Birmingham Royal Ballet Principal Dancer, Ambra Vallo, is seen pictured with some of the pointe shoes donated by the Company to the Music Fund for Cuba in 2007, to be shipped to Cuban ballet schools.

In 2008 the Royal Ballet at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden gave the Music Fund for Cuba hundreds of pairs of nearly new pointe shoes and flat shoes for children and young men and women to deliver to the Cuban Ballet School.

Gracias a todos!

Music Fund buys music equipment for Cuban students – thanks to everyone!

In 2005 the Music Fund for Cuba gave US$15,000 to acquire musical accessories for the wind sections in music schools – it was enough to buy reeds for all the intermediate students in Havana for over 6 months, CNEArt told us: “Tuition is totally free for our students and it is the duty of each Conservatory, Music School or Academy, to provide the instruments and the necessary means for the musical education of the students. A reed only lasts 15 to 20 days, especially in our humid climate and each student needs 79 reeds per year… We very much appreciate your kind donation. ¡Gracias a todos!”

Buena Vista label invests in Cuba’s musical future

World Circuit Records, the label behind the Buena Vista Social Club phenomenon celebrated their 20th anniversary in 2006 by donating an amazing €10,000 to the Music Fund for Cuba.

Nick Gold of World Circuit told us: “There are many aspects that make Cuban music so special to me. There is an extraordinary variety and depth to Cuban music and the musicians I have worked with have a deep wisdom and understanding as well as love of their music and its history. I have been extremely impressed by the technical level of musicianship and also the desire to innovate and not to stand still. There is a very high regard for ensemble playing and a great deal of support amongst the musicians and they are always ready to listen and experiment. They have a high regard for their peers and the heroes of the past and a deep pride in their country’s music, which they value above all others. The music has it all: wonderful melodies, a matchless rhythm, great musicianship, intelligence, as well as a great sense of humour. I was really impressed with the project to renovate the Teatro Miramar and hope that one day we will see the theatre fully operational again. It is an honour to be able to contribute in some way to this.”

What a fantastic boost for the Music Fund…

New text for music teachers

The Music Fund has arranged the publication of an education text in Spanish for music teachers in Cuba. Written by the Cuban music academic Alina Ponsada, the book is an introductory course in musicology and music education for teachers of children at primary school level. A very big thank you to Chambers publishers in London for publishing thousands of these books which have now been distributed to teachers all over the island.

In memory of Joe Scurfield

Over £3,000 in donations have flooded in to the Music Fund from friends, family and fans of Joe Scurfield, who sadly died in June 2006. Joe was a musician and a life-long champion of world music and music education. He was the creative genius behind the Old Rope String Band, which took its music on tour across the UK and Europe for nearly 20 years.

Joe was based in Newcastle upon Tyne and tributes to him along with more information about the band can be found at:

www.oldropestringband.co.uk/tributes/obituary

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