around the North of England. She tutors harp at Withington Girls' School, Pownall Hall School in Wilmslow and the Manchester Grammar School. Louise is also the harp tutor at Huddersfield University and is a visiting tutor at RNCM.

Polly Ives: Narrator



Polly Ives enjoys a varied career as a concert presenter and narrator, workshop leader, trainer and cellist. As a children's concert presenter, Polly regularly works with London Philharmonic Orchestra (recent highlights include Julia Donaldson's *The Gruffalo's Child* and *Zog*), Wigmore Hall, Music in the Round and Ensemble 360. She has also worked with CBeebies, Royal Opera House, Southbank Sinfonia, European Brandenburg Ensemble and Trevor Pinnock, the Beatrix Potter Attraction and has performed live on BBC Radio 3's *In Tune*. She has performed most of the well-loved children's concert pieces but has also commissioned and premiered many new pieces for young audiences, by composer Paul Rissmann.

Polly is a highly experienced children's workshop leader; often specialising in music to support speech and language and child-led creativity. She has enjoyed projects with Wigmore Hall's Chamber Tots, LPO's MiniHarmonics and The Big Malarkey Festival in Hull.

Polly has devised, managed and delivered training days, inset sessions and conferences for early years practitioners, musicians, workshop leaders and students across the UK. She has devised, presented and written many online resources for early years practitioners and KS1 teachers, including many Youtube videos.

When she had her first baby, she founded *Concertteenies*, a pioneering live music series for babies, toddlers and their grown-ups at venues across the North of England. This has now included an eclectic mix of highly renowned performers, including harpist Louise Thomson, baritone Roderick Williams, flute-beatboxer James Lyons, Little Robots, and Aida Khakhanbekova (dombra, zhetigen, saz, syrnai). There is now a series of Relaxation Concerts for pre-crawlers and a Story Concerts series for 3 and 4 year olds.

As a cellist, Polly performs with chamber ensembles, orchestras, bands and TV and film session work, including performing alongside Bryn Terfel on BBC One's *Billionaire Boy*, written by David Walliams. She has also coached the National Children's Orchestra of Great Britain, City of Sheffield Youth Orchestra and is Chair of Sheffield Young Singers.