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TEACHERS  
ASSOCIATION

ENSEMBLE  
MAGAZINE

No. 110 / Spring 2020

CONNECTING | INSPIRING | LEADING

**MUSIC &  
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RESOURCES FOR MUSIC TEACHERS



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# WELCOME EDITORIAL



Keith Ayling  
Editor

We often don't get to see the effect that we have on the lives we influence. Sometimes, the seeds that we plant mature into oak trees many years later.

I was inspired to read the article in this issue on page 43 about Panos Karan and his music education charity Keys of Change. It reminded me of several things.

Back in 2002, I set up a charity that pioneered trips to Eastern Europe and India, funded by work in the UK, to take music education (specifically songwriting) to classrooms that couldn't afford the luxury of a visiting music teacher. The joy on the faces of the young people to see a visitor, let alone someone bringing music in to their assemblies, classrooms and towns was inspiring to say the least. During the next few years I saw over 20,000 young people.

But, and this is mostly true of the teaching profession, we often don't get to see the effect that we have on the lives we influence. Sometimes, the seeds that we plant mature into oak trees many years later.

I also ran a workshop recently with Harrogate High School. Apart from the elation of completing a song, it was fantastic to see the students realise that *music could be for them*.

These experiences make it essential for us to continue campaigning for music in our schools. The Department for Education has recently issued a consultation and so please encourage anyone you know to take a look and support music education. **The consultation is open to all.** Just search for **Music Education call for evidence**.

Finally, we're launching this issue at the Music Education Expo and so if you are reading for the first time, welcome. The Music Teachers' Association has been in existence over 120 years. But if you've only just discovered us, now is the time to stand together as we try to strengthen music provision in all our schools, by sharing what we know. We have some great offers on membership until 31st March, so please consider how you can contribute to what is a vibrant and effective association.

Keith Ayling  
[@keithayling](#)

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## #WeAreMusicTeachers

# JOIN US



If this is the first time you have read Ensemble Magazine, welcome!

You may have been passed this issue by a colleague or received it at the Music Education Expo. If so, now is the perfect time to join the Music Teachers' Association.

The Music Teachers' Association is the largest and longest established association of music teachers in the UK, supporting all who are connected with a school music department. In challenging times we must work together and stand together for the future of music education.

**Join us before March 31st and membership is half price.**

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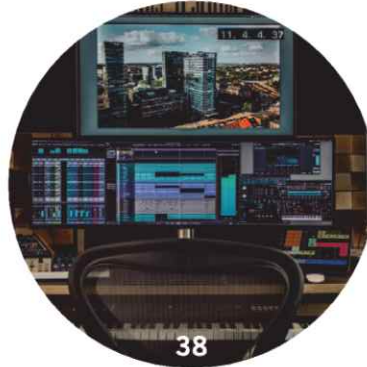
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# CONNECTING | INSPIRING | LEADING



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**James Manwaring**  
Head of Music  
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Partnership

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Media Technologies

**Lewis Edney**  
Director of Music  
The Royal Alexandra  
&  
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# FROM THE PRESIDENT



Simon Toyne is the Music Teachers' Association President 2019-2021 and Executive Director of Music, David Ross Education Trust & Malcolm Arnold Academy.

This edition of *Ensemble* has a particular focus on the connections between music and drama, especially music theatre. School musicals are always popular – not just because of the pieces chosen, but because of their power to galvanise a community, bringing all kinds of students and adults out of the woodwork. Done well, a musical can be one of the key school events in the year, leading to an increased profile for the music department, engaging more students and leading them to discovering other areas of music (including taking the subject further at GCSE and A Level) and building a larger musical community.

One of the key things we can do as MTA members is share good practice, and I hope that the articles here will prove useful. What pieces work particularly well? What sort of budget is needed? What equipment should a school own and what is better hired? How do you approach set design, construction and lighting? What kind of lead-in time works best? What time of year is good? What kind of rehearsal schedule works? How many staff should be involved? How do you ensure all members of staff involved know their areas of responsibility? And how do you ensure you're not a nervous wreck before the first night?

As well as the articles in *Ensemble*, a form of support should come from all of us as MTA members helping each other. We will shortly be launching the **MTA Virtual Staff Room** as a private group on Facebook, which we hope will prove an effective and useful way of gaining quick answers to questions. There are already popular Facebook groups for KS3 and KS4 curricular issues; so, the focus of the MTA Virtual Staff Room will be mainly concerned with extra-curricular music, and requests to borrow or loan equipment from each other – for example, asking if anyone has 40 copies of the Vivaldi *Gloria*, a particular Big Band chart, resources for instrumental taster days or songs to use with Year 7, or similar requests for borrowing particular instruments, stands or other kit for performances. As soon as this is launched, please sign up: the more members involved, the more useful it will be. Members of the committee will be monitoring the group, so we hope that you will receive responses quickly.

The programme for the May **Conference at St Paul's School** is structured around two themes – partnerships and composing. Working together as one music education sector will positively affect so many more lives than our operating in isolated fiefdoms. The conference will showcase effective work that is taking place at the moment, including live performances, as well as offering opportunities to discuss ways in which partnerships can be developed. Of course, we discuss partnerships between schools, and those between schools and arts organisations, but music is supreme at developing partnerships between individuals, and the second strand of the conference – composing – will explore ways in which musicians working together as a class or in ensembles

can be at the heart of the compositional process. The demands of GCSE and A Level specifications for composing as an individual can form almost insurmountable barriers unless composing is at the heart of classroom and instrumental tuition from an early age, and several sessions at the conference will offer practical tips on how to address this.

For the first time, we are offering **special rates for additional members** of music departments to attend the conference. Although, the norm is for a school to send one person on a CPD course and then ask them to feed back to the rest of the department, the impact of the MTA Conference is being able to talk ideas through with others, and so we want to ensure as many music teachers as possible are able to attend. Similarly, we have a Saturday only offer for non-MTA members, bookable until 31<sup>st</sup> March. Please spread the word about both of these offers!

The eagle-eyed will notice that there is no Sunday programme at the conference. This is mainly due to the closure of Hammersmith Bridge and the likely spread of accommodation, but also so that members travelling from far afield can enjoy more of London over the weekend. There will be a full Sunday programme at the 2021 Conference, but I'm sure that there will be several survivors' Sunday brunches planned this year!

Finally, and most importantly, the **Department for Education** has launched a consultation on the future of music education in England. This is in preparation for the launch of a new edition of the National Plan for Music Education in Autumn 2020. The department is inviting views from musicians, specialist teachers, young people and parents about their experience and what they want to see in the new National Plan. MTA and the ISM have issued a joint statement in which we reaffirm the importance of music in schools, supported by music hubs, and that funding be allocated to schools and ring-fenced for use on music alone. However, although we have responded as an organisation, it is important that we all contribute as individuals and encourage as many as possible to do so – please contribute!

**The deadline is 13<sup>th</sup> March.**



Welcome to the 110th issue of Music Teachers' Association Magazine (Ensemble). The magazine seeks to support you in your music teaching and to network teachers together through the sharing of classroom experiences, advice and wisdom.

Take a look at our Music & Drama section (from page 19) which has valuable insight on stage a production and partnering with another school. Additionally Richard Llewellyn's music technology column on page 38 is now 25 issues old and always features great tips for your classroom! We're also grateful to Jonathan Varcoe who continues to write with humour for our Final Word page at the back of the magazine. We want our resources to be as broad as possible. Why not consider sending in your own? You may discover new inspiration in an old idea that you have forgotten. Everything is valuable.

## OUR CONFERENCE

The Music Teachers' Association has one of the most exciting music education conferences in the UK. Moving to a different host school each year, it attracts teachers and heads of department from a wide range of schools and includes an enviable programme of CPD covering all aspects of music teaching.

Our next conference is on May 15-16 2020 at St Paul's School, London.

The programme has been launched online. **Don't miss the early bird discount that ends on March 13th.**

## OUR WEBSITE

Our website is a focus for our work and continues to be the focus for conference details. But don't forget our Facebook page and the soon to be launched Virtual Staff Room group. We want the focus to attract new members and more accurately reflect the association and its national voice, as well as providing resources for the teachers we serve. [www.MusicTeachers.org](http://www.MusicTeachers.org)

## OUR PUBLICATIONS

Members automatically receive all of our publications to resource their teaching. This termly magazine has been nominated for 'association magazine of the year' and as a highly respected journal of music education attracts prominent writers from schools and national organisations.

Our Music Directory gives parents choices for schools wishing to promote their music department and the facilities and opportunities they offer. Our Yearbook (PDF) is updated annually with members' details allowing teachers to network further.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

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## Our mission

It is the Mission of the Music Teachers' Association to provide first-class training, support and networking opportunities to all those who work in Music Education. Through our outstanding publications and our exceptional Annual Conference and CPD programme, we inspire a membership which passionately believes that schools and their pupils' lives are deeply enriched by a high quality music provision.



## INVITE YOUR COLLEAGUES TO JOIN US

We have always found that the best way to grow is through personal recommendation. Following a conference or CPD day, inspired members return to their school music departments and enthuse about the techniques learned, the experience shared and the encouragement they have received. By working together, supporting each other and sharing good practice we are securing the future of music education. Encourage a colleague to join us: go to [www.MusicTeachers.org](http://www.MusicTeachers.org) to download a membership form.



# MUSIC TEACHERS PODCAST



**Teaching Notes – the MTA Podcast** is designed to bring together all music educators, to share good practice, hints and tips, and successful schemes of work. We'll be featuring interviews with professional musicians and musicologists, as well as flagging up updates in policy that will affect us all. And of course, interviews with you – music teachers! We want to know what schemes of work you teach, which you've abandoned (and why), and which you are planning for next term/year (and why!).

It's designed to be long enough to be crammed with interesting features, but short enough that you can listen to it on your way to and from school.

Please subscribe to the podcast through your usual podcast provider, or you can download it from the MTA website, and do get involved – we'd love to hear from you:  
[media@musicteachers.org](mailto:media@musicteachers.org)



Patrick Johns is a music teacher, performer, broadcaster and member of the MTA.



## Introducing Patrick Johns

I am lucky to have what is - I believe - known as a portfolio career. In addition to my classroom teaching at The Tiffin Girls' School, Kingston, I also play the trombone professionally with the band Oompah Brass, and produce radio programmes for BBC Radio 2 (Top Brass, Country Christmas, Jazz Junctions).

When developing new ideas for radio shows, I always try to think what kind of programme I, as a musician, would want to hear. And as podcasts' popularity increases, I began thinking about what kind of podcast I'd like to hear, that isn't already out there.

As a music teacher, I spend much of my life talking about, reading about, and thinking about music education: how to improve my lessons, what new pedagogy is out there, available resources, and of course, the latest policies and requirements from exam boards, the government, and more recently, Ofsted.

Some of the most lively and invigorating conversations and discussions I've had in recent years have been with fellow music teachers, both at the MTA Conference, and in social media groups: always interesting, always a meeting of different perspectives, and always invigorating and inspiring.

It therefore seemed an obvious step to fill a gap in the market with a Music Education podcast!

# MUSIC TEACHERS CPD

## EDUQAS A LEVEL MUSIC CONFERENCE

**Tuesday 6 October 2020**

A conference workshop for A Level Music teachers, Lower and Upper Sixth A Level Music students

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# UPDATES FROM SCHOOLS

## Balcarras School

Director of Music, Helen Chong

Balcarras School is an 11-18 mixed comprehensive school in Charlton Kings, Cheltenham. This is my third year as Director of Music. I am in the fortunate position of having a Head teacher and SMT who are incredibly supportive of Music and the arts in general, acknowledging and valuing their importance. So, when this opportunity was offered, I was delighted that the school was able to participate.

The Music Works is a key partner in Make Music Gloucestershire, the county's music education hub. Their mission is to 'transform lives through music'. Having worked with Ben O'Sullivan, Creative Director (Education) from Music Works in a previous role, I jumped at the chance to work with him again, knowing what a fantastic opportunity it would be for the students of Balcarras School.

Some thirty four students, from years seven to eleven, took part in the songwriting project – The Voice Collective. They met after school every Thursday and composed their own song. The final work is all the students' own creation. Watching thirty-four students come together, most strangers



at the start, to write their own lyrics and create their own melody and backing was amazing. Everyone's voice was heard (pardon the pun!) with all ideas being considered. The buzz in the room each Thursday was electric; the enthusiasm and excitement immense. Once the song was complete, the students had a day out of school to make a professional quality recording and video. This took place at Postlip Hall, a Cotswold Manor House on the outskirts of Cheltenham. The day provided the students a first-hand insight to what it is like to partake in a professional recording; from the waiting around, to the need to re-record, re-record, and re-record again! And then to keep smiling too! They had a great day - and I was incredibly proud!

The video is now available on YouTube. A 'launch' event was held, to which parents and carers were invited, for the 'première' showing of the video before it was made available to everyone. These Balcarras students have achieved so much - this is their song with their message – and, I believe, quite a powerful one! Their amazing efforts can be viewed by searching 'Balcarras Voice Collective' on YouTube!

## St Peter's School, York

Director of Music, Paul Miles Kingston

The Chapel Choir of St Peter's School was invited to broadcast the Sunday Worship service for BBC Radio 4 on Sunday 26 January. This was a live broadcast from our Chapel led by our Chaplain, Reverend Daniel Jones, and featured anthems, readings and prayers from the pupils. It was the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz this year and our service marked Holocaust Memorial Day with a theme of 'Standing Together', including some poignant reflections from one of our former staff, Jane Dawson, whose family were directly affected by the holocaust.

This broadcast followed on from the success of one of our Third Form pupils in the BBC Radio 2 Young Chorister



of the Year competition. William Miles-Kingston was named as the boy chorister for this year on December 22<sup>nd</sup> and will be recording with the BBC Philharmonic in March as well as participating in broadcasts this year. William sang two solos in our Sunday Worship broadcast.

Our Chapel Choir will be singing Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral, London on 2 March and will be touring to New York in July, including singing a Eucharist service at St Thomas', 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

## Stonyhurst College

Director of Music, Andrew Henderson

Stonyhurst is a busy and exciting place to learn Music. Almost uniquely, the students board horizontally in year groups (which, for historical reasons, we call 'Playrooms'), and so an innovation for this year is that each Playroom is putting on a concert to coincide with their Parents' Weekend. Syntax (Year 11) have gone first, despite having only a week after mocks to draw everything together; and when I say 'everything', I mean it, from Chinese traditional music to Klezmer via Einaudi and Schumann.

One important activity involving students from all Playrooms is the Choir, which is attracting an increasing number of day students as well as weekly boarders to return on a Sunday morning to sing at Mass. This year so far, we have sung at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral and in Mayfair in pursuit of our links with those places, and we are looking forward to making new links locally too (I won't spoil future updates by announcing them before they happen).

We have our highest numbers opting for GCSE and Sixth Form music for a decade, and so there are exciting times for the academic side of the department. Lower Grammar (Year 9) have been working towards some of the requirements of the LCM Grade 2 Composition qualification; we expect some to complete and submit the portfolio. In the meantime, the department is resounding with arrangements of pieces from Attwood to Wedgwood.

# UPDATES FROM SCHOOLS

## Warminster School Senior Music

Director of Music, Caroline Robinson

As always, the Music Department at Warminster School is a super busy place for all of our musicians. The year started with a super concert showcasing the whole of Year Seven. In October we enjoyed a fabulous tour of Catalonia with the Concert Orchestra and various other school bands, proceeded by a sold-out Pre-Tour Concert in the UK. Spending over 100 hours on a coach wasn't everyone's idea of fun (!), however, some lovely beaches and sunshine amongst thunderstorms made up for it. The atmospheric Candlelit Christmas sold out its 500 tickets in a record 23 hours and didn't disappoint. Our pupil 'Ben-D Band' entertained at a Staff and Parents Christmas Ball and our Music Scholars and GCSE Pupils are looking forward to seeing the BSO perform their awesome Hollywood Head to Head Williams and Zimmer Concert at the Lighthouse in Poole in March. This will be swiftly followed by our incredibly glamorous Oscars-Style 'A Cabaret', where the black-tie adorned audience of 300 are served a 2-course meal alongside every school music group being showcased (tickets for this one sold out in just over 24 hours!).

A few weeks ago @futureDJ joined the department with our first pupils starting out on the decks as a part of our instrumental programme and last week our annual Scholars Recital Evening was a superb showcase for our most dedicated musicians. Our term is punctuated with Lunchtime Concerts along the way, and a full programme of concerts in the Summer Term and most likely a Musical to look forward to in November. Do follow us @warminstermusic



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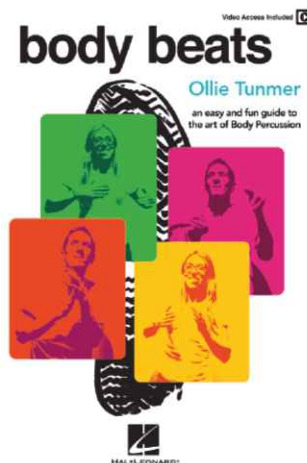
# CORPORATE MEMBERS' NEWS

## Beat Goes On

### NEW BODY PERCUSSION RESOURCE AVAILABLE!

Ollie Tunmer, former cast member of STOMP and now director of Beat Goes On is releasing his exciting new body percussion book & video tutorial. 'Body Beats - a fun and easy guide to the art of Body Percussion', includes easy to use rhythm grids and video demonstrations, covering a range fun rhythm-based warm ups, funky routines, Afro-Brazilian polyrhythms, BBC Ten Pieces, Body Percussion with Literacy (based on his work with Pie Corbett of Talk4Writing), and much more.

'Body Beats' will be published by Hal Leonard, and will be launched at the Music & Drama Education EXPO on Wednesday 4th March. Ollie will have copies available to buy, with a special MTA 10% discount, when he delivers his 'STOMP-style Body Percussion' session at the MTA Conference on Saturday May 16th. For more details contact Beat Goes On at [www.beatgoeson.co.uk](http://www.beatgoeson.co.uk)



## Sing for Pleasure

National choral charity Sing for Pleasure (SfP) has confirmed dates for its training events taking place this summer.

On 30 and 31 May Bromsgrove School's state-of-the-art Performing Arts Centre, opened in late 2017, will play host to the charity's acclaimed choral conductor training programme.

### Summer Training Opportunities with Sing for Pleasure

30-31 May 2020:

#### West Midlands Weekend for Vocal Leaders and Conductors, Bromsgrove

- Acclaimed choral conducting tuition, for absolute beginners upwards

"I can't recommend this highly enough ... it maintains a fantastic balance between hard work and enjoyment."

Intermediate 1  
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8-16 August 2020:

#### Summer School, Keele University, Staffordshire

- Choral conductor training courses - for all ability levels
- Musicianship for Singers course - music theory from a singer's viewpoint
- Part-week choral courses - for singers with all levels of experience
- NEW Singers' Course for 2020 - Songs from the Shows

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SfP's structured, progressive tuition caters for all abilities, from those new to vocal leadership to choir leaders with more experience under their belts; it places a strong emphasis on effective song teaching and efficient rehearsing, through the development of expressive and economic conducting gestures. Singers are also welcome to attend the weekend for a small fee, to work with Intermediate 2 and Advanced level students as they practise their conducting skills.

For anyone keen to gain a deeper understanding of music theory from a singer's perspective, and develop their notation sight-reading skills, the charity will be offering its Musicianship for Singers course at Foundation level for the first time at this location. SfP's residential Summer School - its flagship training event for the year - will run from 8-16 August at Keele University, Staffordshire and offers something for choral enthusiasts of every kind; whole-week choral conducting courses at four ability levels, singers' courses in the shape of Musicianship for Singers and Songs from the Shows, along with part-week choral courses in different genres, designed for varying levels of experience.

President elect of the MTA, Don Gillthorpe, says "Sing for Pleasure taught me the essential vocal leadership and conducting skills which I use every day, both in school and as Director of Music at Lancaster Priory. The teaching is well-structured and delivered in an engaging, supportive way." Those interested in attending can check when booking opens at [www.singforpleasure.org.uk/events](http://www.singforpleasure.org.uk/events) or sign up for the charity's e-newsletter for updates.

## VOCES8 Foundation

The VOCES8 Foundation and Future Talent, two leading music education charities, are launching a joint initiative to provide opportunities for gifted young singers from low-income backgrounds.

The programme will provide places during the 2020-21 academic year for eight singers aged 16 or 17 and resident in the UK to have bespoke training and performances alongside the top professional singing groups, VOCES8 and Apollo5. It will also offer sustained support for all successful applicants and provide valuable mentoring, career and general music development advice alongside practical musical training.

The eight successful applicants will take part in VOCES8's 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations and the annual Future Talent Christmas Concert at St George's Hannover Square in 2020, and will perform at the VOCES8 International Festival in Dorset in July 2021, amongst other opportunities. Their places will be fully funded, and applications will be means-tested to ensure that the awards are being given to singers who might otherwise find it difficult to access such opportunities.

Applications will open on 28 February and close on 24 April, and initially require a solo recording to be sent. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to audition in person in June, after which the successful applicants will be announced. For more information please visit [www.voces8.foundation/futuretalent](http://www.voces8.foundation/futuretalent) or email [futuretalent@voces8.foundation](mailto:futuretalent@voces8.foundation)



## Charanga & AYM

Charanga and Awards for Young Musicians (AYM) are to collaborate to help young people sustain their musical learning through the development of an interactive Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and web environment supporting their progression. The project will give young musicians the tools to be able to shape their own musical journeys and enrich their learning. Students, and their teachers, will be able to access an ILP tailored to their needs via Charanga Yumu, a new area of Charanga's award-winning music education platform, on multiple devices. The project is inspired by AYM's Furthering Talent programme, which supports students from low income families whose whole-class music lessons are coming to an end. The programme enables them to continue making music, with students receiving weekly instrumental tuition for a minimum of two years, and a learning plan to support them further.

"I've been following AYM's Furthering Talent programme since its launch and think the framework they've developed to support individualised learning is quite brilliant," said Mark Burke, Founder and Director of Charanga. "Working together in this new partnership, I'm excited to leverage our technology, platform and reach to help scale up this potentially game-changing approach."

Charanga and AYM will work closely with their partners, schools, music services, hubs and others to find the young people who could benefit most from the new project, and the Furthering Talent programme more broadly. [tonypinkham@charanga.com](mailto:tonypinkham@charanga.com)

## The Royal College of Organists



It is definitely not too late to encourage your organ students to book for 'The Organ Student

Experience' course in Cambridge, 4–9 August, and it may well still be possible to book for 'TOSE-in-a-Day' on 21 March in London.

Directed by acclaimed performer and teacher Daniel Moul, the Cambridge week offers ambitious teenage organists of Grade 7 standard and above essential tuition in repertoire, technique, keyboard skills, choral conducting and accompaniment, in short everything youngsters need to develop for life as an organist, and for university organ scholarship auditions as well as conservatoire entry.

Teachers include Janette Fishell, Anne Page, Gordon Stewart and Simon Williams, with NYC's Esther Jones heading the choral programme. TOSE-in-a-Day meanwhile is aimed at young organists of grade 5 level and above, with the breadth of experience offered by the full week's course condensed into a single day. It is ideal for those not quite ready for the 'full Monty' as too for those wanting a boost before attending the August week in Cambridge. For full details, to book online and for information about bursaries visit [rco.org.uk/events.php](http://rco.org.uk/events.php).

## The Choral Courses 2020

It's been a few months since we launched the 2020 Choral Courses, and places have been filling up since the applications opened. The first Junior Course at Uppingham School is coming up first in April with Ralph Allwood and Martyn Ford directing. There are still some spots available!

To find out more about our other courses this year, head to our website to find out more! You can access all the information you need to apply for each course on the website but don't delay! Places are filling up quickly, and you don't want to miss out!

We have generous bursaries available to please let us know on your application if you'd like to apply for one. Perhaps you know someone who may like to come on one of our courses? So many people come on our courses due to a recommendation from a teacher, relative or friend!

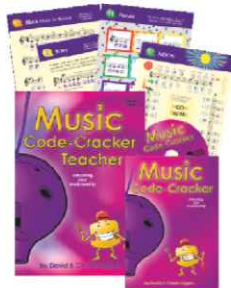
Visit [therodolfusfoundation.org.uk/sing](http://therodolfusfoundation.org.uk/sing) to have a read of our brochure, where you can find all the information about the courses, the tutors, and some of the events each course includes. If you would like any hard copies of this brochure, please get in touch.

**"The Choral Courses change lives, open doors, reveal new horizons. Over the years they have become a pillar of our cultural life in Britain, with the wonder of music setting an example to us all"** *John Rutter CBE*



## Ocarina Workshop

NEW 'Adventurous Music-Making' resources for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 will be launched at the Music Education Expo, Olympia on the 4th and 5th March at Ocarina Workshop Stand G23. Come to the Workshop Theatre on the 5th March 3.45-4.30 for a free introductory session "Adventurous Music-Making: how to introduce 10 key elements of music into whole-class singing and playing."



'Music Code-Cracker' and 'Music Music-Maker' are the newest 'Adventurous Music-Making' titles. In keeping with the whole series, all 40 songs in these two titles can be sung, and played instrumentally in a D to D range, supported by colourful pupil books and extensively researched teacher books, piano arrangements and audio CDs. Themes from Beethoven's 5th and Mahler's 1st Symphonies to sing and play, are a welcome and unusual addition to the whole-class repertoire. And equally ground-breaking are blues and rock & roll pieces in 3-part harmony, to be played by beginners as young as six years of age.

For those unable to visit Olympia, see [ocarina.co.uk/amm](http://ocarina.co.uk/amm) for more details of the series, and invite David and Christa to your school for workshops with 6- to 12-year-old pupils and/or CPD. Email [music@ocarina.co.uk](mailto:music@ocarina.co.uk) for more details.

## Club Europe



A new easy-to-reach, French destination for your next choir tour, L'Aisne is a little known-gem in the Hauts-de France region of North East France. Criss-crossed from east to west by the beautiful Aisne River, it offers a wealth of sight-seeing opportunities to visiting choirs as well as wonderful venues.

Enjoy a cathedral tour, involving Amiens, Soissons, Laon and St Quentin. Perform at a special event such as a memorial service in a cemetery and even meet the local mayor! Or you could pair up with a local choir for a joint concert. L'Aisne is only 2 ½ hours from Calais so this would make a great long weekend trip.

Attractions include a Champagne 'cave', many significant WW1 and WW2 sites, and the Caverne du Dragon, a complex of caves where the Germans held the frontline during WW1.

Club Europe are the only company to offer this amazing new choir tour. For more information on our choir tours, call our team on Freephone 0800 496 4996 or visit [clubeurope.co.uk](http://clubeurope.co.uk).

## Onestage Concert Tours

Anniversary Year: Celebrating 20 years of Concert Tours

On 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020, OneStage raised a glass to celebrate 20 years of concert tours in Europe and worldwide. We thought we would take this opportunity to share a few memories and poignant events from the past 20 years:



OneStage in numbers since 2000:

- **Number of tours to date:** Over 1,260 tours have travelled throughout Europe and worldwide since the year 2000
- **Number of concerts organised:** 3890 concerts and counting!
- **The largest tour (most participants):** 172
- **Our most popular destinations:** France, Italy, Belgium and Germany
- **Number of countries we currently arrange concert tours in:** 42
- **Number of OneStage team members:** 9
- **Our experience:** More than 125 years of combined experience in the travel and music industry
- **Languages:** Eight different languages spoken in the office
- **Musicality in the team:** We play piano, violin, viola, clarinet, saxophone & sing!

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all our clients who have travelled with us over the years for your continued support and friendship. We look forward to the next 20 years!

## Introducing Richard Lawson Pianos

Richard Lawson Pianos Ltd are a long established specialist piano dealer based in the beautiful town of Amersham, just to the North West of London.

We have a selection of over 200 pianos available from stock and are authorized dealers for Yamaha, Kawai, Shigeru Kawai, Bluthner, Petrof, Ronish and Irmler. We also stock a range of used Steinway instruments. Our new purpose built facility is arranged over 3 floors to ensure that we always offer the best possible variety of pianos across a broad range. With pianos ranging in price from under £1,000 to over £70,000 we should have the right piano for any requirement.

With a strong background in music education everyone at Richard Lawson Pianos understands exactly what schools, colleges and universities require. Since the start of the business we have offered discount packages to educational establishments and their students. This has been well received over the years and helped make the finest quality instruments more attainable.

We view all of our clients as long term partners. We work with them beyond the purchase of the instrument to assist with all aspects of ongoing and detailed maintenance such as regulation and voicing as well as basic tuning and moving. The Richard Lawson Pianos technical team have decades of experience working with top brands, and regularly attend professional development courses to keep their skills up to date and fine-tuned.



Steinway & Sons London workshop was the home to our chief technician for over 10 years prior to him working with us. Whilst there he worked in every aspect of the workshop and was later responsible for concert tunings for some of the finest artists in the World. Yamaha and Kawai also offer regular courses which all of our technicians attend. This ensures that they are all fully up to date with their instruments.

Our aim is to be the only contact that you will ever need for any piano related requirement. At Richard Lawson Pianos we understand the importance of a personal and attentive service. We know how very busy many music departments can be so we offer a one to one appointment 7 days a week from 8am to 10pm to assist the selection process. Our proximity to London makes access by road, air and train very easy and collection from the station or airport is also available.

To find out more visit our website [richardlawsonpianos.com](http://richardlawsonpianos.com) or call us on 01923 720974.

# Steinberg

## Introducing Dorico SE free music notation software



Dorico, Steinberg's next-generation music notation software, has been creating quite a stir recently, with the release of Dorico 3.0 in September last year introducing a number of new and unique features, including automatic condensed conductor's scores, smart tablature for guitar and other fretted instruments, and much more. Following hot on its heels, this past January Steinberg released Dorico 3.1, a free update for existing Dorico 3 users that brings more power and flexibility to its unique condensing features, plus a new lane for graphically editing the performance of dynamics in Play mode, and a raft of new notation features, including bracketed noteheads and an enormous variety of horizontal and vertical lines for annotating the score.

But there's even bigger news: a completely free edition of Dorico, called Dorico SE, is now available for download for Windows and macOS. Allowing you to write for one or two players, it's ideal for beginning composers and arrangers, those exploring music theory for the first time, and it can even be used as a "reader" for projects created in the larger versions, as it's fully compatible with both Dorico Elements and Dorico Pro.

Dorico SE has been very well-received and has already attracted thousands of users. At the NAMM Show, the largest trade show in the music world, in California, Sonic State handed Dorico SE their prestigious Best Music Software award. With the introduction of Dorico SE, the Dorico product family now has a product for every type of musician and every price point: students and beginners can get started for free with Dorico SE; when you need to write for larger ensembles of up to 12 players, move up to Dorico Elements; and when you need absolutely everything Dorico has to offer, including all of its unique desktop publishing features for producing hand-outs and teaching materials, move up to Dorico Pro. Both Dorico Elements and Dorico Pro are available with special educational pricing, and you can crossgrade from Sibelius or Finale to Dorico Pro very inexpensively, retaining your existing Sibelius or Finale licenses. Contact your local reseller for more information, or check out <https://new.steinberg.net/dorico/education>

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# TEACHING INSPIRATION



## Instrumental Teaching

Isla Keys - our  
Instrumental Teaching  
Lead - works at  
Nottingham Girls' High  
School



We used to be peripatetic teachers. Now we have been re-classified as Instrumental Music Teachers or VMTs, (Visiting Music Teachers). No matter, our role within a school music department remains as fundamental as ever and certainly for as long as performance continues to form 30% of GCSE and A Level.

Academic exams notwithstanding, of course we also tend to prepare our pupils for the traditional 'Grades'. It would be interesting to know what others think of the UK exam system, which of course also exists in many other countries – ABRSM holds exams in over 93 countries worldwide, Trinity in some 60 countries. I haven't lived abroad for some time, but my earlier experience in Switzerland was that there were relatively few formal music exams. That said, at the time, children had to endure two years of 'solfege' (theory) before they were even allowed to touch an instrument. Things may well have changed – anyone know?

I have recently read through an online forum relating to pros and cons of our examination system, and would like to open up this new column for instrumental teachers by considering this. One individual writes:

*'Anything people use to identify level can be a help or a hindrance. Here in the UK there are unfortunately some teachers (and parents!) so focussed on getting students to the next grade that they hardly do any repertoire beyond the three that ABRSM require for each grade.'*

Is this your experience? Or do you feel that having an exam

on the horizon is an incentive to learn new pieces to performing standard? Or are exams just more hurdles to jump over, with never enough time to prepare properly?

Of course the Music Teachers' Association cannot promote one exam board above another, but do you have a preference? ABRSM has traditionally been a 'benchmark' for exam standards, but in addition to the two other main boards – Trinity and London College – there are numerous others. This article is worth a look if exams are your interest: [www.rhinegold.co.uk/music\\_teacher/off-beaten-track-small-exam-boards/](http://www.rhinegold.co.uk/music_teacher/off-beaten-track-small-exam-boards/)

Individual music teachers, whether in schools, hubs, or teaching privately in studios or at home, are forming the musicians of the future, both instrumentalists and singers. It's a big role - and a huge task - to pass on the skills acquired during careers in performing and teaching. We spend a lot of time with our individual students, often not having the chance to confer or merely discuss aspects of teaching and learning with colleagues simply through being too busy. At this year's MTA conference, we hope that many of you will come along to enjoy the variety of CPD available, and indeed participate in the VMT forum – do bring along your ideas for open discussion.

We look forward to hearing more from you and seeing you at the Conference in May. And if you feel the urge, please contribute something to this new space, which is reserved for us!

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concert tours

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## Partnerships

Tim Garrard - our new Partnerships Lead - is Director of Music at Westminster School



At the beginning of 2020, the Department for Education announced funding for music education, the wider arts and cultural education, with confirmation of a funding boost for Music Education Hubs (in England). And the DfE has just released a 'Music Education: call for evidence', inviting anyone and everyone to feedback to 'inform proposals for the refresh of the National Plan for Music Education'. This call for evidence can only be a good thing, and I hope that as many people as possible are able to contribute.

So, in keeping with my message from the previous edition of Ensemble, it's not all doom and gloom!

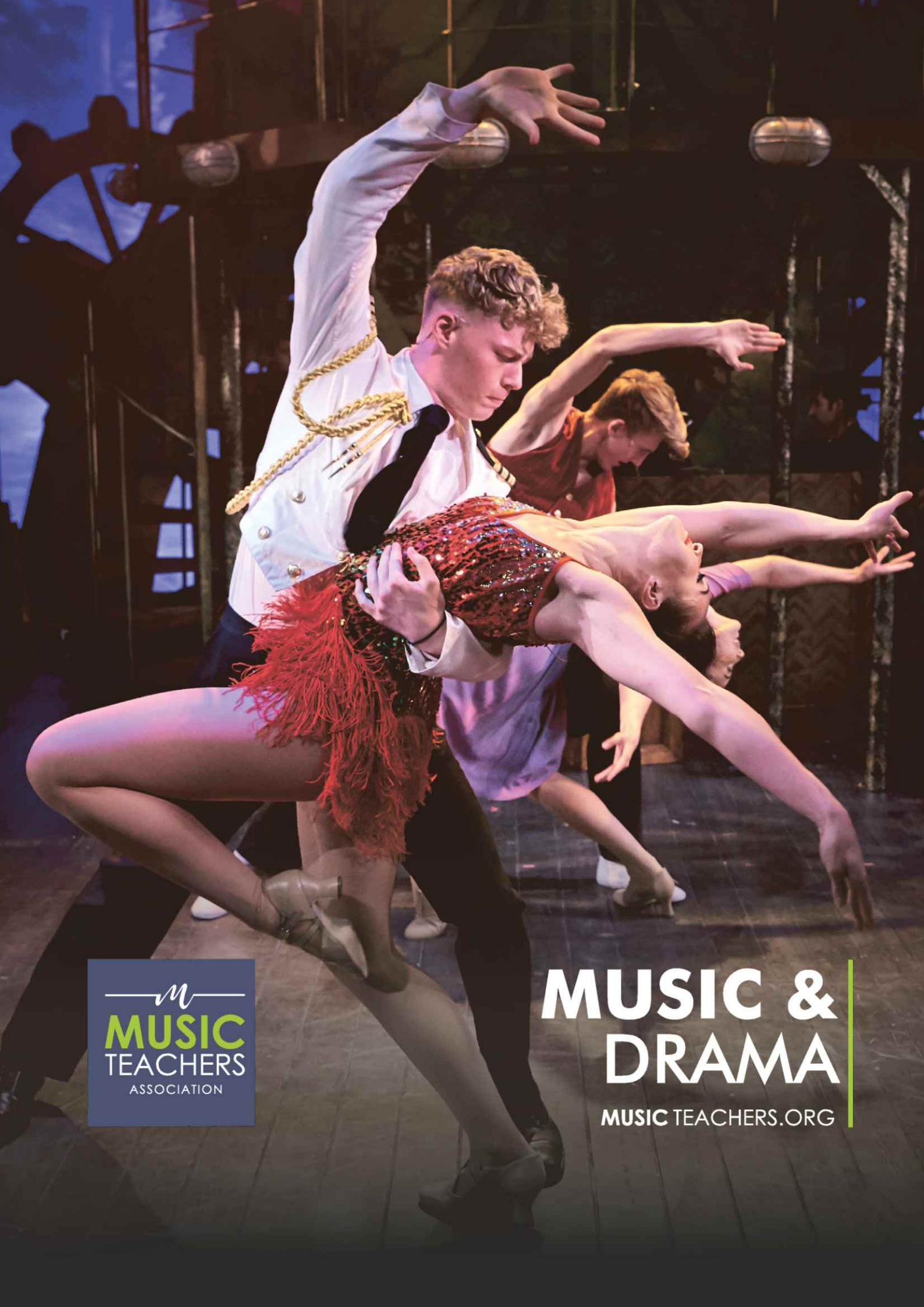
However, as Music Mark points out, the figure received by hubs is still well below that given to music services in England a decade ago. And it seems that the funding settlements which hubs are receiving from DfE/Arts Council for the next financial year are in many cases significantly down on this year's figure. Coupled with local authority decisions regarding the redirection of financial resources, it appears that music hubs should ready themselves for a tough financial year ahead.

In my local area, the Tri-borough Music Hub (TBMH) covers the three London boroughs of Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, and Westminster. The Head of TBMH is Stuart Whatmore, and he's excellent. Since picking up the phone and subsequently meeting for a coffee, developing a relationship with Stuart and the TBMH has in a short space of time led to all kinds of potential projects and partnerships. Stuart is a strong advocate of partnerships between schools, irrespective of whether they are from the independent or maintained sector. It's not about ownership for Stuart; projects don't need to involve the hub directly. He's extremely supportive, resourceful, and delighted that partnership is taking place.

In March, Westminster School (where I work) is collaborating with the TBMH and one of its Additional Providers, the Pimlico Musical Foundation (PMF), in a performance of the full orchestral version of Maurice Duruflé's Requiem at the Barbican. TBMH have been extremely supportive of this venture, as have PMF. Over two hundred pupils from Churchill Gardens Primary Academy, Harris Westminster Sixth Form, Millbank Academy, Pimlico Academy, Pimlico Primary, St Gabriel's Primary, The Grey Coat Hospital, Westminster Cathedral Primary School, Westminster City School and Westminster School will form a massed choir. I'll let you know how we get on in the next edition!

Colleagues in the maintained sector will no doubt work with their local hub to support in-school music provision, but many independent schools may not yet be aware of the hub's work. At a time when adequate governmental support is not guaranteed for music education, it's extremely important surely that we are all engaged in dialogue with one another. Once again, my advice is to pick up the phone and start a conversation with your hub and neighbouring schools. Fantastic collaborative opportunity awaits!

*Tim Garrard and Stuart Whatmore will discuss the power of partnership at the MTA Conference in May, alongside Janella Ajeigbe (Head, Churchill Gardens Primary Academy), Hawys Elis-Williams (Head of Music, Pimlico Academy), Richard Ogden (Co-Head Extra Curricular Music, Harris Westminster Sixth Form) and James Day (Director of Music, Pimlico Musical Foundation).*



# MUSIC & DRAMA

MUSIC TEACHERS.ORG

## Developing a whole-school summer show

Emma Marshall, Principal



Emma Marshall, Principal of Havelock Academy, Grimsby, demonstrates how a whole-school approach to music and drama can achieve impressive results.

The annual summer show is a strong tradition at Havelock Academy, never to be missed, part of the fixtures and fittings throughout the year, and has been since before academisation, so over 12 years now. Whilst this is led by the performing arts team, it is truly a "whole school" affair, with staff from across the academy getting involved to support - from costumes, scenery and tech, through to front of house and refreshments.

### So how and why do we do it?

The simple answer is to provide the pupils with a musical theatre experience that some of them would never be able to access without us - and in doing so, developing a whole range of lifelong skills, along with a love for the arts and all things theatrical. We serve a highly deprived catchment area, where access to music and theatre is limited, particularly if finances are tight. Whilst there are weekend and evening amateur theatre groups and theatre schools, many of our families cannot afford these for their children, and in many cases, would never think about accessing something like this, unless it was offered on a plate.

So we do just that - offer musical theatre to our community on a plate! Our annual summer show always includes three (usually sold out) evening performances, with ticket prices capped at £2.50 to ensure families can enjoy an evening out without the cost being a prohibitive factor. We also put on several "dress rehearsal matinees" for our feeder primary schools, providing access to a full scale theatre production (although often a cut down, one hour version, to appeal to the younger audience). We want to inspire as many people, from as many age groups, as possible.

But the real beneficiaries are our pupils - all age groups from 11 to 18.

Many join our after school youth theatre in Year 7, and stay with us for five or even seven years, making memories that will last a lifetime. Others take a few years to build up the confidence to get involved - especially as performers.

Auditions start in September, with a few weeks of workshops before the formal auditions. The pupils only need to audition if they are wanting one of the main roles. The chorus is open to everyone, regardless of experience or talent! At this point, it is mainly the performing arts teaching team who are involved, or those keen teachers from other departments who benefitted so much from our productions during their own school days! (We have two former students on the staff body, both of whom were musical superstars at school, and both who are now an integral part of the production team, despite technically belonging to other departments.)

Rehearsals take place weekly, on Fridays after school, as there is very little else on then so it avoids clashes with sporting activities or exam intervention classes. It is also a great way to end the week!



“Live music has always been a must. This has been a challenge as we haven't had the money to pay professionals.”

Our first performance each year comes at Christmas, during the annual Christmas Concert, where we share a choral version (no dancing or costumes at this stage) of one of the big numbers as a bit of a sneak preview. Fundraising begins at that point too - with concerts, events and merchandise planned to raise money towards the costs involved with the show.

The show always takes place in July, usually in the final week of the summer term. A few weekend rehearsals are included in the final run up, and it is an incredibly busy time for everyone involved as we pull everything together.

We are talking big - certainly in terms of a school production. The scenery and props are collected throughout the year. We have some standard flats for scenery that the art department will paint up to meet our needs. We are also lucky enough to have a screen that we can project scenery onto when appropriate. This has worked for more modern shows, such as "We Will Rock You" - and is a huge money saver - so we try to alternate in terms of scenery and costume requirements, so that we don't do two "expensive" shows in a row! When we tackled "Beauty and the Beast" we splashed out on a castle, with secret scaffolding included to provide different platforms. That took all of our ticket money, so a projection-based show was chosen the following year. We are self-funding in the sense that the ticket money goes back into the shows, along with the fundraising done by the team throughout the year.

Live music has always been a must. This has been a challenge as we haven't had the money to pay professionals. We have used any

musicians we can persuade on our own staff - including convincing a teacher that she wanted to learn bass guitar when we were doing "Grease" (she did a very good job!). Some shows have been done with just one or two pianists (from the staff); others with a live band; others with a mix of band and orchestra instruments. Ex students have been a real blessing here - with many of the coming back to play for us, some for multiple shows. Other ex students support back stage, enjoying the opportunity for some theatre-based work experience in a school. At one point we did have an arts technician on the staff team, but after some huge successes with us, he was successful in gaining employment producing professional shows on one of the big cruise liners - so we definitely provided a strong stepping stone in his career. We are lucky to have a decent theatre within our school, with lights and sound. We have built up our sound equipment, and expertise in using it, over the years, partly through the fundraising we have done for the shows. The pupils love being able to use professional-style equipment, such as radio microphones and it is all part of the experience of being in a "real" show.

"Les Miserables" and "The Phantom of the Opera" were the big ones - personally, some of my biggest achievements ever as a teacher. But I'm not sure I'd tackle either of them again as the challenges were immense. I'm so glad that we did though - and so proud of what was achieved. Certainly teamwork at it's best. Both "Phantom" and "Christine" went on to study musical theatre at university, whilst "Fantine" from Les Mis and "Carlotta" from Phantom is now a professional performer - so that in itself demonstrates what these projects can lead to!

This year is the first year that I have not been directly involved with the show, due to my change in role. However it is very satisfying to see the team working through the planning and rehearsal process without me - showing that succession planning does work! I think that, for the first time ever, I will get to sit in the audience this summer and enjoy! I can't wait! For "Les Miserables", back in 2014, we paid for the video license, so I was able to watch the show afterwards - and it blew me away - that we had done this - with school children from Grimsby and Cleethorpes - who have proved themselves to be simply amazing!

## Partnering on a musical production

Xavier Iles, Assistant Director of Music at Bryanston School shares how a state school and an independent school can make the most of a musical partnership

At Bryanston School in Dorset we are always looking at ways to involve the community and open up our facilities and resources to the local area. Last term I was musical director for our annual school musical. What set this apart from previous productions at Bryanston is that we undertook it as a joint project with the local state secondary school, The Blandford School. This was an opportunity to create something truly meaningful at a time when independent schools are coming under increasing scrutiny and political pressure.

The idea was first mooted around Easter time. We are fortunate that The Blandford School also has a strong tradition in the performing arts. The Director, Duncan Fowler-Watt, and I contacted the Head of Performing Arts at The Blandford School, Lucy Bowerman-Ellis. She was very keen on the idea. We wanted to be ambitious and so we decided to put on possibly the biggest and best-known musical of all, *Les Misérables*. Even better, Lucy said she had a talented pupil who was hoping to get to the West End and who might be just right for the biggest role in the show – Jean Valjean. We went to hear him sing and within the first four bars of “Bring Him Home” a huge smile had crept across my face. I knew this could be a great show.

Casting for the production took place in the summer term. *Les Mis* was a challenging choice due to the demanding nature of the score. However, we hoped pupils would be inspired by the wonderful music and the chance to take part in a production of such an iconic show. We were also fairly confident that between the two schools enough strong singers would audition who could pull it off. And so it proved to be. The extraordinarily high standard of singing far exceeded our expectations. There was a shift from merely looking forward to embarking on a joint collaboration to genuine excitement at the sheer talent and potential in front of us.

Aside from Jean Valjean who was a shoo-in, the biggest challenge was casting the male leads, many of which are proper tenor roles. We only really had one contender for the role of Marius. This was a boy who had not had singing lessons for four years. He had potential though and most importantly he could act and looked the part. So we agreed that he would have twice weekly singing lessons to help his technique. I made a few subtle alterations to his part to give him a fighting chance of hitting the top notes when he really needed to. It worked. He nailed the big moments in “One Day More” and “Empty Chairs” every night.

We needed to carefully balance the expectations of pupils at both schools. We did not want anyone to feel the collaboration meant they were less likely to get a lead role. To address this, we took the decision to double cast the main parts where possible. In the performance week the pupils would alternate and avoid having to sing every night. The idea was well-received; the students were incredibly supportive towards one another and worked together brilliantly from the outset.





“A fine example of the local impact of a state/independent partnership.”

Rehearsals started in September. The cast came back early from their summer break to build momentum and start to create the sense of teamwork and camaraderie that is so important in a production. Everybody needs to feel important. We broke the back of the big chorus numbers fairly early on – there are simple harmonies which the pupils picked up quickly. They soon learnt that a large cast sounds absolutely amazing whether singing *pianissimo* at the start of the final chorus or going flat out at the end of Act 1 in “One Day More”. There was a palpable buzz amongst the students when they put those numbers together. This spurred them on to raise the standard ever higher. But we only had nine weeks and in order to fit around the two schools' timetables we had to rehearse after school until at least 9pm every weekday and every Sunday. It is crucial to plan rehearsals carefully. Not every pupil is needed every time and nobody should be left sitting around waiting for their scene.

One of the reasons for picking *Les Mis* was the need to choose a show that would excite the pupils and rekindle interest in performing arts, particularly amongst boys. We made a decision to teach all our new Year 9s a medley of songs from the show as part of their class music curriculum. We also trialled teaching the girls and boys separately for this singing project. We wanted to develop self-confidence and sidestep any issues of shyness and lack of willing amongst the boys. So successful was this initiative that we took the whole year group to perform this medley at our annual school concert in Holy Trinity Church in Sloane Square. They received a standing ovation. We had decided to reserve a number of places in the chorus for these pupils. If we could capture a love of performance early on, they would continue to thrive and

invest in the performing arts throughout their time at school.

We are extremely fortunate at Bryanston that we have a brilliant team in our theatre with the skills to build the set 'in house'. One piece of equipment that we hired in was a revolving stage. This brought the famous barricade to life and helped create some poignant moments as it revealed the shattered bodies of the revolutionaries after the gun battle. To accommodate the large cast, the theatre team built an extension to the stage. This meant that the orchestra pit could not be used. In turn the front rows of seats were removed to make way for the large band. We used as many students as possible, supported by full-time teaching staff and some visiting teachers. In the end we had 19 players in the orchestra. We made use of the wonderful RMS Keyboards software package which gave easy access to authentic 1980s keyboard sounds. They also offer software to help with rehearsals and to fill in any missing instruments in performance if needed.

Rehearsals intensified as the performance week approached. Budget restraints meant that we could not have a proper sitzprobe, or even a dedicated band call. Instead we had to do our best with a four-hour rehearsal the day before the dress. We played through as much of the score as possible and tried to run the big numbers. It was nowhere near enough time. We managed to find a bit more time just before the dress the next day. Even so the band was playing large chunks of the score for the first time during the dress itself. Nerve wracking for all involved.

*Les Mis* is completely through-composed meaning there is no time to think ahead. Preparation and knowing

the score inside out are vital. There is always an intense concentration in the pit with such a show. Everyone focuses from the first note of the Prologue with no opportunity to relax until the interval. Then twenty minutes to sort out bits that went wrong (or pop to the bar) before heads down again for the second half. But the music is amazing with brilliant orchestration. Conducting such a talented cast and band is a buzz like no other.

The show week is always a blur. The day job has to continue. Lessons have to be taught and work marked. Sometimes it can be nice to see one's own children. The performances themselves seem to fly by, mostly going as planned but with occasional moments of terror as something unexpected happens. At the end of each performance everyone emerges from the bubble of focus and concentration. It seems impossible that so many little details and moments came together. The nightly standing ovations suggest that it has all worked.

After the inevitable post-show blues, we all had an opportunity to reflect. Lucy Bowerman-Ellis summed it up brilliantly: “Developing and delivering such a significant joint production has been a wonderful experience for staff and pupils of both schools and I am immensely proud of every member of the cast – from the youngest to the most experienced.” The collaboration was a triumph and we are already planning the next project. Headmaster of Bryanston, Mark Mortimer, said after the final performance “*Les Misérables* was a powerful collaboration between Bryanston School and The Blandford School. Neither of us could have done it on our own. A fine example of the local impact of a state/independent partnership.”

# MUSIC & DRAMA

NATIONAL YOUTH MUSIC THEATRE

MUSIC TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



## Introducing NATIONAL YOUTH MUSIC THEATRE

Jeremy Walker  
Artistic Director of National Youth Music Theatre  
and Director of Music at Westminster Under School

NYMT was founded in 1976 by Jeremy James Taylor with its first production, *The Ballad of Salomon Pavey*, winning the *Scotsman Fringe First Award* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Since then NYMT has gone on to produce over 200 musicals and concerts and worked with thousands of young performers and theatre makers from across the UK.

The National Youth Music Theatre offers exceptional opportunities in pre-professional, musical theatre training for talented young people of all backgrounds aged 10 to 23 years through skills workshops, master classes and residential courses led by industry professionals, through commissioning and presentation of exciting new work and - in collaboration with some of the UK's leading creative minds - producing bold, new realisations of major works of the core repertoire. These opportunities exist for stage performers, musicians, technicians and stage crew and, through our Creative Team Mentorship programme, for aspiring directors, musical directors, choreographers and designers.

NYMT's reputation is an assurance of quality and each year we audition over 1,000 young people from all over the UK. Auditions are held over a full day and run as three workshops in acting, singing and movement, which we feel gives the participants a sense of belonging and confidence to relax and enjoy the day. It is imperative that those who audition have a positive experience, learn and develop through this process. Mentoring opportunities are also open to recent graduates who are seeking to pursue a professional career in theatre as directors, musical directors, choreographers and designers. Openings also exist for stage and technical crew and for those interested in costume and wardrobe.

Inclusivity and diversity are key and we are proactive in working with schools and youth organisations via our audition recommendation scheme to further increase our reach and diversity. The NYMT Bursary Fund supports those who would otherwise be unable to experience such opportunities and, through provision of open workshops and in dialogue and partnerships with regional theatres, youth groups and schools, we seek to extend our reach and impact.

Inclusivity and diversity are key and we are proactive in working with schools and youth organisations via our audition recommendation scheme to further increase our reach and diversity.

NYMT is also regarded as a major incubator of new musical theatre writing and has commissioned and premiered over 50 new works. Our commissioning programme encourages writers to work on a large scale and promotes greater diversity in casting, through engaging storylines that expressly provide roles for young people of all backgrounds. An annual summer workshop of a new musical in development aims to provide the time, space and the wherewithal to support the development of new writing from the page to the stage. These workshops are led by an experienced director/dramaturg working with a diverse cast assembled from our nationwide auditions and supported by a creative team of leading industry professionals, many of whom will have entered their chosen career path through the NYMT Creative Team Mentoring Scheme.



1. **LEGEND TRIPPERS** by Scott Gilmour and Claire McKenzie [AKA Noisemaker] NYMT 2019 Commission

2. **ANYTHING GOES** Music and Lyrics by Cole Porter Book by Guy Bolton, PG Wodehouse, Howard Lindsay & Russell Crouse

3. **GROWL** Book and lyrics by Tim Knapman Music and lyrics by Laurence Mark Wythe NYMT Premiere 2019



4. **THE BATTLE OF BOAT** by Jenna Donnelly and Ethan Lewis Maltby NYMT Premiere 2017

5. Jude Law as Joseph in **JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR** © DREAMCOAT

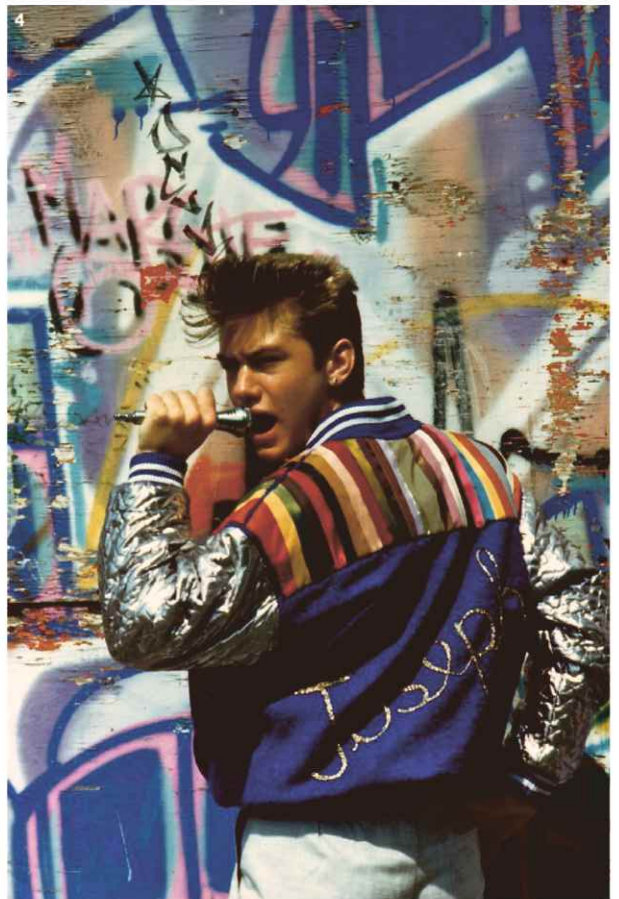
Many of NYMT's ever-expanding catalogue of new works are available for amateur licensing, providing refreshing and, often, challenging new repertoire for schools and amateur groups. Recent commissions include works by Dougal Irvine, Jake and Pippa, Frost and Hough and Noisemaker. Following its premiere in 2015, Ben Till's epic WWI Musical, *Brass*, won the UK Theatre Award for Best Musical Production.

From the outset, our aim has been for young people to be integral to the creation of the story and of the individual characters for whom some roles might be specifically written. The approach to subject matter, style and tone has been led by these factors. The delivery of this project offers us greater opportunity to develop top quality work that is by and for diverse young people. Participants engage in these residential workshops, devising and rehearsing the piece together, shaping and creating their own characters from the very beginning - a rare and thrilling experience! Our most recent invitation to musical theatre writers received over 50 submissions, proving that British Musical Theatre Writing is alive and kicking. NYMT is here to keep it that way!

In the course of its history NYMT's list of illustrious alumni has grown beyond measure. Jude Law, Sheridan Smith, Kerry Ellis, Eddie Redmayne, Lily James, Idris Elba, Sally Hawkins, Matt Lucas and Stephen Graham all started out with the company and there are few West End theatres without at least one alumnus on stage. Former musicians include Jessie J, James Bourne and rising star, violinist/conductor, Stephanie Childress.

Although our stage performer auditions close at the end of February, we continue to seek talented young musicians for our pit orchestras and will be holding further auditions for our 2020 season by appointment in March and April. We'd also love to hear from young people interested in stage management and technical support. Please contact [enquiries@NYMT.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@NYMT.org.uk) for further information or visit our website here: [www.nymt.org.uk](http://www.nymt.org.uk)

National Youth Music Theatre represents the very best in work with young people through musical theatre enabling thousands of youngsters across the UK to develop both their creative and personal potential, leading Andrew Lloyd Webber to dub it "the best youth music theatre in the world".



## THREE QUESTIONS

FOR THE SCHOOL MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Bilton Grange School - Director of Music, Mark Penrose

**What were the last 3 musicals you delivered?**

Annie / Bugsy Malone / Vikings (this last one turned out not to be what we expected, but we had committed to it and made it work). For Annie and Bugsy Malone, we had a full band as well.

**How do you decide which musical to deliver?**

We (ie. the director and I) usually just start throwing ideas around and thinking about which pupils might play which important parts (there's no point choosing something for which you won't have strong leads). Then, we come to an agreement - it has to be something that will work dramatically *and* musically, and it has to be something we both really enjoy and that has stood the test of time. We want the children to be able to engage with the subject matter and forge lots of great memories.

**What is the biggest challenge in arranging and delivering a performance?**

Getting pupils for sufficient rehearsals (and making sure everyone is there) can be very difficult in a busy boarding school, even on Sundays.

Colyton Grammar School - Director of Music, David House

**What were the last 3 musicals you delivered?**

Grease / Guys & Dolls / The Winter's Tale – Howard Goodall

**How do you decide which musical to deliver?**

We decided in conjunction with Drama department, looking at the combination of abilities within the student population both musical and dramatic as well as the interests of the staff and general appeal of the show.

**What is the biggest challenge in arranging and delivering a performance?**

The biggest challenge is coordinating rehearsal times across other demands placed on students.

Exeter School - Director of Music, Peter Tamblyn

**What were the last 3 musicals you delivered?**

Company / Guys and Dolls / Pirates of Penzance

**How do you decide which musical to deliver?**

We look for maximum cast opportunities, to get as many on stage as possible, without the need to spotlight individuals. 'Great music for everyone' is our maxim.

**What is the biggest challenge in arranging and delivering a performance?**

Ambitious kids want to do everything. I work in a school packed with ambitious kids. All the other things they want to participate in mean they have nowhere near as much time as you'd like to devote to your project.

Kensington Prep School - Head of Music, Jonathan Burgess



Recently at Kensington Prep School, we have been getting to know the collected works of Musicline Productions! I was initially introduced to them by my wonderful Head of Drama. For those schools that put on numerous productions, these are ideal. Many Musicline productions are written by Craig Hawes. The songs are catchy, and the children enjoy learning and performing them. The scripts can be edited, but there is that ever important factor of 44 parts with lines. These shows work well with Year 4 upwards.

Our most recent productions have been Oink!- an interesting take on the tale of the Three Little Pigs! These shows work well as ensemble pieces, enabling the entire group to be involved at all times. From a musical point of view these productions work very well with a small band, which is what we use. The parts are easy to follow and provide all of the links between scenes. All in all these productions are a fantastic resource.

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- 1/3 off for a 2nd member of your staff
- 1/2 price for a 3rd member
- Non-MTA members can attend on the Saturday for **£130 (£185 with Dinner)** This offer includes a year's MTA membership.

"Last year I attended for the first time and was very impressed by both the location and the event itself. As someone who is looking towards becoming a Director of Music in a few years time I found it really inspiring."

Peter Williams  
Rydal Penrhos Preparatory School

Visit [MusicTeachers.org/events/conference](https://www.MusicTeachers.org/events/conference) to register your place.

## Top Five Tips for Musical Theatre Productions

James Manwaring  
is Director of Music  
at The Windsor  
Boys' School



In November 2019 we staged a production of Les Misérables Schools Edition in Windsor. It was the most wonderful week for the cast of 96 students. I believe that a musical production, no matter what scale or show, is an essential tool for engagement in school. Les Misérables was the 12<sup>th</sup> School Musical I have produced, and every single show has been different over the years. Whilst it is always quite hard work, the joy I get from being part of a production is priceless. This got me thinking about MTA and how we can support, encourage and inspire each other with our productions.

I wanted to use this opportunity to share with you some thoughts on musical theatre productions and hopefully give you some ideas to go away with. The first thing I would say is that if you haven't ever put on a musical then go for it! You will love it, the students will love it and the impact on the wider school community will be huge. Musicals get the local community into your school and they impact on the whole school. I find there is a real buzz about the place during show week, especially due to the fact the basically all of the staff in my school come along and see it.

1. Pick a show that is going to work for you and your students. That doesn't always mean your favourite, or their favourite. It means a show you can fit around your budget, a show that you can cast with the talent you have and a show that will sell well. Of course you want to enjoy it, but you will! I have enjoyed shows such as "The Boy Friend", "The Pajama Game" & "Guys & Dolls". They don't need to be major productions, but they are great shows that work really well.
2. Putting on a show can be expensive, but that doesn't need to stop you. I don't get any money from my school for my shows, I raise it all through ticket sales, clever bar management and sponsorship. Write to parents, businesses and organisations and seek as much sponsorship as you can. Price the tickets well and make sure that you are licensed to sell alcohol and make some money.
3. Create a buzz around your production from start to finish. Have a set date when you announce the show to the world – well your students at least. Don't give away what you are doing until the big reveal. Do the same with tickets, launch them at a set time and add lots of hype around the date of release. Use social media, email and word of mouth to promote the show – don't stop talking about it basically.
4. A musical is all about your students and also future students. Make sure you always do it for them. It isn't about you, the budget, the ticket sales or the community. It is about the students. The thing is, if they are loving it then the rest will take care of itself. You want the students to be proud of the show and excited about people coming to see it. Thinking ahead is also crucial and you must pay lots of attention to the lower years or those without lead parts that have potential.
5. At the start of the process have a clear rehearsal schedule and stick to it. Make rehearsals organised, productive and satisfying. Remember that students want to enjoy rehearsals and they will work harder for you when they are having fun.

I could probably talk to you about musicals all day long! I love putting them on, watching them in the West End and seeing the affect they have had on my school setting. I have just started the process of staging Oliver in the Summer 2020 and then I will be on to our annual November show. The summer production is a bit of a one off where I am bringing together students from across my multi-academy trust. It is going to involve around 150 students from across Windsor and I am really excited about it. I love musicals because I truly believe they can breathe life into a department and embed the kind of atmosphere that we all want in our schools.

If you need advice, ideas or support then please do get in touch with me. I can offer you advice on tech that I use, costumes, set hire, arrangements. Being part of MTA means that we can support each other and I am more than happy

to answer any questions however big or small. If you are worried about budgets or how to get around bar licences, tech issues or SLT questioning, then please just email me – [manwaringmusic@icloud.com](mailto:manwaringmusic@icloud.com).

I don't know every show in the world, but I have been closely involved with the following shows in case you need specific support:

*On The Town, Carmen Jones, The Boy Friend, The Pajama Game, Guys & Dolls, The Sound of Music, Sweeney Todd, Kiss Me Kate, Beauty & The Beast, Singin' In The Rain, Les Misérables, Billy The Kid.*

I hope that your next show is a huge success and that you have a great time staging it!

## Putting on a musical

Suzie Gouldstone

Director of Music at Highfield Preparatory School, Maidenhead

1

### Choosing a Musical

Task number one: choose the production. I've found productions to be most successful when the musical is selected by both the Head of Drama (or whoever is going to direct the play) and the Director of Music. There needs to be respect for each other's viewpoints and opinions. It's no good choosing a musical which is suitable from the drama angle, but where the songs are too difficult - or where the songs are great but the drama is not right for the cohort of pupils.

For prep school pupils (the age I teach), it's important to be very aware of the level of difficulty and suitability of the music for your particular pupils. It's important to check the ranges, too. A musical specifically written for this age of pupil is often a good bet (although you still have to check through!) Well-known Disney or West End musicals can be very costly to mount - acquiring the licence alone is very expensive and there are many strings attached because there is more concern with the integrity of the script and songs. The songs, of course, were not written with your average ten or eleven year-old in mind. Most publications from e.g. *Starshine Music*, *Out of the Ark Music* etc. acknowledge that schools need flexibility and something which works for them.

It isn't usually possible to have more than a taste of each song or a few pages of script on which to base your decision. Sometimes we've ordered something which, on close inspection, hasn't been suitable and we've had to go back to the drawing board. Making the right choice and preparing all aspects of the script and songs before casting really helps. Try to come up with a script you feel will work (with any cuts or additions) and choose the

songs before you start. You don't have to do every song or every verse of a song - cut the cloth according to the time you have and the ability of the children. Beware of songs where a verse is repeated - almost! - and there is a subtle change of words or pitches. If your pupils can manage that, fine, but if it's likely to cause confusion, choose one version of the song and stick with it.



**Trolls** by Peter Skellern [dsmusic.com](http://dsmusic.com)

**Alice the Musical** by Mark and Helen Johnson (The Story of Alice in Wonderland)

**Wind in the Willows** by Mark and Helen Johnson, script by Sue Langwade

**The Piper** by Margaret Carpenter (The Pied Piper Musical)

(Available from [outoftheark.co.uk](http://outoftheark.co.uk))

**Rats** by Nigel Hess (Another take on the Pied Piper tale) [musicroom.com](http://musicroom.com)

**Robin Hood and Friends** by Debbie Campbell [dotdismus.com](http://dotdismus.com)

**The Wizard of Oz** [musicscopeuk.com](http://musicscopeuk.com)

**A Midsummer Night's Dream** by Adam Tucker [rightroyalscene.co.uk](http://rightroyalscene.co.uk)

**The Tempest** by Nick Perrin and Ruth Kenward [starshine.co.uk](http://starshine.co.uk)

**The Jungle Book** adapted by Kathryn Schultz Miller [childrenstheatreplays.com](http://childrenstheatreplays.com)

### 2 Making a Rehearsal Schedule

Task number two: while you're in admin mode, I recommend making a rehearsal schedule. This means working out a complete plan of how many rehearsals you have and what you plan to do in each of them. It means that you *know* how you will get through everything which needs to be done (if you stick to it). Remember that things often take longer than you think, so keep the plan realistic - you will feel good if you are actually ahead of schedule!

I would recommend a Preliminary Dress Rehearsal and a main Dress Rehearsal, with time in between the two. This allows everyone to spot any problems with lighting, costumes, music or acting - and gives you a chance to put them right and check them before the real thing.

Think about when photographs will be taken (we have a professional photographer who comes in to take stills of the cast. We have to plan this at a time when the children will be in costume and make-up and we think about the groupings of characters - do we want just individual photos or posed scenes from the play?) Consider, too, whether any videoing will take place in a Dress Rehearsal as well as on the night. We tend to record both - in case (as happened a couple of years ago) something gets missed out on the night. On the night a very brief scene between two soldiers was skipped when a main character entered and gave the wrong cue. It was one of only a couple of occasions in the play where these two poor soldiers actually spoke! Luckily I was able to have a word with our recording company and they inserted the scene from the Dress Rehearsal recording.

If a rehearsal is being videoed for this purpose, consider building in extra time in case an important scene or song does not go well so you can record it again. In one Dress Rehearsal, the school bell went off in the middle of a very poignant solo when the character was singing about a bell tolling for her long lost fiancé. Not quite the right sort of bell. So now I always make sure the school bells are turned off for Dress Rehearsals or performances during the school day.

3

### Who's Doing What?

Task number three: Putting on a musical is a big team effort, although it needs to be absolutely clear who is overall in charge. In my experience, it's usually the Director. He/she needs to gather the team and harness people's talents and skills. Always ask people if they are willing to do something and show lots of appreciation as you travel the road together. Make sure all the 'jobs' are covered and everyone knows what is required of them. Make a list so nothing is forgotten. Let people know any time-scales they need to work to. Check that the people who need to be at Dress Rehearsals and Performances can be there! Your list might look something like this:

- Director of Drama
- Director of Music
- Costumes
- Scenery
- Props
- Lighting
- Choreography
- Sound
- Musicians/Band
- Make-Up
- Staging/Curtain/Prompt
- Programme
- DVD
- Photographs
- Tickets
- Publicity
- Supervision of pupils before, during and after the show
- Refreshments

"I've found that increasingly, great sensitivity is needed regarding casting. Make sure that the audition process is transparent, completely fair and you have notes about how everybody did, so if anyone makes enquiries you can back up your decisions."



4

### Casting

The productions I've worked on have mostly been Year 6 whole class musicals; so every child is in costume and make-up and has a part on stage with lines to say. I've found that increasingly, great sensitivity is needed regarding casting. Make sure that the audition process is transparent, completely fair and you have notes about how everybody did, so if anyone makes enquiries you can back up your decisions. My experience would suggest that an individual audition without the rest of the class/potential candidates observing is best. It's good if the Director of Drama and Director of Music conduct the auditions together.

*How* the pupils are told their parts can be a 'make or break' experience. I do enjoy a production where the characters and story are *not* well-known and the children cannot latch on immediately to who is a supposedly 'main character' or not. Talk every part up and make it sound valuable and exciting. Even smaller parts (which some pupils may be relieved to have) can have lots to *do* even if they don't have lots to *say*. This is worth some thought before rehearsals begin. What special things could the smaller parts do if you feel more balance is needed between the parts? Do you need to let your own creative juices flow and write in a scene specially for those children/characters? Make sure every part has a proper name - I think this gives more value to the part than telling a child they are 'Soldier 1'.

As I mentioned, the productions I've been involved with have tended to include the whole year group. I would recommend announcing parts in register order rather than starting off with the 'main parts' and finally getting to the least significant part. It can be a confidence-crushing experience for some children to be left until last.

5

### Rehearsing

Songs need to be learnt with reasonable time to spare so that they can be properly incorporated into the play. Often things could/should be happening on stage during a song or there is choreography to add, and this takes time. Hopefully, this has been considered in the Rehearsal Schedule.

Use the real props right from the start - I've seen so many productions where either a child has been told to pretend they have a particular prop (and then actually come onto the stage pretending in the real thing!!) or the prop has been introduced so late in the day that the problems it presents haven't been foreseen and solved in time for a smooth run. For one play, a lovely cart on wheels had been painstakingly made, but it didn't make its appearance till the opening night. This appearance was very brief because as soon as it had been correctly placed and the dialogue begun, it duly rolled off and crashed backstage.

Ditto with costumes. Check for hats causing shadows across faces or hiding faces from the audience. Check long dresses or cloaks which get caught on things or cause someone to trip and footwear which is noisy on the stage, an outfit which slips or causes problems because of the character's movements in it. (*This reminds me of a performance I was once in - The Importance of Being Earnest, playing Algernon.*)

The suit which had been hired was too big, so I had lots of safety pins holding the whole thing together. Just as I sat on the sofa with my cucumber sandwich one of the pins came undone and stuck right into me. This led to a little improvising... I hope Oscar Wilde would forgive me.

Make sure rehearsals are well organised and purposeful. If it's possible to work out a tableau or plan for a scene in advance, then do so; it saves time umming and erring in front of the children. Sometimes when you look at something you planned you'll see it's not working, so then you'll be creative on the spot, but often planning in advance can save a lot of time, especially if you can visualise it all.

It's best if you only have the children present with whom you are actually working, although I know this isn't always possible. Taking each scene like a piece of a jigsaw puzzle and working with the children involved means others are not getting bored, being disruptive or endlessly asking when you're going to get to their scene. When you've got all the jigsaw pieces reasonably sorted, then you can have larger groups of children and put the jigsaw together.

I would say don't make a last-minute change - especially if it hasn't been tried and tested. Even if the change seems a better plan, it's a risk, and I've witnessed all sorts of unforeseen things happen when a simple change has been made at the eleventh hour.

Some Directors I've worked with have very much liked the idea of the whole group creating a tableau around the edge of the stage or in front of it for the whole play. I love everyone to be involved in singing all the songs - especially in the smaller schools I've worked in where you really need all voices on board - and so if the children are not actually on stage they are in the chorus and able to slip in and out (if you plan this carefully). The advantages of both these approaches mean that children don't need supervising off-stage (because no-one is ever off-stage or in the green room), everybody is there to sing, the children feel fully involved throughout and parents are very happy because they can see their child all the time.

**6 On the Night...** Make a checklist and go through it carefully to make sure everything is in place and ready. I am usually sitting at a piano with a light on my music - but also water, some tissues, a pencil and post-it notes. If you're using percussion instruments always have more than you need or a spare in case something breaks or gets left in the wrong place for the next scene etc. Try to be prepared for every eventuality - you never quite know what might happen... like the time when Dorothy never actually followed the yellow brick road because someone jumped two pages ahead in the script and missed out the song! A tense moment for the Director (who was prompting) and me, wondering if they were going to jump back again or not - but no, they went blithely on!

Remember to leave time for gathering the children to warm up their voices, create focus, give any final reminders or words of encouragement. The feeling of teamwork - everyone going out there to give their best, support each other and pull together is really important.

I wish you all the best with your production and hope it is a great success - and great fun!



“Make sure rehearsals are well organised and purposeful. If it's possible to work out a tableau or plan for a scene in advance, then do so.”

## Checklist

Choose the production

Make a rehearsal schedule

Recruit and arrange your team

Have a fair and transparent audition process

Allow time in rehearsals to adjust props and costumes

Create a detailed checklist for the night of the show

Keep calm and have fun!



# Taking a musical to the Fringe

Helen Brown, Director of Drama, Shrewsbury School

In the middle of August, while most teachers are lying prostrate on a beach, I shall pack thirty singers, three technicians, a troupe of musicians and a very stressed composer into a fleet of minibuses and make the six-hour journey up the M6 to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Crazy, you may think.

It is also the most rewarding, enervating and inspiring experience I have had as a teacher. This will be my third show; for John Moore, Shrewsbury's inimitable Director of Music (and the aforementioned stressed composer) it will be his tenth. The whole process takes nearly a year; in September, John will sidle up to me in the Common Room. "So....." he says. "Edinburgh?" Thus begins a whirlwind creative process: sleepless nights, endless re-writes, rehearsals where everything seems to go wrong – all culminating in the euphoria and exhaustion of the final performance.

There are as many different ways of writing musicals as there are musicals: some shows start with the book, others with the melodies. Some shows will be a play-with-songs, others will be sung-through. When John and I write

together, we start with the story; I write a complete libretto – a play-with-poems – which he then sets to music. Before he starts to compose, however, we cast the show. This means that he can write for the voices and the characters of the students we work with, giving them an extraordinary degree of ownership over the show. Auditions, therefore, are crucial for us to get to know the company we will be working with. This year, we had nearly eighty students – ten percent of our school community – come to audition, singing everything from Handel to Hairspray. The choice of song, as much as how they sing it, allows us to get a feel for our potential cast: who can inhabit a song? Who can make us laugh? Who (crucially) can hit that top B flat?

Armed, then, with a libretto, a cast and some sketched-out melodies on the back of an envelope, we enter the rehearsal room. This, for me, is where it starts to get really exciting. The atmosphere of a rehearsal room where everyone is engaged is magical: ideas fly around, spontaneous harmonies emerge and the company push themselves in all kinds of different

directions. Songs are written, scrapped and re-instated. The tight-head prop of the first XV learns how to box-step. Slowly, the show starts to take shape.

The first night is terrifying. Sian, our wonderful choreographer, roams backstage dispensing soothing words and kirby grips. John gulps his seventeenth cup of coffee. I hide in the control booth and refuse to talk to anybody. Is it any good? Will they like it?

The show itself passes in a blur. It feels like I don't draw breath until the lights go down, silently urging the cast onwards like a jockey towards Beecher's Brook. The rush as the audience applaud is indescribable. One show down. Six to go.



## Taking a Musical to the Fringe: Some Advice

- **Edinburgh in August** plays host to over 4000 shows; from 10am to 2am, the same venue might show stand-up comedians, new writing, circus acts and opera. Every church hall, pub and café becomes a theatre for the month, and the Royal Mile is packed with performers trying to convince visitors that theirs is the show to see. Be friendly – if you just thrust a flier at someone, they'll drop it twenty yards down the street. Stop for a chat. Sing them a song! If they feel like they know you, they'll come to your show.
- **Choose your venue with care.** Better a sold-out 50-seat venue than a half-empty stadium. Try to be as close to the Mile as possible.
- **See as much as you can!** Some of it will be rubbish. Some of it will make you laugh, cry, re-evaluate existence and send you into the street singing. All of it will teach you about what makes good theatre and what doesn't.
- **Reviews are a minefield.** We live in the TripAdvisor generation, and anyone who buys a ticket to the show can leave a review on the EdFringe website. For students who have only ever had feedback from their teachers and their granny, this may be the first time they get impersonal, objective comments on their performance. Getting a good review from a stranger can be the greatest buzz imaginable – and a bad one can knock the stuffing out of an actor. Use the criticism. If they liked you, great. If they didn't, what can you do to make it better?
- **Invest in your fliers.** They are your most important marketing tool and it is worth spending a bit more to make sure they look really exciting and professional.

**GATSBY by Helen Brown and John Moore, performed by the students of Shrewsbury School, will be at Paradise in Augustines, Edinburgh, 17-22 August 2020**

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MUSIC & DRAMA | EXETER SCHOOL | Peter Tamblyn, Director of Music

## Experiences with Sondheim's "Company"

Sondheim's "Company", performed in November 2019 at Exeter School, was a fine choice for us. There is one central character, about 15 supporting characters, and some good opportunities for chorus members and dancers tucked into the show, so long as you're happy with tweaking a little here and there. Music and Drama staff get along very well indeed here, a key point for success. We can laugh at each other and with each other, even in the heat of rehearsal and planning.

We started auditions at the end of Summer Term, and concluded at the very start of Autumn Term, once new members of the school had arrived, mostly into Year 12. Performing in November, this gave us about 8 weeks of rehearsal time. One key thing we didn't want to do was exhaust the children in a busy school. We aimed to spread the performance load. We did consider breaking up the central character to share the role across a single performance. This can be done by a key item of costume being passed on between scenes and/or acts, coupled with the audience's "willing suspension of disbelief". We decided not to do this, but it's a thought to consider for large roles. Other roles had a scene or two each; not so much to learn (and hence fewer rehearsal to attend). They were allocated to two, even three, people, such that, after the bulk of the rehearsal process, we could see who worked well with partners (the show is based on a narrative about couples). We could then assemble different casts of 15 "leads" each night, including that of the central character, meaning that over three nights we had lots of children given the opportunity to be on stage, singing songs, delivering lines

and acting. This is the point of a school musical, surely? All leads then became the chorus for their "other" nights, giving them a little more to learn. The school's more elite choir participated as chorus in the few numbers that requires a chorus, and they could also be in the wings to bolster the singing of the leads that might have had less experience than them. For a cast of 15, we had more than 80 on stage at some point.

Company is also a great show. It's quite grown up, very funny, drenched in the best music and sophisticated. Planning is paramount, as is the support of academic staff, bursar, SMT, sports staff and anyone else in school. We budgeted for a professional band. Expensive, and worth every penny. Borrow radio mics, if possible, as they're expensive to hire. I still underestimate the technical requirements of putting on a musical that sounds and looks good. We are blessed with experienced staff, and children willing to learn and work hard. And yes, there is a chance we might just possibly have considered making cuts to the show. And (just possibly) executed them.



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## They might say no

Building the music department in a state boarding school

The Royal Alexandra & Albert School is a state boarding school that is tucked neatly in the elbow of the M25 and M23. The Music Department is housed in a separate building, the Bothy, away from the main school buildings. I started at RAAS in 2016 and became Director of Music in 2018. We have launched two very exciting projects in the last few months which almost did not happen, and it is that experience that I wanted to share.

Lewis Edney is  
Director of Music at  
The Royal Alexandra &  
Albert School



In 2017, we began teaching the Year 6 classes string instruments in their curriculum lessons, involving the visiting peripatetic teachers in the project. It was very successful and we saw an immediate uptake in the junior ensembles, not just the orchestra and string group, but also in our extra-curricular groups, such as 'Learn to Play the Piano', Band Club and Choirs. We did not have the budget to continue funding the support from the peripatetic teachers so this project was put on hold. I had a few tentative conversations with Marketing about finding extra funding, but was not really pushing the issue. It was when I sat with my link governor and we were talking through the project that he gave me some very simple advice: 'Go and see the Headmaster, explain the positive outcomes and tell him how much it will cost to roll out properly.' Fast forward 12 months and we have just completed the woodwind instrument complement to add to the string and brass stock. The visiting peripatetic teachers now know that every child has an instrument to use in their lessons. The school foundation supports the cost of the tuition and with the support of the Marketing Department we have received four separate grants that have allowed us to purchase class sets of string, brass and woodwind instruments. This now means that in Year 4 all pupils will have two terms of lessons on strings instruments, Year 5 will have two terms on brass instruments and Year 6 on woodwind. Each child that goes through the RAAS Junior School will have had the opportunity to experience professional teaching on three orchestral instruments and for a sustained period of time. This is the first year of the project running in full, so there are no results of the project to share yet, but all the signs are positive: the pupils are loving the lessons and their time on orchestral instruments. As an orchestral player in my past life, I could not be happier to see young children playing violins, violas, cellos, flutes, clarinets, trumpets, trombones and the odd flügelhorn. There can't be a better way to learn to read music, can there?



Our second venture is one about which I still find myself wondering if it really is true, or just a wonderful dream. We had just finished last year's Senior Prize-Giving service and I was delighted with the musical contribution. The orchestra had started the proceedings and then accompanied the hymns with musical maturity; the Chapel Choir was excellent; the choristers had sounded like angels and one of our Year 9 pupils had played Chopin's Nocturne in C sharp minor beautifully. So, walking out of the Chapel I felt pretty pleased with the morning's work, only to be stopped by a school governor who simply said "It's a shame the instrument doesn't match the quality of the pupil who played it." Deflated a little, I could not disagree with the sentiment. The grand piano in the school Chapel had always been lacking in quality and the time between need of tuning was decreasing each term. This began a conversation with the

*continued*

school's major stakeholders that I had wanted to have since I began as Director of Music, but I had always assumed the answer would be no. The same governor happened by chance, to meet a friend at a BBQ who worked with Steinway and they spoke about the piano. It was recommended that I get in touch with the Education Department at Steinway Hall. When this was first mentioned to me I could only assume this was a lovely pipedream, but one that would never amount to anything. I met with Keith, from Steinway, and the dream got even bigger when he made it clear he was not only interested in replacing the grand piano, but every other acoustic piano in the department as well. The proposal was passed on to the Headmaster and Chair of Governors and I waited for the email saying 'thank you, but no'. It did not come; in fact what happened was a room full of SLT and management that were as excited about the concept as I was. We have announced in January that we are to become the first state 'All Steinway School' in England and will be going to Hamburg in the very near future to choose our grand pianos for the Chapel and the Bothy, before receiving all of the pianos in the Summer Term. In the short space of time since this has been announced, I can already sense the excitement and buzz in the department. The piano teachers look like children on Christmas morning, and we don't even have the instruments, the piano pupils are asking if it is really true, and parents continue to email in to congratulate us and to thank us for the opportunities it will provide for their children.

It is a truly exciting time for all involved in music at RAAS and I feel very privileged to be at the helm. These are two of the many aspects of our musical endeavours and I am extremely thankful for the support I have been given to make them happen. If I can offer any advice to our wonderful community of music teachers, it is to always ask for support if you have belief in what you are asking for. I was lucky to have two very supportive governors push me into asking the right questions at the right time. If you do not ask, you won't ever get 'yes' as an answer and you never know, they might not say no.

## The Sheku Effect

There has been an increase in cello students since Sheku Kanneh-Mason won BBC Young Musician of the Year.



According to reports from the National Schools Symphony Orchestra (NSSO), the 'Sheku Effect' is in full swing, seeing young people across the country picking up a bow and dusting off their sheet music.

The orchestra, which offers a high-quality orchestral experience for young players aged 9-19, has seen an influx of new cello players signing up for the 2020 residential course: inspired by "the world's new favourite cellist" (The Times), NSSO reports a 69% increase in applications from young cellists compared to this time last year, half of whom are first-time applicants.

They have also reported an uplift of 26% on recruitment across all instruments compared to this time last year, which is contrary to claims that music was becoming the preserve of the most privileged children from higher-income backgrounds.

NSSO also works with the London-based "music for social action" organisation Nucleo Project to offer places on their summer courses to children who show a gift for music but who would not otherwise have the ability to access courses such as these. NSSO awarded bursaries to 10% of the successful orchestral applicants in 2019.

Artistic Director of the NSSO, John Madden, said: "Malvern College, in the heart of Elgar country, is the home of the National Schools Symphony Orchestra. This year, with applications up by almost a third on our 25th anniversary last year, the number of cellists applying is double that rate. There can be no doubt that the artistry and advocacy of Sheku Kanneh-Mason has been an inspiration to many young players; those taking up the cello as well as those who want to join NSSO."

"This rewarding increase in applications comes at an uneasy time in the landscape of UK music education. NSSO offers opportunities to all talented young instrumentalists in one of our three orchestras, to enthusiastic singers in the NSSO Chorus and to aspiring school age conductors in our unique Conducting Course. Bursaries, worth up to 80% of the course fee, have further encouraged and facilitated access for less affluent families."

The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), a music examinations board that accepts more than 600,000 candidates in over 93 countries worldwide each year, reported a spike in cello examinations following Sheku's 2016 BBC Young Musician win. In 2017, the ABRSM received a 12.7% increase in cello exams undertaken on the previous year.

nssso.org  
shekukannehmason.com

# Holiday pay: know your rights

Are you self-employed or a Visiting Music Teacher? With the summer coming, remind yourself of your rights. Mariachiara Valsecchi, Senior ISM Representative – Legal Services Manager at the ISM writes.

The music profession is generally perceived as a category of freelancers, a world of self-employed artists doing gigs and concerts, carrying out their own business with no protection whatsoever, especially in terms of employment rights. This is not always the case. There are many types of music professions: yes, there are performers and composers. But there are also music teachers and church organists, music directors, choir singers, music examiners or orchestral musicians, just to mention a few. With few exceptions and under certain conditions these musicians may be considered legally as workers. And as such they may benefit from all or some employment rights.

Entitlement to holidays is one of the basic rights granted to all workers. Derived from EU legislation, in the UK the statutory right to holidays is governed by the Working Time Regulations 1998. The Regulations provide that workers are entitled to 5.6 weeks' annual leave in each leave year. The entitlement would generally, but not necessarily, include bank and public holiday – this will depend on the employment or engagement contract, which could also grant more than the statutory minimum. For a person working full time, 5.6 weeks would mean 28 days of holiday a year.

During their annual leave workers have the right to receive their normal pay at a rate of a week's pay for each week of leave. The calculation of a "week's pay" is not a simple exercise. In brief terms, for those working "normal working hours" the week's pay corresponds to their weekly salary. For casual workers, or those working under a zero hours' contract with no fixed hours a week's pay is an average of all remuneration including any overtime payments and commission earned in the previous 12 working weeks, which will increase to 52 weeks (or the number of complete weeks for which the worker has been employed, if that period is less than 52 weeks) from 6 April 2020.

But many professional musicians do not have full time jobs. A visiting music teacher, for example, would generally work part time, a few hours a day and only during school terms. Similarly, a music examiner would work for short-term periods across the year in connection with specific examination periods. While it is possible that contracts provide the VMT or the examiner with actual periods of paid leave, in many cases the worker will receive an amount in lieu of their holidays calculated at the percentage of 12.07% to their standard rate, and rolled up in their hourly fees. Although this is a wide-spread system, it has been criticised by many, including the ISM, because it may result in the worker's holiday entitlement being less than the 5.6 weeks granted by the Working Time Regulations 1998. A landmark decision on this issue has been given by the Court of Appeal in a case involving one of the ISM members, Mrs Brazel, in August 2019. With the support of the ISM, in 2013 Mrs Brazel asked the school for clarification about how her holiday pay was calculated. She found out that although she was entitled to 5.6 weeks paid holiday, in fact she was being paid at a lower amount, because her holiday entitlement and pay was 'pro – rated' on the basis of her working hours. After the school refused to reconsider its calculations, the ISM and Mrs Brazel brought a claim before the Employment Tribunal.

The ISM has backed and funded Mrs Brazel's case all the way through to the Court of Appeal, via its legal expenses insurance. On the 6 August the Court of Appeal found in favour of Mrs Brazel. The court stated that Ms Brazel was entitled to 5.6 weeks in accordance with the Working Time Regulations 1998.



As a result, her holiday pay had been erroneously calculated and the method of "pro-rating" used by the School to work out holiday pay was not provided for within the Regulations. This is a very important decision indeed, which will affect many part-time and casual workers, and especially musicians.

In conclusion, musicians should not confuse their art with their legal status. Being a musician does not mean that you have no rights. Check your contract, consider the nature of your engagement and think about whether you are actually receiving all the rights you are entitled to, and are being paid the correct amount. If you are an ISM member and have any doubt, please contact the ISM legal department. Our trained staff will assist you to protect your rights.

*Since this decision, the Harpur Trust has submitted an application of leave to the Supreme Court.*

Find out more about the ISM at [ism.org](http://ism.org).

# MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

with Richard Llewellyn

CONGRATULATIONS RICHARD  
ON YOUR 25TH MUSIC TECHNOLOGY  
ARTICLE FOR ENSEMBLE MAGAZINE!



Richard Llewellyn has over 30 years' experience in music education, having worked for sheet music publishers, instrumental manufacturers and several international music technology companies around the world.

## The latest news in Music Technology

A Music Tech round-up

### A lack of DAWs?

As I visit schools across the country as part of my job as the UK Education Manager for Steinberg, I am becoming increasingly concerned with the lack of DAWs (Digital Audio Workstations) in many schools. At least 99.9% have a notation program but I'd reckon that as many as 20% don't have a DAW! This is shocking.

Yes, I understand that music notation has been around for a very long time (and music notation software has been available for 30 years), but what about DAW's. Is it because it's such a different piece of music software, still in some areas thought of as a 'dark art'? Possibly a lack of funds? Or is it just the lack of knowledge and understanding of how a DAW works that is the issue? That DAWs are not deemed as being 'academic' enough? I feel strongly that all schools should have DAWs as well as a notation software program. This offers greater access to creative music-making for a greater number of students, those that can play a traditional musical instrument, and those who enjoy making music using a DAW/Sequencer.



This issue was raised in the recent 'Sound and Music' #CanCompose report (see the Autumn Ensemble issue report), which stated that only 43% of school teachers are likely to use a DAW to compose, as opposed to 76% that use notation. The report recommend that:

**'Educators should have access to appropriate resources and training to explore a range of styles, methods and contemporary musical practices, including use of Digital Audio Workstations.'**

DAWs are about 30 years old, during which time there has been massive development. You can now operate a DAW from within a Virtual Reality environment with 3D headsets on. This is an exciting, fun environment of development, especially in the world of computer games audio.

There are many jobs within this music profession that require the use and knowledge of a DAW. It is going to become increasingly important for all musicians to know how to use both pieces of software, the DAW and the notation program.

If you need any help or assistance learning how to include a DAW within your school, please do drop me an email ([r.llewellyn@steinberg.de](mailto:r.llewellyn@steinberg.de)). There are many different places where help is freely available, be it at the MTA Conference, a multitude of YouTube videos and a network of helpful teachers.

### The Mac to PC quandary!

I follow quite a few Facebook groups to do with music in schools and music technology. One issue that has been coming up more and more frequently over the past few months in relation to DAWs has been 'I've been told I can get new computers, but I'm not allowed to get Macs. What software would you suggest?'

Yes, Macs can be lovely things, but they do 'die' and can sometimes no longer be updated to the latest operating system. They are also expensive! You can generally get double the number of PCs for the cost of Macs. It might be worth considering whether a leasing scheme for your IT hardware would be more cost effective.



Of course, on a Mac you get GarageBand for 'free'. Logic would often be the obvious next step up from GarageBand, but if you're not allowed to buy a new Mac suite, you'll be faced with having to move onto a different piece of software.

Most other music software works equally well on both Mac and PC, but then other options may be worth considering such as cloud-based programs. Does your school have a good, strong and reliable internet signal and are there security risks? MusicFirst have done very well in the 'cloud' and have several programs in their portfolio. Other options would of course be Cubase, Ableton and Pro Tools.



## Department for Education

### 2020 National Plan for Music Education (NPME)

The Department for Education has issued a 'Call for Evidence', inviting proposals for the 2020 edition of the National Plan for Music Education, due out in the Autumn. The current Plan was published in 2011, and a lot has changed in music technology since then!

Therefore, it is great news that Music Technology has been highlighted (along with SEND inclusivity and Music Hubs). The DfE wants the 2020 Plan *'to help reflect advances in technology in the way music is created, recorded and produced, and to reassess the music education young people benefit from at school.'* They want responses from teachers at Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Further Education and sixth-form colleges, and the deadline is 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020. I really hope that they get some good feedback and respond accordingly.

#### New App

A new type of notation app has recently been released. This one is called **StaffPad** and works on iPads and Windows tablets, featuring handwriting recognition, touch editing, playback, "ScoreSync" realtime parts sharing with StaffPad Reader, automatic layout and much more.



This is the most expensive app I've encountered so far at £84.99, pushing the generally recognised low cost of apps up to a new level. There are also in-app purchases for VSTs such as Spitfire Audio, Orchestral Tools and Cinesamples ranging from £64.99 to £99.99.

All very well, but not if you only find out after purchasing that your iPad/tablet hasn't got enough storage space!

There are however some really cool features within StaffPad that I hope other manufacturers will consider. One of these is their 'ScoreSync' feature. With this you can change or edit a full score 'live', and then send the changes out to everyone that has the free StaffPad Reader (as long as they have internet access). This could certainly speed up some rehearsals, but it's still very expensive and perhaps better suited for professional session musicians.

## Upcoming Events

- 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> March 2020 - Music & Drama Education Conference, London
- 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020 - Musikmesse, Frankfurt
- 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> May 2020 - Music Teachers' Association Conference, St Paul's School, London
- 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020 - Music Education Technology Conference, London
- 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 - Music & Drama Education Conference, Manchester

# On the search for the Urtext

## How a music edition is created

Music publishers occupy but a small segment of the international publishing scene. They often have a very long history. They have always seen their task as providing musicians with the printed music that they need to practise and perform musical works. The printed music is just an aid, but an essential one. Without it, works from the history of music could not be heard; music lovers could not be moved by the 'Dona nobis pacem' from Bach's Mass in B minor, could not empathise with Beethoven's 'Rage over a lost penny', could not weep when Puccini's Mimi wastes away from her illness.

We rapidly take it for granted that these and other works are unique, that a composer has written them down, that a publisher has had the music engraved and published. What's the problem? But as so often, the devil lies in the detail, for works often take on a life of their own. A composer might have been unhappy with the first performance and subsequently made alterations. Larger forces might have been required for later performances. Perhaps the autograph manuscript has been lost and only the first printed edition or the parts from the first performance survive. Which is the 'authentic' work now?

For many years, Bärenreiter-Verlag and others have used the term 'Urtext'.

The very word smacks of dusty libraries and fragile manuscripts that have to be handled with kid gloves. But behind the idea of Urtext are people who are passionately devoted to the search for a definitive form of the work.

All composers, whether a servant of a higher realm like Bach, or a genius like Mozart who composed faster than he could write, or a rebellious hero like Beethoven, have a precise idea of what their creations should sound like.

Musicologists invest every effort in reconstructing the intentions of the

composer from the surviving sources. In a painstaking process of comparison, evaluation, decision-making and verification, they produce a version that will then appear in print and on the music stands of concert halls, opera houses or in people's homes.

This meticulous approach is no mere art for art's sake, for musicians need an authoritative basis for their art. Anyone who examines the great works of music history should not have to rely on dubious editions.

Beethoven's 9th Symphony demonstrates just how complicated the preparation of an edition can be. As the illustration shows, a large number of sources exist (autograph manuscripts, copies, printed editions), which are listed in relation to each other in a 'stemma', like a family tree. The editor – in the case of the Ninth the English Beethoven expert Jonathan Del Mar – has to make an evaluation of importance based on familiarity with all the surviving documents, which can then help clarify decisions in doubtful cases. Each individual decision is listed in the Critical Commentary, but the end result has to be a score which can be

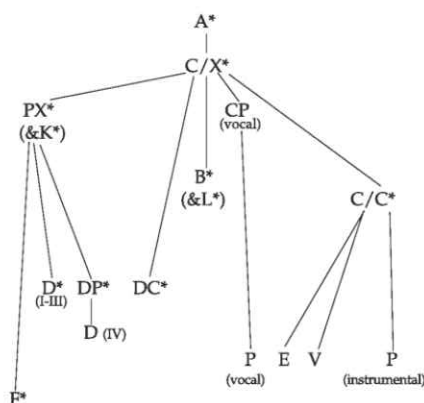
used directly for performing without long-winded subsequent research.

Between the submission of a manuscript and the publication of a music edition, plenty of time is allowed. Thoroughness is more important than speed here. After the music has been engraved according to the publisher's precise requirements, several stages of proof-reading are undertaken by the editor of the edition, the publisher's editor and external proof-readers until all parties are satisfied that no errors remain.

Qualities that are separate from the musical text also contribute to the success of an edition. Finely-tinted paper which does not reflect in artificial light, a durable binding, and not least, page-turns which, for example, allow pianists to turn the pages and yet play all of the notes.

Bärenreiter-Verlag in Kassel (Germany) has acquired an international reputation for its carefully prepared and authoritative Urtext editions. Its publishing programme includes works from all periods and genres of classical music. [www.barenreiter.co.uk](http://www.barenreiter.co.uk)

Johannes Mundry is in charge of PR for Bärenreiter-Verlag





## High Storr's School's Music Tour to Koblenz

Joan Spencer, Head of Music at High Storr's School, Sheffield is interviewed about a recent music tour with Halsbury Travel Group



### **What was your main aim/objective for this tour?**

To provide a performance focus for the school ensembles accessing a wider audience, as well as to experience the culture of another European country.

### **Why did you choose this destination?**

The practicalities of transporting orchestral and band equipment make a coach journey the best option for us. We also needed to limit the trip to five days, so Germany or France were going to be the best destinations for us. We eventually chose Germany because we've found the musical culture in Germany to be very vibrant, even in the smaller towns.

### **Can you briefly describe the venues you performed in during this tour?**

The audience at Boppard, a colourful town on the Rhine were waiting long before the concert was due to start! Several of them joined in and danced, creating a very lively atmosphere. The second venue was in Königswinter and we performed as part of a diverse cultural arts weekend. It was well-advertised locally and they were extremely well-organised, providing changing space, instrument storage and refreshments for the students which, on a day of 28 degrees, was most welcome. The large audience was extremely appreciative of the concert. The third venue was Rudesheim, which is a very busy tourist destination. This was later in the day and again there was a lot of passing audience in the market square, as well as those sitting in cafes and bars.

### **Why did you choose these venues?**

They were suggested to us by Halsbury, but we did request three outdoor concerts with two on one day, allowing the students a whole free day in Phantasialand theme park.

### **What will be your lasting memories of this tour?**

Giving an impromptu concert on the hotel balcony to a coach tour of other guests at the hotel in Kamp Bornhofen on the last evening. Being exceptionally proud of the way the students behaved throughout the trip, which was also commented on by the hotel staff.

### **Why did you choose Halsbury for this tour?**

We had used them previously and found them highly organised and very accommodating to our needs and requests. They provided an excellent experience all round and were thoroughly professional in every way. I would also highly recommend the coach company who were brilliant in the way they interacted with the students and staff and were happy to meet any requests made.

[www.halsbury.com/music](http://www.halsbury.com/music)

## How to make the most of your music tour budget

For most groups, budget is a key element in the choice of tour destination. Finding the right destination which will excite and inspire your performers, work with your concert programme and ensembles and also be affordable can be a challenge. Ensuring you make your money travel as far as possible is paramount and **Travelbound Music and Concert Tours** have prepared a list of helpful tips to consider when planning your next music tour.

### **Travel by coach**

Travelling by coach is the most economical way to travel for most music groups. The coach will pick your music group up from your chosen departure point and take you all the way to your destination; it will also be available whilst you are on tour to carry out local excursions and concerts. Music groups with large instruments can request a trailer to increase the luggage capacity of the vehicle and ensure baggage and equipment are transported safely.

### **Consider travelling in low season**

Prices vary during the year with premium prices being charged by all of our suppliers over key times such as July when groups are competing for places with families. If you are able to travel October to April, prices are more favourable and some destinations can still offer the option of performing outdoors. If you are able to do so, travelling term time rather than during school holidays is also an effective way of reducing your tour price and getting best availability.

### **Include as many free or low cost local excursions**

A specialist music travel company can typically obtain specially reduced prices for groups at most attractions. Being able to obtain specific contract rates only available to tour operators, they can pass any savings straight on to music groups. They can also advise on any local visits which are free of charge or fairly inexpensive while still of interest for your group. Make sure you discuss your group's specific budget requirements with your travel company at an early stage so they can help you make the most of your budget.

### **Boost your numbers**

Broadly speaking, travelling with a small group can often increase the price of the tour as some of the costs are shared amongst all group members. Financially, it makes sense to open up the music tour to more than one ensemble, especially if they can share the same performance venue. Alternatively, you could consider including a Junior Ensemble to increase numbers; perhaps they can feature at the start of the group's main performance. Another option would be to include additional group members whose dedicated role would be to support the setting up of equipment for the music group's performances. Not only can they help set up, but they can take on roles such as writing a tour report

for the school magazine/social media pages or be the tour's official photographers.

### **Consider your free place ratio**

Most travel companies normally use 1:8 free place ratio for our coach tours and 1:10 free place ratio on air tours. The cost of the 'free places' is shared amongst the paying passengers and added to their tour price so if you are able to reduce the number of free places you need, the price per person will reduce. Make sure you ask for a quotation based on your group's required free place ratio.

### **Stay in a Youth Hostel**

Nowadays, most hostels offer a modern, safe, bright and vibrant environment, which is perfect for music groups. They offer all the essentials in en-suite rooms with generally four to eight beds and great facilities such as free Wi-Fi and plenty of sockets to keep all devices fully connected and fully charged up at all times. No dormitories are used for youth groups and your performers will never share a room with strangers. Large rehearsal rooms are often available as well as instrument storage space. There are usually good communal spaces, which are perfect for a talent night, a games evening or even a summer barbecue.

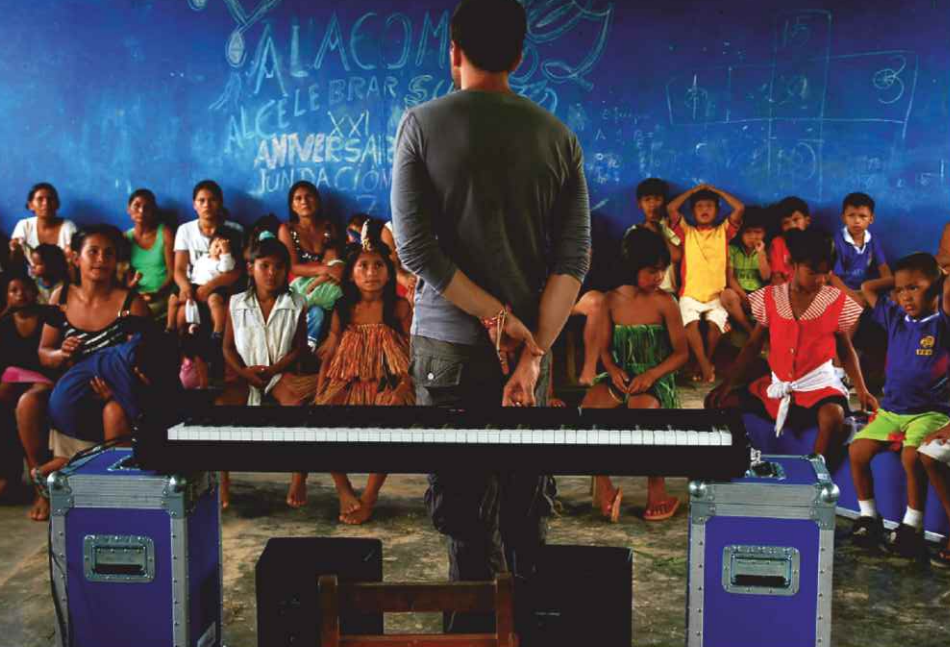
### **Make the most of your board options**

Depending on the destination you wish to travel to in the world, your group will be offered different meal options from 'room only' to 'full board'. Often, opting to eat at your accommodation will prove cheaper than eating out, as the cost of your meals is incorporated in the contractual prices of the accommodation suppliers. Make sure you explore the various options with your travel company right from enquiry stage.

### **Ask about 'good value' destinations**

Did you know that the Rhineland offers very good group-friendly prices all year round, which are usually much cheaper than the rest of Germany and even the Netherlands or Belgium? Staying in one of the seaside resorts on the Costa Brava can save you money compared to choosing accommodation in Barcelona itself. If planning a visit to Paris, consider staying just outside the city at a fraction of the cost you would normally pay for a central hotel. It is worth discussing options with your travel company at an early stage.

To find out about how we can help you make the most of your music tour budget, please ring the Travelbound's Music Team on 01273 265 290 or email [music@travelbound.co.uk](mailto:music@travelbound.co.uk). Alternatively, visit [www.travelbound.co.uk/music-concert-tours](http://www.travelbound.co.uk/music-concert-tours).



## A chance for your ensemble to perform with the Fukushima Youth Sinfonietta (FYS)

In 2011, the concert pianist, Panos Karan formed the FYS; many of its members are survivors of the tsunami. The ensemble has now performed all over the world and is a testament to the healing effect music can have in times of great emotional upheaval and uncertainty. Next year, the ensemble will celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and they are looking for an ensemble from the UK to perform and collaborate with them.

### Keys of Change

The FYS is just one of the many projects the inspirational Karan has run since he founded the music education charity, Keys of Change in 2011. When he is not performing in some of the world's most prestigious venues, Karan travels the world, offering live classical music performances, workshops and music camps to young people in many deprived or suffering areas; he is committed to the belief that playing music can make the world a better place and change lives: "I believe very strongly that music is a powerful tool that can be used to change lives, to improve circumstances, to bring people together. At the same time, music belongs to everyone, not only to those that have the means to buy a ticket and enjoy it. As such, musicians have a responsibility to bring music not only to concert halls, but as far away as possible, to those who perhaps need it the most.

"I studied music for six years at the Royal Academy of Music and, while I learned so many things about the music I am playing, the most fundamental question of, 'Why do we play music?' was never answered. I can say with certainty now that classical music belongs as much in a schoolyard in the Amazon or a slum community in India as much as it does on the stage of Carnegie Hall in New York or Queen Elizabeth Hall in London."

### The Fukushima Youth Sinfonietta

Karan first visited Fukushima in the aftermath of the disasters of 2011. He was drawn to the region, hoping he could help those worst affected, and visited several evacuation centres to perform for the survivors. This eventually led to the creation of the Fukushima Youth Sinfonietta (FYS), which has now become one of the most positive things to emerge from the devastation of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in northern Japan.

### Get involved with the Fukushima Youth Sinfonietta

This wonderful group of musicians is looking for a UK school to collaborate with them in a performance either in London or Japan. For Karan it's all about enriching the lives of its members through music: "One of the key messages of the FYS is that 'anything is possible', and within this message one of the main

goals has been an international influence in the orchestra, be it teachers from outside Japan, or indeed players that have travelled to Japan from all over the world to work closely together and perform with the Fukushima musicians. We would be happy to hear from anyone that, like us, believes 'music can change the world' for the better, and would like to come to Japan to meet our musicians and be a positive force with them."

Although travelling the world much of the time, Karan would love to visit UK schools to talk about the FYS and the work of Keys of Change. His visit could include a masterclass for the school's ensembles and a conducting workshop for the music leader and possibly lead to a joint concert with Karan either at school or at a high-profile venue. Specialist school music tour operator, Club Europe are delighted to have teamed up with the charity and are hoping Karan will visit some of their music touring ensembles around the UK. Club Europe are donating £1 for every passenger who travels with them on a music tour in 2020 to the charity to mark their 40 years in the school music tour industry.

If you would like to get in touch with Karan or Club Europe to find out how you can get involved, please email [Jenny.d@club-europe.co.uk](mailto:Jenny.d@club-europe.co.uk). Find out more here: <https://club-europe.co.uk/school-music-tours/club-europe-and-keys-of-change/>

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# NEW MEMBERS



WELCOME to the following new teaching members who have joined since the publication of our last magazine:

Rachel White	Junior School Music Coordinator, Wakefield Girls' High School Junior School
Jo Scott	PA Teacher
Anne-Marie Brazier	Trainee Music Teacher
Adam Stanworth	Director of Music, Box Hill School
James Kelly	Music Teacher, Coloma Convent Girls' School
Chris Wiltshire	Teacher of Music, George Dixon Academy
Laoise Carney	PGCE Student, St Margaret's Church of England Academy
Jane Werry	Director of Music, Hayes School
Jane Swindells	Class Teacher and Music Teacher, March CE Primary
Ruth Bourne	Class Teacher and Music Subject Leader, Cop Lane CE Primary School
Emma Goddard	Head of Music, Bexley Grammar School
Gareth Dowle	ITT Music and Geography, Hungerhill School/Sheffield SCITT
Angus Meryon	Director of Music, The Tiffin Girls' School
Claire Harris	Executive Music Leader, Warren Mead School
Sarah Marsh	Head of Prep Music, Loughborough Schools Foundation
Jessica Weetman	Teacher of Music, St Edmund's
Jo Hensel	Deputy Head of Wind, Brass & Perc, Guildhall School of Music & Drama
John Barker	Director of Music, Leicester Grammar School
Joanna Szalewska-Pineau	Trainee teacher
Adam Treadaway	Teacher of Music, Abingdon School
Lindsey Ashwin	Director of Music, Stoneygate School
Jane Wilce	Assistant Head/ Music Subject Leader, The Discovery School
Thomas Bruton	Director of Music, The Thomas Hardy School
Margaret Edwards	Music Graduate Assistant, Stonyhurst College
Daisy Gibbs	Teacher of Music, Eltham College
Andi Pacurar	Teacher
Laura Swadkin	Head of Academic Music, Eltham College
Gemma Cragg	Music teacher, Nishkam School West London
Sarah Blyth	Director of Performing Arts, Henley in Arden School
Emma Carpenter	Teacher of Music, King's Leadership Academy Liverpool
Emily Rouse	PGCE Student
Dominic Fincham	Music Technician, St Michael's High School
João Reis	Music Teacher
Thomas Haggerty	Music Teacher
Jamie Thorpe	Music/Science Leader & UKS2 Leader, St Stephen CE Primary School
Matt Hartley-Stevens	Music Teacher
Lucy Marsh	Music Teacher Trainee, Westonbirt School
Eloise Akehurst	Music Administrator, The Blue Coat School
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# OUR OFFICERS & STAFF



Please get in touch with the members of our team to support you in your school.



President / Simon Toyne  
president@musicteachers.org

Simon Toyne is Executive Director of Music of the David Ross Education Trust, where he oversees the award-winning music curriculum and enrichment programme across the Trust's 34 state primary and secondary schools. Prior to this, he was Director of Music at Tiffin School and Kingston Parish Church. He is a Director of the Rodolfus Foundation Choral Courses, and is a member of the government's expert panel developing a model music curriculum.



President-Elect / Don Gillthorpe  
gillthorped@ripley.lancs.sch.uk

Don is Director of Music and Performing Arts at Ripley St Thomas CE Academy in Lancaster where he is also a Lead Practitioner and accredited Specialist Leader in Education. Don's specialisms are in choral music, with a particular focus on establishing a singing culture in a secondary school and boys' changing voices.



Honorary Secretary / Helena McKillop  
h.mckillop@tpsco.co.uk

Educated at Birmingham Conservatoire and subsequently at the Sweelinck Conservatoire, Amsterdam, Helena has gained a reputation for developing, expanding and enhancing Music Departments. She is regularly invited to lead seminars on Music Department management and career development.



Honorary Treasurer / John Padley  
john.padley@qas.org.uk

John is Director of Music at Queen Anne's, Caversham. During his time at Queen Anne's, he has actively encouraged partnerships with local schools and Queen Anne's hosts the Caversham Music Centre run by Berkshire Maestros. Queen Anne's runs regular inset training for Eduqas A Level Music and would be delighted to hear from anyone about this specification.



Past-President / Simon Williamson  
SRJW@wellingtoncollege.org.uk

Simon Williamson is Director of Arts and Music at Wellington College. He is particularly interested in bringing independent and state schools together within the arts.



Keith Ayling  
Media & Publications  
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Keith is a TEDx speaker with a Masters degree in Songwriting. He visits schools nationwide to run songwriting workshops and is passionate about encouraging creativity in young people whatever their background. He was a finalist in the National Association Awards for his work on Ensemble Magazine.



Carol Hawkins  
Conference Administrator  
07799 886697  
conference@musicteachers.org

Carol is former Music Administrator and PA to the Director of Music at St Edmund's School, Canterbury from 1996 until 2014. Carol has been working for the Music Teachers' Association since 2002 and currently manages the annual conference.



Sophie Kirk  
Administrator & Membership  
01223 312655  
membership@musicteachers.org

Sophie has 12 years of classroom music teaching experience across all age ranges (3-18) as well as being an instrumental string teacher and ensemble coach. She is an orchestral player, content contributor for Naxos Educational and music administrator at St John's College, Cambridge.

## Help strengthen our voice

### Officers

The President is voted for by the association and stands for two years. There is also a commitment to serve the association before and after the appointment supporting the current role-holder. Our Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary are also active members serving voluntarily.



# OUR COMMITTEE



Please get in touch with the members of our team to support you in your school.



Dr Steven Berryman (Co-opted)  
Steven.Berryman@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Steven is Director of Music at City of London School for Girls and a Visiting Research Fellow at King's College London. He is currently seconded to the Education team at the City of London, working across the family of schools.

## CURRICULUM LEAD



George Bevan (2020)  
bevagd@monkton.org.uk

George is fully signed up to the belief that *everyone* can sing, and that singing has the power to transform lives. Endlessly fascinated by the learning process. Blogs at music@monkton



Jonathan Burgess  
enaandjonathanburgess@gmail.com



Tim Garrad (Co-opted)  
Tim.Garrad@westminster.org.uk

Tim is the Director of Music at Westminster School, London.

## PARTNERSHIPS LEAD



Andrew Henderson (2019)  
a.henderson@stoneyhurst.ac.uk

Andrew is Director of Music at Stonyhurst College, Lancashire. He is particularly interested in developing high-quality choral provision in schools and fostering an environment where participation in musical activity is seen as the norm.

## OPERATIONS MANAGER



Patrick Johns (Co-opted)  
p.johns@tiffingirls.org

Patrick is a teacher at The Tiffin Girls' School, Kingston, a professional trombone player and a radio producer for BBC Radio 2 (Top Brass, Country Christmas, Jazz Junctions).



Isla Keys (2021)  
isla@innotts.co.uk

With 30 years' experience of teaching singing, in addition to class music from Reception to A Level in both independent and state schools, Isla now enjoys working with young singers and directing 2 choirs at Nottingham Girls' High School, also coaching choral scholars at St.Mary's Church.



James Manwaring (2021)  
JManwaring@twbs.co.uk

James is Director of Music for Windsor Learning Partnership, a multi-academy trust in Windsor. He teaches and works with students from Years 1-13, runs an adult community choir and writes a music education blog - manwaringmusic.blog. He has been nominated 5 times for Music Department of the Year.



Mark Penrose (2022)  
performingarts@biltongrange.co.uk

Mark is Director of Performing Arts at Bilton Grange Prep School, which has recently merged with Rugby School as of January 2020. In addition to classroom teaching and consultancy, Mark has taught on British Kodály courses and delivered training for iGCSE and A Level Music.



Caroline Robinson  
crobinson@warminsterschool.org.uk



Caitlin Sherring (2019)  
csherring@woodcroft.barnet.sch.uk

Caitlin is the Music and Visual and Performing Arts Lead at Woodcroft Primary School. She is a Primary Music Education, Woodwind and Choral Specialist who is particularly interested in utilising the arts as a stimulus for all curriculum areas and supporting whole-school development.



Oliver Walker  
omw@repton.org.uk

Fascinated and motivated by music's ability to draw people together positively, I am committed to strengthening music education networks and building better resources for everyone.

# THE FINAL WORD

## DIVERTIMENTO

### Op.49



## A sideways look at music education from Jonathan Varcoe

Were you helped during your education by a truly inspirational teacher who enthused you and maybe changed your whole outlook to set you on your life's path?

Who are these special people who showed you possibilities other teachers were unable to show? Perhaps they were eccentrics, perhaps hard task-demanders, perhaps outstanding performers, all with a gift for communication. They would have been the right people for you at the right time.

We all want to be special teachers like this and perhaps a lot of us are. At least I know most of us excel in certain areas of our busy and varied lives (too busy you might say). To know what your pupils need at any one time is often hit or miss, but depends on a deep understanding of what it is like growing up, and an empathy for each individual and his or her circumstances (health/home situation etc). Some teachers just seem to 'have it'. Others aspire but maybe analyse too much so that spontaneity is lost – children are

incredibly perceptive. Many teachers talk too much and are poor listeners. We can but try to become more natural teachers and temper aspects of our personalities that get in the way of inspired communication.

Oh, and one other thing: did you ever thank that wonderful teacher of yours for their expert guidance? My guess is that most of you didn't. I used to get messages from certain of my pupils, often the ones I least expected, but not always from those whom I think I helped the most. Without feedback we cannot be sure that we hit the spot. We are lucky as musicians to get plenty of feedback after our concerts: letters from governors and parents, a note from the Head, and so on. But the best are from the pupils themselves, current or past.

### Thoughts about instrumental exams

Some time ago it came to my notice that a few very musical children had missed by a wide margin, and one even failed, their expected results. This was perceived as unjust since the candidates were reckoned to be worthy of better marks by their teachers and by the experienced accompanists who played them through their pieces, and by the school music staff.

It is easy for the 'home' team to be accused of prejudice but when they are highly experienced musicians a shock poor result deserves some scrutiny. Indeed written GCSE or A level examinations can be returned for remarking and in quite a few cases are regraded upwards. This is not possible with live music exams unless of course the exam is recorded. In this age of technological wizardry a small unit placed on the examiners desk could quite simply record the performance of the pieces and be accessible to a panel to reassess if need be.

We all know the difficulties of training examiners to conform to a strict marking scheme (many readers will be trained examiners themselves) and we

have all experienced examiners who have clearly erred on the side of generosity or on the side of strictness in their visits to our schools. No-one is going to complain if Jones Minor passed his Grade 2 Piano when he was destined for a catastrophic Fail, but if Samantha failed to get a Distinction when she had already successfully got a place in a national children's orchestra and had played a concerto movement to great acclaim with the school orchestra and whose teacher expected nothing less than a high Distinction, then something may not be right and an appeal would be the fairest way to see whether the judgement of the examiner was sound. When performers of one instrument sit in judgement on pupils playing many other types of instrument, particularly in the higher grades, there will be many technical issues for examiners to take into account.

However much these are important, the most prized thing for advanced candidates is their musicality. How convincing was the performance and so on (regardless of any odd slip – we all do those!). The exam tick box system does not cater for the parade of

sensitive musicianship.

Examiners are writing their reports throughout the examination such is the pressure of time, and one wonders whether some really listen to (or just hear) the pieces while they are making instant judgements and pen-pushing. Filling in the marking sheet and quickly moving on to the next candidate is not the best way to make fine judgements. Once the marks are added up, that is that, no second thoughts about the marking of the first piece for example, no giving the benefit of the doubt to a candidate whose pieces were very good but whose scales were a bit dodgy or aural tests were not impressive, yet clearly such a candidate was a musical force to be reckoned with even if the tick boxes didn't quite appreciate that and the marks stubbornly refused to go above 128.

I am not calling for general leniency (the syllabus can be sensibly balanced and it is difficult to think of an overall alternative system), but permission for examiners to use a bit of give and take in their assessments would be sensible. Or perhaps record the exam pieces so that a second opinion can be given in certain cases.

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