



## LSF-UK Mission Report No.12 Philippines April 2018

Volunteer luthiers Alice Phelps and Robert Cain

In partnership with **THE OPEN STRING**

The Jose Depiro Education Centre for the Arts is situated in the small rural settlement of Pagalanggang, in Bataan province, a three-hour drive north-west of Manila. It is administered by the Roman Catholic 'Missionary Society of St Paul' and reaches out to this economically disadvantaged community by offering employment training, life skills, sports facilities and music education.



The centre is run by Fr. Joseph Cremona whose vision has seen the centre grow from a 'fishpond' to a thriving community centre over the past 13 years. Recognising the value of music participation to young disadvantaged people, the centre is home to a youth orchestra and offers music education, (much of it by 'Skype' lessons with overseas teachers) and performance opportunities. The centre hosts regular visits from professional musicians from various countries. Recently the orchestra has benefitted from the support of the charity 'The Open String' who have donated instruments. In 2017 it became clear that



some training was needed in order to maintain the instruments and so LSF-UK was asked to arrange a training mission. This spawned a very natural and positive collaboration between TOS and LSF-UK.

TOS introduced LSF-UK to Fr Cremona and also contributed £600 and some equipment towards the mission.

Our Host, Fr Joe, had organised things very well and we were able to set up our well-tried 'pop-up' workshop in a newly-constructed workshop space with an adjacent tool store.

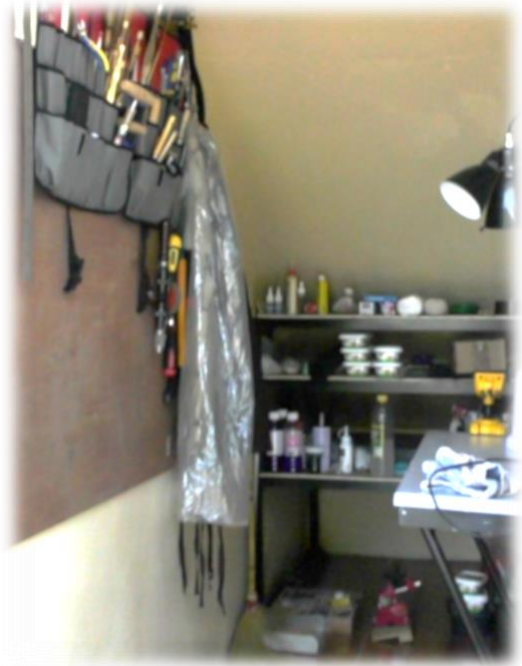


About £1000-worth of tools and equipment was brought from the UK, enough to equip the workshop and allow basic repairs and maintenance for a few years.

Teaching started on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> April and continued uninterrupted for the next ten days. LSF volunteers typically work 12-hour

days and this was no exception. It was exhausting in 35degree heat but very, very productive and great fun.

Three students were taught. Unusually, they were very young (15, 16 and 18 years old) however they were very dedicated and learned very quickly.



At the end of the 12 days, the tools and equipment were transferred to a secure store.

Given the short visit, we decided to teach one student bow rehairing and the other two, set-ups and repairs. This worked very well and the intensive tuition for each group meant that excellent progress was made. By the end of 12 days the three students, between them, had learned enough provide a very useful service to the orchestra and to local musicians.



Getting students to teach each other is a vital part of LSFs teaching style.

### Reflections

- Splitting the teaching into two groups was very successful. It enabled us to give much more intensive tuition to each group.
- There is only one known luthier in the Philippines, a country of 100m people. With sufficient support, it's possible that the centre could provide a service to the wider music community.
- Planning the logistics of a mission is a lot of work and when we arrived we were conscious that we had not really planned the teaching in as much detail.
- This was LSF-UK's first collaboration with the 'Open String' and we look forward to many more.

## Budget

Airfares etc: approx.: £1600

Tools etc: approx: £1000

It is a condition of LSF-UK missions that our accommodation and food is supplied by our host

The above figures are typical for a two-person, two-week mission and represent excellent value for money.



*Thank you to*

[www.theopenstring.org](http://www.theopenstring.org)

[www.TheSoundpost.co.uk](http://www.TheSoundpost.co.uk)

[www.Proarte.be](http://www.Proarte.be)

[www.missionarysocietyofstpaul.org](http://www.missionarysocietyofstpaul.org)

Many friends and well-wishers who support our work.

and especially Father Joe Cremona and the community of Pagalangan, Philippines.



*in partnership with*

THE  PEN STRING

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