

Interview with Peter Freestone – a native speaker in Trivis Třebechovice

1) Why did you decide to live in the Czech Republic?

Back in the year 2000 I visited Prague at the insistence of a friend who knew about my love of classical music. I was there for a long weekend and really fell in love with the place and the people, with whom I had dealings. I returned to England to sell a business I had there, and, once it was sold, I had some spare time on my hands, and decided to have three days again in Prague. These turned into four, to seven and then to ten. I finally returned to London to a great disappointment. I went back to the airport, bought a ticket to Prague and have been here ever since. I love the 'feeling' of the country, people are so welcoming and have always been very kind to me. You have some of the best musicians in the world here and generally I have found all ages are proud of their musical heritage, which is so important to me.

2) What were the reasons which have lead you to work for Trivis in Třebechovice?

I was really excited when I learned I would be working at Trivis in Trebechovice because one of my staple feelings in life is that the young people of today are the future of this world. I spend quite a lot of time with young people in this country through various projects and I find it invigourating to be working alongside these very inquisitive minds, who are wanting to learn whatever they can. The more I can help them, the more satisfied I can feel with my life. Also, it is a great way to keep myself young!

3) You are famous for working with the Queen and its frontman Freddie Mercury? Could you tell us something about it?

It was a very different life. For the first six years of that life I was constantly travelling, whether on tour, looking after the band, and then becoming personal assistant to Freddie. It is easier to say where I haven't been, than to state the countries I have been to. Because of the nature of the job, constantly being at Freddie's side, we had to become very close friends, so I got to know the great showman that the whole world knows and also the very shy man who couldn't walk into a room of people on his own. From the amazing stage shows to the intimate atmosphere of the recording studio, Freddie loved having fun.

4) What are your activities here?

Aside from every school Thursday when you will find me at Trivis, I am busy creating lyrics for songs, working with Czech vocalists who want help with English pronunciation when they are singing and helping a few companies with some stage works. I have already created the libretto for a ballet that is performed in Olomouc, but one of my big projects is the TFA Project. It is a seminar, basically for schools, developed by a young Czech man to make younger, 13-18 years old, students aware of the dangers of HIV/AIDS. It compares the Titanic and Freddie, how they were both destroyed by something very small. So far we have spoken to over 6,000 students in Czech and it has also been seen in Holland, UK, USA and a couple of other countries. We have also adapted it for adult viewing.

5) Do you like the Czech food?

Who doesn't like Czech food. I don't need bread dumplings with every meal, but the potato ones are lovely. I do have a soft spot for 'zelenacka' and you can't go wrong with roast duck, potato dumplings and red cabbage.

6) Do you have any pets?

One pet has me at home. As you know most pets are owned by their humans, but cats gracefully allow a human to take care of them. Snowflake' all white, and is the loveliest, loud, annoying creature I have ever

met. I can be doing something else and you can hear the demanding meowss from a long way away.

7) Do you like living here and why?

I love living here. I have spent most of my life in some of the busiest cities in the worl, New York, London, Munich and even Prague. I always believed that life meant living in the city, to be close to the vibrant heart of a country. It wasn't until I moved to a house in a village near Domazlice thet I found what life was really about. I moved here, near Trebechovice and it is a pute joy to wake up listening to chickens and ducks rather than trams, cars and loads of loud people. I am HOME!