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TEACHERS  
ASSOCIATION

# ENSEMBLE MAGAZINE

No. 112 / Winter 2020  
CONNECTING | INSPIRING | LEADING



PART ONE  
**PARTNERSHIPS**  
RESOURCES FOR MUSIC TEACHERS



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# WELCOME EDITORIAL



Keith Ayling  
Editor

## We can do more together than we can alone.

Around ten years ago, alongside my work in music education, I also worked for a charity in Greater Manchester creating projects and partnerships across the region. Some of this work involved the Conservative and Labour Parties. Some involved civic leaders and those in the cultural spheres. Some work involved Media City and those creating programmes for the various channels and companies in Salford. The biggest, most successful and most exciting project that I created during this time was called *Fresh Thinking*. It brought together all of these leaders already mentioned to consider how they might partner together to become stronger, across the city.

Across a region like Greater Manchester (and indeed any large region) it is all too easy for people to 'work alone in their silos' concentrating solely on their own purpose and not consider the wider impact of their work and how it can help others. *Fresh Thinking* gave a platform to the smaller voices, to present their ideas to the wider leadership community, and to the stronger voices to coalesce support for national initiatives.

Similarly, schools can easily exist in a small world of their own eco-system. As teachers of music with a small department, or a department of one, the pressures can be such that any external 'conversations' always take a back seat to the more urgent work. Partnership becomes a distant idea, rather than a daily reality.

There is a way to circumvent this.

Partnership is not something that we need to find the time for; it is a state of mind, an attitude, an intention.

If music is the greatest force for good in our schools, then it is also the subject with the biggest possibilities.

Aligning yourself with a mindset of partnership on a daily basis will make this come into being. Why not partner with your drama department, your sports teams, or your English department? (In the US, most football teams already have an intrinsic relationship with their music departments.) These simpler ways of creating a culture of partnership in your school, will undoubtedly lead on to bigger ideas and the experience of navigating and negotiating with internal departments will prove invaluable when you work at a regional level.

Thinking even more on a micro level, what about partnering within your own department? We often forget that our instrumental teaching staff also work alone for much of their timetable. What would a true collaborative partnership between these different methods of teaching look like? How could this lead the way as an example for other academic departments? We often forget that music is the only subject in school that has a 'classroom' staff as well as a tutorial staff! How can we maximise this within the eco-system and provide the kind of inspirational solution that transforms the lives of students and the educational system?

Big questions perhaps. But let's start with simply improving the culture. If our daily mantra was 'who can I partner with today?', think of what we could achieve. We hope that this issue - **Part One of our feature on Partnerships** - gives you the inspiration and motivation to do just that. I'm very grateful to Tim Garrard, our Partnerships Lead - who is working tirelessly to build bridges across the music education community - for editing the feature section of this issue.

Keith Ayling  
@keithayling

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# JOIN US



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

You may have been recommended to the Music Teachers' Association by a colleague and recently joined. Please accept our welcome to the most vibrant association of music teachers in the UK. We hope that we can support your teaching, your students and your career by connecting you with experience and wisdom from colleagues around the country. 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.

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# CONNECTING | INSPIRING | LEADING



## GUEST EDITOR

In this issue, we have invited our Partnerships Lead, Tim Garrard, to edit our feature section.

**Tim Garrard** is Partnerships Lead for MTA, Director of Music at Westminster School and a trustee of Musical Boroughs Trust



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## CONTRIBUTORS

Features & Articles in the Music Teachers' Association magazine are informed by experts in their field. Here are just a few from this issue.



**Sally-Anne Huang**  
High Master of St Paul's School & Chair of HMC



**Paul McCreesh**  
Founder and Artistic Director of the Gabrieli Consort & Players



**Stuart Whatmore**  
Head of Tri-borough Music Hub

**Janella Ajeigbe**  
is Principal of Mossbourne Parkside Academy



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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.

In 1900, a meeting was convened at the Royal College of Organists of 24 'Organists and Directors of Music in Secondary Schools'; three years later, the Union of Directors of Music in Secondary Schools (UDMSS) was established, with 91 members. In 1926, this became the Music Masters' Association, amalgamating as a separate section of the ISM two years later, and in 1929, the first combined meeting took place of the MMA with the newly formed Music Mistresses' Section of the ISM. 1982 saw the MMA formally becoming the Music Masters and Mistresses' Association; and, last year, the MMA changed its name to become the Music Teachers' Association – us!

The reason for this brief history lesson is to highlight how, throughout the last 120 years, we have been an association of teachers – run by teachers for each other – and Partnership has been at the core of our existence. We have never been a business, a company, or an organisation. That first meeting in 1900 was set up because of a desire of individuals to come together and share ideas, to explore what those organists and Directors of Music had in common, sharing metaphorical shoulders to cry on as well as devising collaborative projects. The same holds true today, as we have seen through the popularity of our Zoom CPD sessions, podcasts, social events and conferences. As Matt Ridley has written, “the human instinct for co-operative teamwork is literally in our nature”.

Working together in partnership as music teachers makes our day jobs that little bit less lonely. But this issue of *Ensemble* is about a bigger picture than that – how can we develop partnerships across the country to ensure that all our children and young people are able to access outstanding music education? The sense of isolation that can be felt by a teacher in a one-person music department is felt even more starkly by hundreds of thousands of children who do not receive adequate classroom music; who do not have the opportunity to sing in a choir or play in an ensemble; who are not allowed to play a musical instrument; who are unable to study music at GCSE or A Level. What can we, as legendary problem-solvers, do together to address this?

As an association, the last few months have seen us develop ever closer partnerships with the ISM, Music Mark and the Musicians Union. Our

collective action caused substantial changes to the DfE guidance for schools in July and to the recent pronouncement about extra-curricular clubs. We have written together to key decision-makers about the forthcoming financial package for music hubs, and are campaigning about the restoration of bursaries for Initial Teacher Training in Music. In August, we launched #CanDoMusic, which has made a substantial impact upon the position of music in schools from September. As well as the website ([www.candomusic.org](http://www.candomusic.org)), schools posting on social media about their music provision has helped other schools to follow. In so many ways, this has been a model of collaborative partnership.

We have also established a formal partnership with the HMC, beginning with our combined sponsorship of *Bach to School* – as well as providing resources for the 180-plus schools that have signed up, this will shine a light on school choirs across the country and enable thousands of students across the UK free access to the *Live from London* series of concerts over the Christmas period. It was a pleasure to give a keynote address at the HMC Conference in October, and an edited version of this appears later in this issue.

These two Partnerships editions of *Ensemble* are so important. Everything you need to know about partnerships is here, and I am sure that you will not only find it inspiring but also an invaluable resource. We are indebted to Tim Garrard, the MTA Partnerships Lead, for his brilliant work not only in convening the articles here but in helping schools to develop partnerships further. Can we make 2021 a Year of Partnership?

## CONNECTING – INSPIRING – LEADING



Welcome to the 112th 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 Part One of our Partnerships feature section (from page 19) which has valuable ideas and resources to help you through teaching in these times. Part Two arrives in the next issue! Additionally, don't miss the 50 words feature on teaching during COVID on page 12.

Why not consider reporting on the work of your students for a future issue? Sometimes the simplest achievements can inspire others. Everything is valuable.

## OUR CONFERENCE

The Music Teachers' Association has one of the most exciting music education conferences in the UK. Usually moving to a different host school each year, the 2021 Conference in May will be online. 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.

More details and a schedule of all of the CPD sessions will be released in January. What would you like to see?

## 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 recently launched Staffroom 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. Our termly magazine has been nominated for 'association magazine of the year' and is a highly respected journal of music education.

Our Music Directory (for independent schools) gives parents details on music departments and our Yearbook (PDF), Podcast, Zoom CPD, regular E Bulletins and Facebook Staffroom complete our comprehensive resources for your teaching.

## 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 PODCAST

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**Teaching Notes – the MTA Podcast** is designed to bring together all music teachers, 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. Subscribe via Apple or Spotify or you can download it from the MTA website. We'd love to hear from you: [keith@musicteachers.org](mailto:keith@musicteachers.org)

### Recent Features:

24.

MTA member **Michael Wright** discusses the ethics and authenticity of teachers' choice of music in the classroom; **Natalie Witts** from the MU returns to talk about the copyright restrictions applicable to teachers' own resources; and **Professor Martin Fautley** confronts some big questions in music education, such as the perceived value (or not) of certain genres of music, what "musical quality" means in real terms, and much, much more. #CanDoMusic

23.

In this episode, the artistic director of the Gabrieli Consort and Players, **Paul McCreesh**, introduces their new "Bach to School" singing resource; **Natalie Witts**, from the Musicians' Union, answers questions about music copyright within schools, including crucial information that teachers need to know before embarking on virtual Christmas Concerts; and composer and pioneer of Bhangra, **Kuljit Bhamra** drops in to explain the music and suggest some excellent resources.



# OUR CHORAL COURSES 2021

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"The choral courses change lives, open doors, reveal new horizons. Over the years they have become a pillar of our cultural life in Britain" *John Rutter CBE*

We have been very saddened to hear about the passing of MTA member Dr June Keyte, a respected music teacher and Founder/Director of Children's International Voices of Enfield.

## Dr June Keyte MBE ARAM



Dr June Keyte MBE ARAM was born in South Wales and trained in London as a music teacher at Trent Park College of Education (later Middlesex University). Her distinguished 50 year career in music and music education included many different roles, from Director of Music in comprehensive and independent schools, to editing the music publication of the Society of Assistant Teachers in Preparatory Schools, and conducting the BBC Schools Radio Music Broadcasts for 27 years with her Comprehensive School Choir the Kingsmead Singers. In 1994 she founded Children's International Voices of Enfield, for which she won much national and international acclaim. Most recently she travelled to Johannesburg to be one of the international judges at the Ekurhuleni Melting Pot, National Choral Festival.

June's key role in music education was widely recognised. In 1990 she was awarded a Winston Churchill Memorial Fellowship for Trainers of Children's Choirs to study choir training in Finland, and later that same year a Bye Fellowship at Selwyn College, Cambridge. In 1992 she was awarded an ARAM from the Royal Academy of Music (having studied violin there as a postgraduate with Frederick Grinke) in recognition of her 'distinguished services in Music Education'. In 2005 she was awarded an MBE by HM The Queen for her Services to Music and to the Community and was also awarded an Honorary Doctorate (together with

her husband Christopher) from Anglia Ruskin University. One of June's passions was commissioning new music and many composers were persuaded to write for her. The list is long and includes Betty Roe MBE, Douglas Coombes MBE, John Rutter CBE and Sir Peter Maxwell Davies CH CBE.

Celebrating over 25 years of Children's International Voices of Enfield, the choir have visited Switzerland, Iceland, Wales, Finland, Germany, Italy and Sweden. Important concerts have included a BBC Prom in the presence of HM the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to celebrate her 80th birthday, the 90th anniversary of Save the Children at St Paul's Cathedral in the presence of HRH The Princess Anne and the London Youth Festival of Music at the Royal Festival Hall by invitation of Rotary International. In 2014 Children's International Voices of Enfield gave three Christmas concerts called "RutterFest", performing 11 Christmas works by John Rutter which he himself kindly recorded, edited and produced on CD.

Her legacy lives on in the many performers, teachers and lovers of music found internationally who she taught during their musical training, and her inspiration and kindness are continually remembered by those musicians and countless friends. June will be greatly missed.

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

### Dr June Keyte

I would like to add my own tribute to the life of Dr June Keyte, who we remember here. Over the years that I have worked for the Association, I found June to be one of the great encouragers. Every single time I met her, she was positively charming and always congratulated me on the Association's forward progress.

She was a great believer in the power of music to change lives, and I found this to be inspirational. She carried a passion and commitment for her choral work which we can all learn from.

We send our love and peace to her husband Christopher.

Keith Ayling

# UPDATES FROM SCHOOLS

## Queen Anne's School

Director of Music, John Padley

I must admit that, as I am sure many of you would agree, I was approaching the new academic year with quite a bit of fear and trepidation. So many questions were in my head. How can we keep music alive and give our students the opportunities to perform that they used to have? How do we provide individual instrumental lessons? What about the live concerts, Harvest, Remembrance and Carol Service? How do we make the department safe for our students and staff? Will it ever be the same again?

It was then that discussions and ideas started to emerge, and the support of the music staff and LT made us all think creatively. This was reinforced by the brilliant MTA podcasts and MTA Facebook Staff Room.

We were not alone! Ideas came to us all very quickly and have transformed what we do, and how we share the talent of the amazing pupils we are so lucky to work with.



We decided to keep to our established concert and performance programme but to present these as recorded video and audio performances on Soundcloud which has proved enormously successful! Not being tied to a particular date for a concert has meant that performances can be recorded at any time during the week and then released so that they can be listened to by pupils and parents at any time. The response has been tremendous especially from our parents who are overseas and who would not normally get the opportunity of hearing their daughters perform.

In many ways, we are just as busy as we were before but in a different way which, I guess is what it will be like for the future. It is so good to be able to offer so many opportunities to perform when it all seemed so impossible back in September and our pupils are loving it!

## Warminster School

Director of Music, Caroline Robinson

The past 4 weeks in the Music Department at Warminster School have certainly been very different to what we are used to. Now that we have gotten our heads around the many rules and regulations (and then changes to them too), completed risk assessments and put down our tape-measures, we have found much hope, fun and joy from what is our 'new normal'.

We started very cautiously: singing, wind and brass instrumental staff stayed at home teaching remotely to pupils in school. Our classes didn't sing and we had no instrumental groups.

Little by little, we have added in more and more. This week we have been finalising plans for recording the first piece the Choirs have been rehearsing. We now have four separate groups: Sopranos Choir, Altos Choir, Boys Choir and a brand

new 6th Form Bubble-Choir. We created a small Scholars Ensemble to record a piece for our Online Remembrance Service, they enjoyed rehearsing outside when it was sunny. Our String Quintet have resumed rehearsals, socially distanced, in the Chapel. We recently launched a brand new Brass Group who rehearse after school and next week Year 9 pupils will be invited to a Year 9 'Bubble Orchestra'. The first Lunchtime Concert of the term will be released online towards the end of next week, and our Instrumental Teachers are busy filming introductions to their instruments for a film to replace them visiting year seven classes.

We were inspired by A level music lessons captured on Twitter with a special toy from the Early Learning Centre and managed to bag one on special offer before too many more departments ordered theirs. 'A'

Level harmony will never be the same again!

Over in the Prep School, classes have been really engaged in body percussion workshops and exploring structures and rhythmic patterns; listening and responding to music to inspire and stir the soul; Singin' in the Rain (literally!); celebrating the joy of music and all it can give us at this time particularly; live musical performances streamed to all classes and the Pre-Prep Choir have been having fun singing outside on the field. It has been wonderful to hear and see the children getting so much from their music-making!

Although the new way of working is very different, challenging and at times frustrating, we have not been defeated and will do all we can to sneak in more and more as time goes on. Please keep or start following us @warminstermusic.



# 50 Words of INSPIRATION #CANDOMUSIC

**@twbsmusic**, in Windsor we have had loads happening, despite restrictions. The great thing is that I have a bit more time to focus on curriculum and this is paying off. Lessons seem even more vibrant and exciting than ever! Students are engaged and enjoying making music. When it gets tough I just remember that the students need music in their lives.

James Manwaring



At **@Ripley\_Music** we were nervous about how KS3 Music would work this term. Instead of worrying, we decided to deliver our Scheme of Learning out of order and take the opportunity to revamp the units one at a time, rather than producing our normal workbooks for the year. This gave us lots of thinking space and is shaping up to be a greatly improved curriculum.

Don Gillthorpe



As a VMT I have been able to put more pupils forward for concerts as these are now in year groups and live-streamed (rather than mixed year groups). I recorded my mixed-year ensemble and sent it to the parents. I also entered a pupil for the new ABRSM performance exam - we await the results with baited breath!

Sophie Kirk



**@MonktonMusic**

Strange that having a small year 13 choir singing a hymn live in Chapel for Remembrance should be so moving. Meanwhile, we have all sorts of new ensembles emerging in year group bubbles, and our studio is in full swing with our Song21 project. Much to be thankful for!

George Bevan



After starting the school year on Zoom, **@HarrowHKMusic** have recently been delighted to welcome back our musicians. We've now completed two online recitals and one completely live concert, and have our ensembles running socially distanced at almost full capacity. Music looks slightly different to what we're used to, but is once again at the centre of school life, and the pupils are thriving on collaborating once again.

Caitlin Sherring

Here at Wellington College (**@Welly\_Music**), we managed to have an Arts festival before half term, with year-group recitals and masterclasses. We managed to also test our concert hall's capacity to host a socially distanced audience of parents for a concert of Musical Theatre Songs (involving two local schools). It is possible but it takes some risk assessing. We're now back to things

online, things pre-filmed and lots of live-streaming. So keep performing!

Simon Williamson



**@warminstermusic** we've split choir into 5 and have a recording of them to put out this week. Our music scholars produced 'Bring him Home' for an online remembrance service: around 12 hours of filming, recording and editing rather than a 2½ minute performance: It was DEFINITELY worth it! Christmas filming & recording up next...#candomusic

Caroline Robinson



**@NottmGirlsHigh** We are really delighted that one of Nottingham Girls' High School junior choirs has re-started, albeit with reduced numbers. For the moment, the Year 6 singers meet on Tuesday lunchtimes, and Year 5 singers on Thursdays, very distanced in the large school hall, but nonetheless live singing! The girls are rehearsing for Winterlights, which will be a virtual concert, and the annual Lace Market Carol Service which takes place in Nottingham's civic Church, St.Mary's, at which we hope they will sing as a choir, with the service live for a small congregation, and live-streamed for those who cannot attend.

Isla Keys

As a Senior Lecturer at Leeds Conservatoire (**@LeedsMusicDrama**), we have moved virtually all of our teaching online, with students still able to access facilities for practical work. (The building has extensive measures in place to ensure COVID safety.) On the whole, students are extremely productive and enjoying the digital creation process, together with the ease and speed of online collaboration.

Keith Ayling



Christmas is always quite early at **@StonyhurstMusic**, but this year we started filming our Christmas carol service on Remembrance Day. The distanced rehearsals feel quite normal now, so we are concentrating on the music once more. We have also launched a project to try and find our next generation of (heavily sanitised) organists; and Rockschoo and ABRSM examinations in November have enabled most students to catch up to where they wanted to be with their grade examinations.

Andrew Henderson



We have been working hard not to let the musical content of lessons slip, even if restrictions are in place. An example is Year 8 Blues, where we're focussing on the power of imitating vocal phrasing on instruments, with transformative results in students' improv. We can do music!

Patrick Johns



**@KensingtonPrep** we have had to turn our school orchestra into year group orchestras.

At first I was disappointed that this was going to be the case but now we are enjoying orchestral rehearsals with 35 players in each group, and benefitting from the rehearsal detail that we were unable to achieve in the larger symphony orchestra.

The repertoire has had to be adjusted accordingly but the girls have really been enjoying the smaller groups. The best thing is that they are able to make music together again. That is what it is all about!

Jonathan Burgess

**@WSchoolMusic** (Westminster) We have found there to be a real camaraderie amongst pupils, staff and (via electronic communication) parents in the face of this virus. As such, the pupils have responded really positively to year group bubbles, and we have all been made much more aware of the enormous privilege of making music together.

Tim Garrard



50 Words  
of INSPIRATION  
#CANDOMUSIC



# Ask James

We're thrilled to announce that James Manwaring (Windsor Learning Partnership) is going to present a new column in Ensemble and Zoom series specifically for the Music Teachers' Association, helping members to find quick solutions to everyday questions that arise in the classroom.

You don't have to look far these days to see that Music Teachers have lots of questions. Since September these questions have become even more diverse and varied. This has prompted me to start considering some of the questions that are cropping up across the sector.

## Can I still run Extra-Curricular during this Pandemic?

I guess the simple answer is YES, and the more complex answer is, it depends on your situation & context. I find this is often the answer to questions – you have to consider your situation. It is crucial to work with SLT and colleagues to ensure that all you offer outside of the classroom can happen and continue to happen. Make sure you keep in touch with us through our Facebook group as we will keep publishing advice and guidance.

## How can I bring a Set Work to life in my lessons?

I love teaching set works because I love listening to music. I therefore believe that bringing a set work to life starts with me as the teacher. I am always looking for new ways to approach my teaching and I find that I have to get excited about it first. Sometimes performing bits from a piece can work really well, or maybe a composition task linked to the set work. I find that you can't beat talking about the music with passion and enthusiasm – that can sometimes work better than some glitzy task with post-it notes or playdoh!

## How can I use more Technology in my teaching?

Technology is something that we simply can't avoid in our teaching. And frankly why would we want to. Students can now create music at school, at home or on their phone – wow, how exciting. But using technology is only as good as the ideas and understanding behind it. Lessons need to be musical, with music as the target language. Technology can then help to enhance and enrich experiences. Using more technology means thinking through what you are teaching to work out where it might help. Start with musical

understanding and see if you end up with technology being required. If you are looking for great software then I use Cubase, Ableton, Sibelius & Focus on Sound. Bandlab is a free online DAW but I also rate Soundtrap for a great paid for option. Get in touch for more advice and guidance.

## I work in a one-person department, how do I find a work life balance?

This is a big issue for so many of us and I too work on my own for most of the week across a few schools. Finding a balance is tough and there is no easy route to success. Firstly, you need to work out what parts of your week could be changed – are there things that you could drop? Trying to run loads of clubs and activities on your own is tough, so work out what can go. But you also need to put things in that LIFE column and make sure that you book in things for you. Take up running, visit the opera more or join a book club. Take up a new hobby and keep that sacred in your calendar.

One way I have coped recently is to consider how I can Think Smart and work more efficiently. I recommend reading some of the great books that are out there that help you to think smart as a teacher – “Mark Plan Teach” by Ross Morrison McGill, “Rosenshine's Principles in Action” by Tom Sherrington & “Being a Head of Music (A Survival Guide)” by Gazard, Werry & Ashworth

But also remember that finding balance is hard and it is made worse when you beat yourself up about it. Balance comes when we look at being efficient and also say no to the things that we don't need to do. Music Teachers are often full on and it is hard to get it right. Find people you can talk to – get in touch with me – seek help and keep engaged in the idea of stream-lining what you do in your pursuit of balance.

Alongside this column I am going to be offering MTA members a monthly zoom meeting where you can bring your questions and I can try and answer them. I am envisaging these being the “Facebook Group” style questions, but maybe ones you are embarrassed to ask. The simple things that you just want to know. There will be no judgement and hopefully lots of advice. Please keep an eye on the MTA Facebook page and the weekly E-Bulletin for dates.

And in the meantime please do send me any questions you might have and I will try and answer them! All the best and keep doing what you are doing. Music teaching is the greatest job in the world, and we are making more of a difference than we realise.

Ask  
James  
on ZOOM

## Club Europe

**A new teachers' resource to support music learning online**

With music departments facing many challenges at the moment, you may be interested to know Club Europe Concert Tours are building up a library of educational videos to support music learning. While young ensembles can't travel the world right now, Club Europe is bringing the world to them!

In conjunction with their travel partners across the world, their free, accessible, and curriculum-linked Virtual Travel Encounters feature interactive webinars, Q&As and virtual tours. For example, your choir can perform for one of their Italian villas in Italy's wonderful Brenta Riviera and bring the waterways and beautiful houses to your classroom through a virtual tour of the villa.

Club Europe's Encounters are a great way to keep students thinking about and experiencing music and the world beyond the classroom. A Virtual Travel Encounter will complement and enrich students' learning, as well as enhance cultural capital. Students, and teachers alike, can dream about future trips to these places!

Please get in touch with us if you would like us to create a Virtual Travel Encounter for your students. As with all our school travel tours, we will tailor your Virtual Travel Encounter to your requirements and your students' needs. For more details email [travel@club-europe.co.uk](mailto:travel@club-europe.co.uk). Or to find out more about Club Europe, a specialist school music tour operator, visit [www.clubeurope.co.uk](http://www.clubeurope.co.uk).

## Ocarina Exams

The Music Teacher Board have just launched Ocarina Exams, from pre-Grade 1 to Grade 5, with pieces selected from Ocarina Workshop's 'Adventurous Music-Making' and 'Play your Ocarina' series. The ocarina syllabus is wide-ranging, including whole-tone and blues scales and repertoire in many styles, from classical and jazz to world music. All ocarina pieces can be performed in MTB exams using backing tracks: [www.mtbexams.com/syllabus/ocarina](http://www.mtbexams.com/syllabus/ocarina)

As well as appearing in the Ocarina Exams, the new 'Adventurous Music-Making' series is shortlisted for the 2020 Teach Primary Awards. Six colourful A5 Pupil Books and six A4 Teacher Books plus audio CDs each introduce 20+ themed pieces for pupils to explore, using any combination of voices and non-transposing instruments. The repertoire takes pupils back through time, around the world, improvising, composing and acquiring musical skills as they go. Cross-curricular themes such as coding, natural disasters, communications and spying make 'Adventurous Music-Making' an exciting project for ages 6 to 13, and for whole-class musical participation: [www.ocarina.co.uk/amm](http://www.ocarina.co.uk/amm)

## Congratulations Julian Edwards

Classical recording company Naxos has appointed MTA Conference regular Julian Edwards as Sales Manager – Music Education. Julian joins from MTA Corporate member OneStage Specialist Concert Tours, and says of his appointment: "I'm very excited to join such a globally renowned company as Naxos, and look forward very much to renewing long-standing friendships with MTA members soon, and to seeing everyone at future MTA events!"



To complement their range of educational music resources for younger audiences, Naxos have recently launched Naxos Music Box, a new music resource for KS1 and KS2. As well as Music Box, Julian will also be responsible for the whole Naxos education portfolio including educational books, and the flagship Naxos Music Library, an invaluable resource of over 11,000 titles for universities, conservatoires and schools.

Julian Edwards  
Sales Manager – Music Education  
Naxos Music UK Ltd  
Tel: +44 (0)7768 448381  
Email: [jedwards@naxosmusic.co.uk](mailto:jedwards@naxosmusic.co.uk)

Ocarina Workshop Director, David Liggins, commented: "The Music Teacher Board Exams and Adventurous Music-Making books are the culmination of whole-class music projects that began in the 1970s and continue today. The Ocarina's potential can now be fully realised with pupils and teachers embarking on their own whole-class musical adventures and achieving their first ocarina exam successes."

Try it yourself! For a full set of Adventurous Music-Making pupil books and CDs and a free ocarina, go to: [www.ocarina.co.uk/adventurous](http://www.ocarina.co.uk/adventurous) – quote "MTA" in the Special Instructions box to receive the new full-colour 2020 edition of Play your Ocarina Book 1 free – a total 155 pieces with backings.



# Play Now Pay Later

Exclusively from Viscount Organs Wales

Our vision at Viscount Organs Wales continues to ensure that the Viscount Experience is available to everyone. In these difficult times we looked for an affordable solution to provide an instrument for continued practice in the comfort of your own home. Due to restricted access for many who are unable to play or practise at their local church, Play Now Pay Later provides a unique solution and avoids the full initial outlay for a new instrument.

We are very excited to introduce our exclusive low cost rent to own and interest free instalment options to make this possible. Our most popular home practice instrument, the Chorum 40S is available from as little as £194.00 per month. Additionally, we can provide a custom-plan to meet your personal requirements. We are also pleased to offer this scheme for churches and educational institutions. St Anne's of Margate recently took advantage of this plan with us and installed a magnificent Envoy 35F from our Physis range with external amplification. [www.bit.ly/St\\_Anne's\\_Install](http://www.bit.ly/St_Anne's_Install)

Our promise to you is that there are no hidden charges, 'admin fees' or higher instrument prices: the price for any plan is exactly the same price you would pay if purchasing outright. You can visit us at [www.viscountorgans.wales](http://www.viscountorgans.wales) or call 01792 721499 to receive more information.

## ABRSM

Remote performance exam success shows music learning revolution here to stay



Demand for ABRSM's innovative new music exam, which focuses on students' performance, lets them choose what they play and is 100% assessed online via video recordings. With almost 15,000 students - triple the expected number - signed up, ABRSM's Performance Grade is a regulated qualification and is available at Grades 1 to 8. It carries the same value as traditional Practical Grades and students are able to switch between Practical and Performance Grades as they progress. Candidates will be awarded the same UCAS points for Performance Grades at Grades 6 to 8 as they would have received for Practical Grades for the same levels.

The new exam breaks with 131 years of ABRSM tradition by assessing students entirely on their performance of their chosen music and how they bring it to life, including the essential skills of communication, interpretation and storytelling. The exam room comes to the candidate, who chooses where and when to make their recording, and each video is then assessed by an ABRSM examiner.

The next booking period for Performance Grade exams in the UK is 1-8 December 2020. To find out more, visit [www.abrsm.org/en/performancegrades](http://www.abrsm.org/en/performancegrades)

## The Royal College of Organists



Following the success of taking The Organ Student Experience (TOSE) and Summer Course online last August, we now have various digital offerings to tempt you and your organ students.

- Improvisation classes for beginner and intermediate students, mid-January to mid-February
- Winter Conference, 18-20 February
- International Organ Day, 24 April

Full details can be found at [www.rco.org.uk](http://www.rco.org.uk)

We are pleased to announce Radley College as the second school to gain RCO Accredited Institution status. A major benefit of the scheme is that organ students at accredited institutions are entitled to join the RCO at the heavily discounted Affiliate Student Member rate and thereby, among many other benefits, gain free access to the large bank of learning resources on iRCO, including recordings of a series of 15 webinars taught by Dr Frederick Stocken on the harmony and counterpoint questions for our three organ playing diplomas. For further details of Institutional Accreditation please email [simon.williams@rco.org.uk](mailto:simon.williams@rco.org.uk) or visit [www.rco.org.uk/education\\_accredited\\_teaching.php](http://www.rco.org.uk/education_accredited_teaching.php)



# Steinberg

Steinberg Media Technologies GmbH

Released on the 11th November, Cubase 11 is packed with a vast range of workflow and performance improvements, as well as exciting new ways to find inspiration that may benefit your students' compositions.

New features include an enhanced Sampler Track 2 (on all versions) with a new 'slice' mode that speeds up loop playback manipulation and effects. There's also a useful new Scale Assistant that allows you to set the scale of a composition within the Key Editor and add enhancements. This is a great educational add-on that builds on existing features that include the Chord Assistant, Chord Pads and Circle of Fifths assistant.

There are also new exclusive sound and loop Sample Sets in Cubase 11. They come with all three Cubase versions and have been developed by Grammy-winner Beat Butcha, professional sound designer Robert Dudzic and Black Octopus Sound. Yet more fun creative sounds for your students to add into their



compositions. This is a very big update for Cubase, and I would urge you to consider updating and upgrading your current music software.

**Dorico 3.5 SE – FREE**  
With the continued disturbance at schools and students working from home, it is worth reminding teachers and students about the FREE version of Dorico. With Dorico SE you can write for up to two players e.g. piano and a solo instrument, and you can import this into the full version of Dorico Elements or Pro. All Steinberg software works on both Mac and PC, so all your students can use it.

For further information, please contact Richard Llewellyn (UK Education Manager): [r.llewellyn@steinberg.de](mailto:r.llewellyn@steinberg.de) and tel: 07841 516 066.

# John Packer

## New JP Wooden clarinets

John Packer Musical Instruments is always working to improve and extend their range of instruments, and despite all the challenges the year has presented, 2020 has been no different, with three new wooden clarinets added to their range of woodwind. The John Packer Bb & Eb clarinets have had extensive revisions, and now have a matching A model, with the same high specification. The JP321Bb, JP321A and JP323Eb clarinets are another example of high quality and highly affordable instruments from the British company.

**What's new?** · Wooden tenon rings · Metal capped tenons · Reinforced shaped barrel · Quality engraving · Ringless heavyweight bell · Polycylindrical bore · New professional case

The 3-series clarinets will still feature adjustable thumb rests, heavily silver-plated keywork, and come with an easy blow mouthpiece, and essential accessory package. The poly-cylindrical bore is an attribute more often seen in top end clarinets. The poly-cylindrical bore (where it flares in stages), gives the clarinet a warmer/rounder sound as opposed to a focussed sound that you'd get with a standard cylindrical bore, found on student models. The clarinet has increased resonance and depth of sound thanks to the chunky bell and the distinctive shaped barrel. Because wooden clarinets present a cracking risk, the John Packer models have inlaid metal tenons on all the joints, including the barrel, where it runs the entire length. The wooden clarinets join the existing harmony range of Eb, C and bass clarinets; all of which are already widely used by teachers and schools worldwide.

For educational enquiries contact John Packer on [education@johnpacker.co.uk](mailto:education@johnpacker.co.uk) or call 01823 282386 or to find your local stockist: [www.jpmusicalinstruments.com](http://www.jpmusicalinstruments.com)



# Coach House Pianos

**One of a kind Piano Showroom opens in the Chelsea Design Quarter**

Coach House Pianos is delighted to announce the opening of a 'one of a kind' piano showroom in London on 4th November 2020. The long established piano house has been offering its outstanding service to Londoners for some time, but is now offering the largest choice of highest quality pianos in the capital by creating the ultimate destination in South West London's Chelsea Design Quarter. Anyone looking to buy the 'right piano for them' will be able to choose from the world's most famous piano brands in a relaxed atmosphere at the iconic Talisman Building on New Kings Road.

Senior Education Manager David Halford says: "Pianos are incredibly complex instruments. This can make them daunting to our customers, but we want to remove this complexity and take away the uncertainty people have about buying, leasing and owning a quality piano. Our role is to reassure them by taking care of the detail, offering advice that helps them to make informed decisions and using our expertise to simplify and demystify regular jargon."

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



## Rayburn Tours

**Say hello to our new UK music tours for school, youth and adult groups!**

We hope that everyone is keeping well. It's been a challenging time for us all, but the team at Rayburn have been working hard during the last 8-9 months to ensure that when performances and travel are more feasible, we're ready and waiting with a portfolio of tours that will provide groups with greater choice. Couple this with the fact that our trips can be planned as far ahead as 2022 and we're confident we can get you back touring safely!

UK trips aren't anything new to us – we've been offering them for years alongside all of our international destinations! But because we know some ensembles aren't quite ready to start thinking about travelling internationally in 2021, we've spent some time enhancing our UK portfolio to make them even more exciting, rich with performance opportunities and great value for money – all backed by our Rayburn Covid Guarantee. This means you can plan ahead and book confidently knowing that if COVID gets in the way of your trip going ahead you'll be financially protected\*. Our new extra-flexible Cancellation Policies for all tours booked before 28th February 2021 for travel in 2021/2022 mean you can start planning, and looking ahead to the future. It's a dose of what we all need!

Spanning the length and breadth of the country, our new UK trips cover almost all areas of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales; just start talking to our team and we'll tailor a trip to meet your groups' performance objectives! We're ready and waiting for you. Call 01332 347828 or visit [www.rayburntours.com](http://www.rayburntours.com) to explore further. \*See website for full terms and conditions.

## Trinity College London

**Digital Grades and Diplomas from Trinity College London**

Trinity College London is delighted to bring our Digital Grades and Diplomas to teachers and candidates, across all of our international markets, meaning that whatever the challenges the future brings, candidates will be able to continue taking their exams digitally. Launching on our newly upgraded digital system offering a completely revamped customer experience, the Digital Grades and Diplomas will be available to all candidates and teachers who want to have their achievement recognised through a Trinity College London Music qualification.

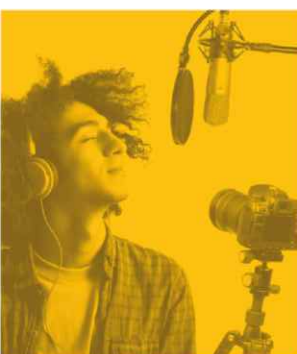
In response to a changing world, the Digital Grades and Diplomas reflect the increasing adoption of digital technologies in learning and education. The digital exams enable candidates to record their pieces/songs and technical work at a place and time of their choice and then submit the video recording via our online platform to be assessed by our expert examiners.

The Digital Grades and Diplomas have been designed to give candidates the opportunity to 'be the best they can be' in all aspects of their



performance. A growing library of comprehensive online digital resources provide support to candidates and teachers throughout their digital exam journey. The Digital Grades and Diplomas open doors to the worlds of education and industry in the same way the face-to-face Grade or Diploma exams do. They carry the same Ofqual regulatory status, including UCAS points at Grades 6, 7 and 8, and are underpinned by the same academic rigour you expect from any Trinity College London qualification.

**Find out more at [www.trinitycollege.com/dgd](http://www.trinitycollege.com/dgd)**



## Podcasting with RSL

**New Graded exams in Podcasting and Vlogging!**

Who would have thought that Podcasting and Vlogging would become such big things?! RSL (Rockschool) have recently launched Graded Exams in both these disciplines, with exams ranging from Debut through to Grade 8. These 'Creative Qualifications' are aimed at advancing the skills of creative professionals and will extend RSL's current offering to students seeking a fully rounded career in the creative sector. The exams have been developed in conjunction with creative media course experts GoCreate Academy, and include e-publications and learning material for each grade. Check out the RSL (Rockschool) website for more details at [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com).



# PARTNERSHIPS

for MUSIC in SCHOOLS

## PART ONE



## PARTNERSHIPS

TIM GARRARD, PARTNERSHIP LEAD FOR MTA, INTRODUCES THE FIRST OF OUR PARTNERSHIPS FEATURE ISSUES

### With a little help from my friends

One weekend in November witnessed the passing of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks against the backdrop of an election viewed by many as one in which love conquered hate. Lord Sacks once said that 'when we restore social covenant, we defeat politics of anger and re-create politics of hope'. There will yet be bumps in the road, but there was something very fitting to be found in Lord Sacks' words on the day that Vice President Biden promised to work to heal a divided country.

And here in the UK, the nationwide reaction to Marcus Rashford's extraordinary determination to end child poverty, prompted Downing Street to make a U-turn and provide free school meals during the Christmas holidays.

This is what humans are capable of. When enough good people decide there is a better way, barriers can be broken.

### It's all too much

One of the more enjoyable moments of any calendar year is the MTA Conference, and, whilst the virus deprived us of the wonderful event that Mark Wilderspin had prepared for us in 2020 at St Paul's School, Bromsgrove's excellent conference in 2019 shone a light on the current state of Music Education in the UK. Speakers including Deborah Annetts (ISM Chief Executive) and Bridget Whyte (Music Mark Chief Executive) told us the sobering truth, that the situation is dire.

The State of the Nation Report (February 2019), compiled by the All-Parliamentary Group for Music

Tim Garrard is Partnerships Lead for MTA, Director of Music at Westminster School and a trustee of Musical Boroughs Trust



Education, the University of Sussex and the Incorporated Society of Musicians, set the scene: most primary school music curriculum is delivered by non-music specialists; in secondary schools, on average, 1.5 music teachers are responsible for whole school provision; music hubs are seriously underfunded and limited in their offer by bureaucratic postcode boundaries.

For years now, we have fought hard to nullify the threat to Music A Level brought about by the EBacc, advocates of STEM, or the Russell Group's 'facilitating subjects'. Only recently was Music initial teacher training funding withdrawn by the Department for Education.

But it's not all doom and gloom! Ofsted's new updated inspection framework focuses on curriculum as opposed to outcomes, and the Russell Group of universities has dropped its list of facilitating subjects. There is an opportunity to change the direction of travel.

This is where we come in.

### Come together

Aside from our corporate members, the Music Teachers' Association is made up of EYFS specialists, primary or secondary specialists, classroom practitioners and instrumental and singing teachers, working in both the state and private sectors. We come

from all over the UK and far beyond. We specialise in Boulanger, B.B. King, Bach, Bebop, balafons, and breakdowns (of the pop music variety). We teach young people with various types of disability and special educational needs. We work with beginners, virtuosos, and everything in between. Some of us have access to significant physical and digital resources, and others have none.

But despite our differing circumstances, through my interactions with music teachers one thing is clear: we share so many common values. It is MTA's quest to honour its strapline as an association run 'by teachers, for teachers', for ALL teachers, for the benefit of ALL children and young people.

As we evolve as an association we will continue to get better at delivering this, and our engagement thus far with UK Music Masters' inclusion and diversity strategy tool, I'M IN, has highlighted how we absolutely must encourage and champion diversity, strive always for inclusion, and constantly review, reflect and refine so as to ensure equity.

Of one thing I have no doubt, that MTA wants to deliver opportunities and access for all, allowing every child access to life-changing experiences.

This is why we are so passionate about exploring ways in which we can work together to provide giant networks of collaborative opportunity.

## Revolution

These two Partnerships issues, Part One (December) and Part Two (February) are full of examples of best practice which, at its core, has to be child-focused as opposed to institution-centric.

With the best of intentions, there is a danger that much good work is happening in silos, and our challenge moving forward must be to open up all lines of communication in order to consider just what is possible.

Met with this Government's silence in response to his initial rallying call, Marcus Rashford demanded more, and organisations the length and breadth of the country responded unanimously with unflinching support for the one cause.

We have similar misgivings about governmental support or lack thereof in the world of Music Education.

But why can't we strive to achieve a similar U-turn?

What would happen if all schools and music hubs, all youth music organisations and youth music charities, and all professional ensembles and venues came together for the sake of the next generation?

What would happen if MTA worked in partnership with ACSL, NAHT and HMC in order to persuade all headteachers of the power of Music? What would happen if MTA, Music Mark and ISM could together create a system whereby everywhere, in this country, local schools and hubs and venues and music organisations were interconnected in a way that left no child behind.

The pages of both Part One and February's Part Two contain the views of heads and music teachers of both primary and secondary and state and independent. They highlight the power of partnership for music hubs and organisations such as the Benedetti Foundation and Gabrieli Roar. They detail the work of educational partnership schemes, such as that run by the Diocese of Leeds, and charities like Orchestras For All and Music Masters.

Together, we #candomusic.

# I'M IN

## The Inclusive Music Index

After two years of development, Music Masters launched I'M IN – The Inclusive Music Index this summer with 70 organisations from right across the UK registered to take part in our trial version of the tool, including the London Symphony Orchestra, Royal College of Music, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and Music Teachers Association.

Each organisation is using I'M IN – our online audit and strategy tool – to better understand where they can achieve success in diversity and inclusion. By helping organisations reckon with the complexities that underpin inequality in our sector, together we will begin to build a richer, more inclusive music sector. We are motivated to do this so that young musicians from all backgrounds, including those we work with every day, can inherit a stronger and more creative musical future.

Rob Adediran, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor for Music Masters, spoke to the MTA Podcast *Teaching Notes* in July, saying, "It's important that all diversities are represented in the music we make. We want our music to tell the stories of the whole nation, and I firmly believe the more people involved telling the stories through music, the better that musical output will be."

The tool, which we developed with *AlixPartners* and *Frost Included* in 2017/18 combines a powerful set of questions which get beneath the surface of diversity issues, such as a lack of representation within the workforce, with analysis from diversity and inclusion specialists. It also provides a scaffold for meaningful conversations on what are complex and hard to navigate issues.

Roz de Vile is the Chief Executive Officer of Music Masters



So far, we have taken 30 organisations through this process and are currently working with another 40, with many of them exploring these themes with a level of detail that hadn't been possible before. We are working with many of the biggest brands in classical music and some of the most innovative community-led organisations. Many of the challenges they face are common, but each organisation requires a tailored response that addresses their particular context. I'M IN is flexible enough to do that, and we have been excited to see the initial results, as understanding and awareness grow and organisations identify steps they can take to create more inclusive cultures for the benefit of all.

**Quotes from some of the participants:** "It was great to hear your reflections and having the recommendations and priorities in the report is really useful for our next steps. I'm really hopeful that this will help us to make a lasting change..."

"Thank you so much for your great workshop with us yesterday, and for being so generous with your time. I found it an incredibly useful session and also a confidence booster in terms of how we should move forward. This has been such a positive and challenging process for us, and I look forward to continuing with it."

"Thank you so much for this insightful report. We are excited about sharing the feedback with our wider team and taking action!"

[musicmasters.org.uk/advocacy/im-in](https://musicmasters.org.uk/advocacy/im-in)

Twitter - [twitter.com/ukmusicmasters](https://twitter.com/ukmusicmasters)



## Schools Singing Programme Diocese of Leeds

Thomas Leech is the Director of the Diocese of Leeds Schools Singing Programme and Musical Director of Bradford Festival Choral Society.



Early on in my role for the Diocese of Leeds, I remember a somewhat jaded organist saying 'your programme's so complicated, it would be too much like hard work to dismantle it'. There's a grain of truth under that stony cynicism; purposeful and productive partnerships - be they with schools, higher education, parishes, or other musical organisations - have created a system with results that are compelling to existing and new participants alike. With opportunities for participation far broader than a typical cathedral choir there is real diversity - social, racial and developmental. With that breadth comes organisational relevance and resilience, both feeding into the personal growth and achievements that Josh and Gabrielle describe in their quotes.

Is there a reason why a school could not be part of such a programme? Is there a good reason for cathedrals to continue so much short term, project-based 'outreach' work rather than create sustained school-centred work in state schools? Perhaps it's been easier for a cathedral outside of the traditional Church of England model to innovate - the absence of perceived tradition and quality is surely liberating.

Back in 2002, Leeds Cathedral had a reasonably good Girls' Choir but little else musically. Initial expansion was modest and incremental. Beginning in Bradford, not in the leafy suburbs of north Leeds, it was emphatically not centred on supporting a cathedral choir, but rather on developing a set of choirs that drew from in-school provision and removed as many barriers to participation as possible. An early decision was made to focus efforts on primary schools, a strategy which paid enormous dividends reflected by the number of children who then sang in one of our choirs from the age of 7 or 8 through to 18.'

“ My experiences with the Bradford Catholic Boys' Choir have shaped me as a person. Growing up in inner-city Bradford with limited options, the choir gave me the confidence to aspire to more. From singing weekly vespers at the local church to performing on TV in front of millions, each experience has proven invaluable in my life journey and I will continue to draw on the lessons of resilience and perseverance gained here as I move on to my next chapter at the University of Oxford.



Josh - member BCBC

The positive and sustained impact on the children and schools taking part was - and remains - the most persuasive argument for schools joining the programme; those early participants saw rapid rewards with quality after-school groups providing opportunities to build on the whole-class singing. After only a couple of years the Bradford choirs had sung at the Royal Albert Hall, toured, broadcast liturgies for the BBC and enjoyed competition success. Expansion continued, with partnerships between schools and parish in Huddersfield, only then followed by Leeds where the cathedral choirs were enlarged and a system of junior choirs introduced. As academisation gained pace, we were able to begin a partnership with the largest of the Diocese's multi-academy trusts, and have continued local expansion, most recently developing our provision in and around Halifax.

What looks like a behemoth (at least compared to many church music programmes) began with that blank sheet of A3 paper, and nothing has been as critical as the building of true partnerships with many of the Diocese's schools. I'll try to extract a coherent set of ingredients and method:

**Need:** For us, the centrality of faith arguably makes working with the Diocese's schools easier (although there's sometimes a misconception that we're force-feeding children neumes...); whatever the context, the case for singing in schools is extremely strong. It is essential to articulate the power, the positive immediacy and long-term impact of music-making

**Money:** Most cathedral choirs cost a lot of money per child chorister and this presents a huge risk. In many ways we've removed this, with schools buying in our provision at rates similar to other providers, and as a result the Diocese's financial input is one of the smaller elements of the system. This means what you're offering needs to be worth paying for, particularly when many schools remain under enormous financial pressure.

**Quality:** The quality of teaching has to be outstanding - the days of maverick, disorganised but brilliant musicians blundering into classrooms without any planning is long gone (sadly the tendency to send young musicians - be they organ scholars or recent graduates - into the same environment without support or training is still rather too prevalent). While the professional jargon can be off-putting, for those 30 minutes our staff are brilliant musicians AND classroom teachers. In short, musical quality is not enough. The framework for further achievement must also exist - the after-school offer that extends the classroom work.

**Relationships:** What do the schools need? What do they think about our delivery? We need to listen, and also guide (providing clear advice on singing alongside Covid-19 being an obvious example). Headteachers need to know we have the interests of the children at the centre of our work, not abstract notions of musical excellence or cheap ways to fund a cathedral choir.

**Diversity:** Excellent whole-class singing naturally removes many barriers - you remove self-selection, children who would dismiss 'choir' or 'singing' have the chance to engage, most will be enjoying it and, by providing such open access, a diverse cohort will join after-school choirs year in, year out. Choirs (with appropriate support for access) then provide role models and the cycle continues.

[www.dioceseofleedsmusic.org.uk](http://www.dioceseofleedsmusic.org.uk)  
[www.schoolssingingprogramme.org.uk](http://www.schoolssingingprogramme.org.uk)  
 Twitter - @thomas\_leech

“ I'll be going to Trinity College, Cambridge, to study Natural Sciences. I have been part of Bradford Catholic Youth Choir for seven years and I have gained so much from it, from the once in a lifetime opportunity to sing in the Vatican, to the many friends I have made along the way. One of the highlights for me was singing live on TV for the Christmas Day mass. I've had such an incredible time in choir, none of which would be possible without the Diocese's Schools Singing Programme, it really has been a rewarding and enriching experience which I will cherish for the rest of my life!



Gabrielle - member of BCYC

Our team has to combine excellent vocal ability with superb teaching, at the same time having the musicianship to stretch our best choirs and rise to the challenges that fresh opportunities bring. Without that quality I suspect we wouldn't enjoy a fruitful relationship with Gabrieli Roar for instance - a programme that has pushed the Bradford groups further (and indeed provided Josh and Gabrielle with a hugely positive experience of Cambridge) - or have our choirs regularly singing for BBC broadcasts.

It's not all about singing - our keyboard programme partners with the Royal College of Organists and continues to innovate, together with a new classical accordion based programme underway - and it's not about sitting back on our progress so far.

Do we provide enough for our most able singers? How do we equip the children with the confidence and tools to continue engaging with choral music when they move on? Is our all-white choral staff a barrier to the aspirations of our many black and brown choristers? There's no one size fits all approach - without doubt I can say that meaningful and equal partnerships are at the heart of our programme, enabling its impact on thousands of young lives.

## PAUL McCREESH

Paul McCreesh, Founder and Artistic Director of the Gabrieli Consort and Players, talks music education, Gabrieli Roar and his latest partnership project, Bach to School, in conversation with Tim Garrard.

### **Can you describe your own music education?**

Yes, sporadic, I suppose! I was lucky. I won a small scholarship for instrumental lessons from my local authority, though that funding eventually stopped. But I was lucky again because my parents were prepared to dig into their pockets, quite deeply sometimes. They didn't have a lot of money but they really valued music education.

Looking back, making comparisons with what is available today, my state schools were OK. Both had an orchestra and a choir, and I think pretty much every school did in those days - the 60s and early 70s. Nowadays, I'm sure you'd find the odd school that has better provision. But, very sadly, the general level is incredibly low or, often, in fact, non-existent. There were more things happening then, at a much broader level.

I think I was quite a musical kid, but I wasn't by any means a wunderkind. Music was certainly my main interest, and I much enjoyed playing in the local youth orchestra, but I surely wasn't going to be a solo cellist, and even getting into the National Youth Orchestra was a level too high for me. Maybe I had some talent, but I was spectacularly unfocused! Even as an adult I've had to work really hard on finding that core discipline. But I do think all of this has made me a better teacher.

### **What makes a really good teacher?**

I'm not for one minute going to presume to lecture teachers about this, but, I do have a lot of space in my life for the slightly awkward, maverick kid who does things their own way; the kid

who's not always going to come up with an A\* but has that flair. I think we all know that if a kid wants to do something, nothing will stop them! Perhaps part of teaching is to make sure that we're opening the right door for that pupil, because somebody who may have failed in one area may really thrive in another; we have to find where that is.

### **Can you tell us a bit more about Gabrieli Roar?**

Roar is unashamedly evangelical in its mission – to connect young people with 'core culture' through singing, and in so doing to challenge the way young people think. A Roar project will often be 300 young people of all backgrounds from all over the country, uniting to share something which is bigger than themselves. I do feel that if we're not introducing young people to the greatest works of art then we're not really giving them the tools to understand our world. You may be in Ely Cathedral performing a piece of Parry, but within five minutes we can talk about people throughout history, connect with plainsong of the ancient world, discuss the history of the Fens, and why Ely Cathedral is built in what is now a very small town. Everything is connected! We can also talk about religion in a really creative way outside the context of religious belief. So, for me, Roar is always a way to make young people think in a different way.

I don't run ROAR to make professional musicians of the future - though that may be a happy by-product because some of our young people are indeed very passionate about singing. I do it because, I hope, our youngsters become more rounded people and understand the world better. They will also be happier people because they've

seen a bigger range of possibilities. Perhaps they will grow up to be great teachers, or great choir amateurs, or people who work in the arts; but, if they don't do that, no matter. I hope they will want to explore the world of culture in their lives, and maybe become parents who are confident to share that with their own children. If we can give that to the younger generation then we can all achieve something of real value to society.

We've made a start, but there's no reason why we couldn't have a Roar-type project in 25 major cities in this country. That has to be the aspiration. Roar has somehow got to grow up and one day expand beyond my own passion and commitment, which is why it's great working with you guys at MTA. I want to expand Roar to be a truly national organisation, but it must never be a quango; part of it must be to offer kids the change to work with really great conductors and singers who can share their skills with kids.

### **You are a passionate advocate for widening access and opportunity for all. How big a role does educational partnership and collaboration have to play in achieving this?**

I am extremely concerned that so many of the people in professional music, and especially choral music, are privately educated. And, it seems, increasingly so. Obviously, to some degree that speaks for the quality of the education they receive so there's no criticism of the people who teach in the private sector, but as a country I think we're losing a tremendous opportunity.





So I think partnership is absolutely vital. But it has to be real partnership. However great the temptation is, we've all got to try and avoid political passions getting in the way of our commitment to the art. And we have to be very careful that we don't make a basic assumption that everything in the private sector is rosy in comparison to the state sector, because that simply isn't the case. There is some stupendously good teaching going on in the state sector. So we have to cultivate really carefully nurtured collaborative projects which are really about true partnership, aware that disparity between resources can often cause some tension.

I'm also a passionate advocate for class-based music teaching, which should never be replaced by projects. So many cultural organisations have 'outreach projects', which is a phrase I rather detest. With Roar we actually invite young people into our core activity. We share the stage with them,

and we put records out in the public domain. Ok, we didn't win a Gramophone Award this year, but we did come in the top three, which is not bad (I can't be responsible if they make the wrong decisions!). And we weren't in an 'education' category – we were in the top three of international choral recordings this year. That proves what young people can do – but Roar's ordinary kids really do extraordinary things.

#### **Tell us about 'Bach to School'!**

'Bach to School' is a little project that I've created, partly with my MTA partner in crime, Simon Toyne. It's built around the Bach Chorale, but engineered to work with the current restrictions facing school music. The beauty of the chorales is that they're really great music but they're very, very simple in terms of their musical demands. So we've put together a list of the best cantata-movement chorales, and we've recorded all the music live

with Gabrieli, so you've got a real orchestral accompaniment with period instruments. And I've also written short teaching notes with a little bit of background. The idea is to make it possible for every single school in the country - whether they've got a developed music tradition or a simple unison choir - to connect with Bach's amazing music. I'm in complete admiration for what teachers are achieving in schools at the moment, and I hope this little offering will be a useful resource.

[www.gabrieli.com/roar/bach-to-school](http://www.gabrieli.com/roar/bach-to-school)  
[twitter.com/GabrieliCandP](https://twitter.com/GabrieliCandP)

# MUSICAL PARTNERSHIPS

## THE CULTURE OF THE POSSIBLE

HMC is a professional association of heads of the world's leading independent schools.

This is an edited version of Simon Toyne's speech to the HMC Conference on 5th October 2020, in which he gave five action points – 1. Be part of your local music hub; 2. Contribute to #CanDoMusic; 3. Make sure your music teachers are members of the MTA; 4. Empower your Director of Music and start conversations with your counterparts in the state sector; 5. Sign up for Bach to School. The full version can be seen at <https://youtu.be/3olbbWit5wM>

Music is the culture of the possible – whether making music individually, in an ensemble, or in a classroom.

Simon Toyne is the President of the Music Teachers Association



Whatever age we are, with music we develop our understanding of what human beings can actually do. And the more people we make music with, the more everyone collectively is lifted. It's often said that, here in the UK, we have the world's greatest choirs; but in none of those choirs will you find the world's greatest voices – we are far stronger collectively than as a group of individuals. Working together is a deeply musical pursuit.

Music in schools occupies an unusual position compared to other subjects, not just because it should operate well beyond the classroom, but because there seems to be little consensus as to its core purpose. And this lack of consensus has created a disconcerting arbitrariness in terms of what music education children receive in school. School choirs, bands and orchestras are a source of pride for schools and their communities, and are an important outward face of the school. Similarly, the musical achievement of individual students – for example, gaining Grade 8 distinction, or giving performances on the professional stage – are celebrated through assemblies and associated press releases, as the school contributes to the country's talent pipeline.

But is the main purpose of music in schools to bring on gifted performers? Is it about large ensembles? Is it something that everybody is doing? Or

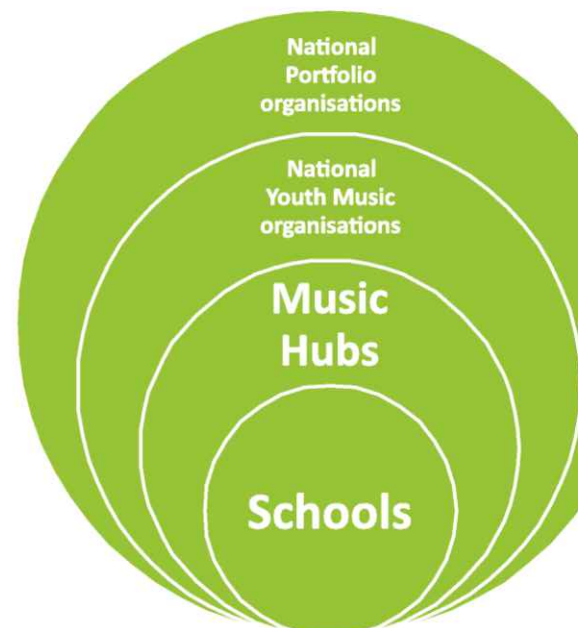
just a few? Is music central to the curriculum, or does it lie within extra-curricular / enrichment?

And what does 'doing music' mean? It's not just performing - it's composing; it's developing critical responses; it's listening – the activity that unites all humanity; it's all-encompassing.

We teach music in our schools to develop the next generation of musicians and music-lovers. Music is a primal need. Therefore we teach it. Yes, there are ancillary benefits – literacy, numeracy, overall academic performance, behaviour, wellbeing, and all of these are well documented – but the reason we teach music is for its intrinsic musical values. We teach music for its own sake.

There is a National Plan for Music - the only subject which has a national plan – which is currently being refreshed and is due to be published this academic year. As a result of this, there is a remarkable ecosystem, in which schools are connected to Music Hubs and, in turn, to the seven National Youth Music Organisations (Music for Youth, National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, National Youth Choirs of Great Britain, National Youth Jazz Collective, National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, South Asian Music Youth Orchestra (SAMYO), British Youth Music Theatre) and the 668 National Portfolio Organisations.

Schools are at the centre of this ecosystem because they are the place where every child is guaranteed music. As a result, schools have a vital role in the musical and cultural life of our nation. We owe it to our children for that music to be purposeful and vibrant, to broaden horizons and open doors to new worlds – for music education to be the culture of the possible.



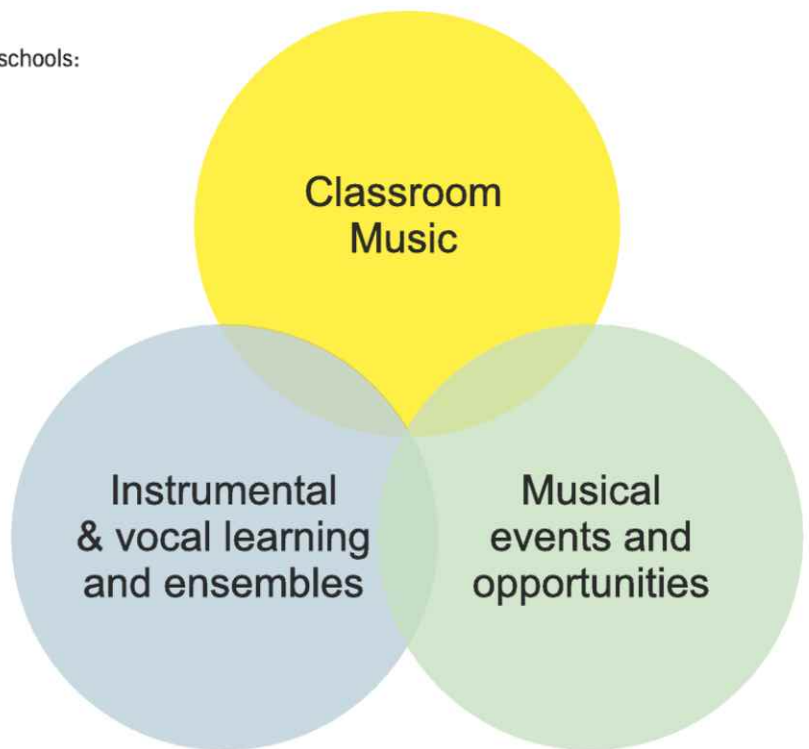
There are three inter-connected aspects of music in schools:

- a) Music in the classroom (the 'taught curriculum'), compulsory until Year 9, then optional for examination classes (GCSE, BTEC, A Level)
- b) Instrumental & vocal tuition (in groups or one-to-one) and ensemble membership
- c) Musical 'events' and opportunities, e.g. singing in assembly, concerts and shows, trips to professional concerts

All three areas need to be nurtured in schools in order for music education to thrive. Traditionally, the profile of (b) and (c) is far higher in independent schools, not just because of the value placed upon them, but because of the financial commitment needed. In state schools, only classroom music is funded by the government.

Despite official protestations, the reality is that, to gain a top grade at GCSE or A Level music, 1:1 instrumental or vocal tuition is necessary. 89% of parents of students receiving one-to-one tuition make a financial contribution towards it. Cultural and socio-economic background therefore plays a part in students' ability to take music further after Year 9. A recent report from the Musicians' Union showed that, while 52% of students with graduate parents will learn a musical instrument at some point at school, the same would hold true for only 21% of students whose parents' education finished at secondary school. The same report highlighted that children in families with a combined income of more than £46,000 per annum are twice as likely to learn an instrument than those children in families with a combined income of £28,000 or less. Over the last five years, entries to ABRSM graded music examinations (grades 1 to 8) in England have fallen by almost 42,000, a drop of 18.6%.

A Level Music is one of the fastest disappearing subjects. This year, there were only 5,035 entries out of total of 731,855 for all subjects, a drop of 27% since 2014/15. There are whole areas of the country where it is not possible to take Music A Level. This is a time bomb for the music teaching profession. Without A Level, music degrees become unviable. Without music graduates, there are no music teachers.



And yet music teaching is a great job. Music teachers are profound influencers, providing so many lightbulb moments that change lives. A prime requirement of the job is to allow the world to open up. We make music every day, developing our own musicianship through teaching. The impact of music on wellbeing and mental health profound – for our students and for ourselves. What we teach lasts for life.

However, over 70% of secondary music teachers are in one-person departments and 70% of secondary music teachers also teaching outside of their subject area. Most music teachers have to invent their own curriculum resources and run a thriving extra-curricular programme, with limited access to subject-specific CPD. They are an important, public face of the school, while often being the person whose demands for rehearsal time and space actively irritate people, even in the most supportive school. As Keith Swanwick wrote twenty years ago, “doing both jobs of music teacher and director of music rolled into one is onerous, especially when people are only paid for one of them”.

The extraordinary online presence of music teachers through Facebook groups (with over 5000 members of KS3 Music – Hints and Tips), Twitter and TES resources, is testament to music teachers' craving for community (what Matt Ridley describes as “the human instinct for co-operative teamwork”).

Music teaching is a lonely business at the best of times. A teacher in a one-person department can feel isolated within the school, let alone in the wider context of the education sector at large.

The result of all of this is the situation on the ground is hugely disparate and unequal. Often this is to do with geographical location; sometimes the quality of teaching; sometimes the quality of leadership. In many cases, all three.

Together, we ought to be able to address this.

“ We teach music in our schools to develop the next generation of musicians and music-lovers.

Music is a primal need.

Therefore we teach it.

# Partnerships

The Music Teachers' Association was founded 120 years ago (as the Union of Directors of Music in Secondary Schools, becoming the MMA 20 years later) as a means of countering the institutional isolation of the music teacher – of being able to meet up, share ideas (and problems) and to work together for the benefit of all. And it's that deeply musical process of connection between human beings that has made such a difference to so many music teachers over the years. This is important for us to consider when planning partnerships between schools and organisations - positive change happens through genuine partnership at a human level. Grand projects do not work unless there is equal partnership and shared ownership. And, please, let's get rid of the word 'outreach'.

At the heart of partnerships is connecting.

The biggest issue in music education is the value placed on it. Yes, it does demand financial investment, but this is secondary to schools recognising its intrinsic value. Jimmy Rotheram,

Senior Music Teacher at Feversham Primary Academy and finalist for the Global Teacher Award, repeatedly points out that the reason music is now thriving at Feversham is because it is valued. Can you help us by articulating to others the value that you place upon music in your schools?

The second issue (often a result of the first) is the one-person music department, as mentioned already. Can you help expand other schools' musical provision?

We encourage our music teachers to think of their vocal and instrumental teachers as full members of the music department, even if they're just visiting for two or three 1:1 lessons. But still, that solitary music teacher is somehow having to deliver those three areas of music. They may feel isolated within their school – always having to fight a corner – let alone within the wider musical ecosystem.

Why should one person have to do it all by themselves? You will not find an outstanding choral conductor, band leader, orchestral musician, rock

guitarist, proficient composer, sight-reading pianist, technician in one person. That's before we add enjoying teaching double Year 9 Reggae on a Friday afternoon. Or the skills needed to be a Head of Department. That's why great schools employ many musicians with different specialisms. That's also why, where there's an outstanding music department, there's invariably an outstanding school.

Even though they are busy, your music departments will still have more time than a one-person music department at a state school, and so can not only make a substantial impact upon the musical provision at local schools but provide a lifeline for these music teachers who need it. Were you to provide time for your music departments to connect with neighbouring schools, the results could be transformative.

So, I'm going to give some ideas about what your Director of Music can do first, and then what you can do as a Head.

## “Where there is an outstanding music department, there is an outstanding school

### What Directors of Music can do

Ask yourself the question, “Do I know my colleagues in local schools?” If not, pick up the phone to them and make contact. Meet them, and establish a connection.

I can't overstate the inherent fear of independent schools that exists in some of the state sector. This sense of not belonging at the same table is deep rooted, often connected to teachers' own educational experiences as students. You may feel that this is unjustified, but you need to recognise that it's there. And the only way to break that impasse is for you to make the first move.

This is important.

Similarly, call your local music hub. Ask to find out what they do, and how you can help. Connect with local venues, ensembles and musical charities. The UK's orchestras and professional ensembles are desperate to connect with schools, and are in a perilous position as a result of COVID-19. How can we all work together to benefit the whole community? Ask questions, and listen.

What type of partnership can you develop that will benefit everyone (including you)?

Offer what you can – venues, resources, expertise (but don't assume others don't have these - this is a two-way street, and you will find truly outstanding practitioners in the state sector).

Establish a network of musical partners.

Importantly, you need to bin the idea of ownership. A partnership is a collaboration; although any partnership needs drive from somewhere, all partners need to feel equal.

Connected to this, use social media/publicity sensitively, ensuring that all partners are credited equally.

Work towards building a sustainable partnership, rather than a one-off project – good partnerships create systemic change.

And remember that just as responsive listening is at the heart of outstanding musicianship, the same holds true for outstanding partnerships.

**What Heads can do**

None of this can happen without your leadership. Empower your Director of Music, and speak to your counterparts in the state sector. Anything you can do to help music in state schools will be met with open arms.

But a word of caution about GCSE and A Level Music. Although your instinct might be to open up your classes to neighbouring schools, the danger of this is outsourcing its value and therefore reducing the amount of music teaching (and with it employment of music teachers) in schools. So, please help schools to understand how these classes, though seemingly a loss leader in period count, are actually of huge value – morally and financially - not just to the students taking the classes, but in enabling extra-curricular music in the school at large. And Key Stage

3 students having strong musical role models at Key Stages 4 and 5 further develops a structure so that, in time, it becomes sustainable.

Please spread the message that Partnership is so important, at HMC Cluster Groups, at Head level and at Director of Music level.

And please start the conversations with state schools – we in the state sector need you to make contact, for the reasons discussed earlier.

**Conclusion**

This is the beginning of an exciting partnership between the MTA and HMC. The contribution of HMC schools to #CanDoMusic, and our collective promotion and sponsorship of Bach to School are tangible (and easy) ways in which the message can be spread far and wide about the value of music in schools.

We look forward to working together to ensure all schools share our educational credo - that all students in all schools should receive outstanding music education. This is the culture of the possible.

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# SALLY-ANNE HUANG

Sally-Anne Huang, Chair of the HMC, talks music education and partnership, in conversation with Tim Garrard.

Sally-Anne Huang is High Master of St Paul's School and the Chair of HMC



**Tell us about your own educational journey (primary, secondary etc.).**

I grew up in Bolton and went to a state primary school called Claypool which is still there! And from there I had the opportunity to apply to go to Bolton School which was the highest profile local independent school. My brother had got there on the direct grant scheme ten years before, but we were not a family with independent education in our background. My parents both went to grammar schools and then, because the grammar schools didn't exist at the time, they looked at independent education for us.

And I'm hugely grateful to Bolton School. I think it was the most formative time of my life, in that I was taught an awful lot of stuff. I did music lessons there; I learnt to play the flute there! But I learnt to like knowledge for its own sake. And I've met a lot of Bolton School alumni - particularly the women - and we were definitely taught that it was our job to go out and rule the world. And we never questioned it! So, Bolton School was hugely important.

I got to go to Oxford where I read Classics and English, and then I decided to become a teacher. I hadn't wanted to become a teacher; I'd wanted to become a journalist, but then when I did college journalism I realised that you had to invade people's privacy, and it didn't suit me! So, a very last-minute decision, I decided to train to be a teacher because I felt depressed about not talking about Shakespeare anymore. I did my PGCE at King's, and have remained in teaching ever since!

**You are a passionate advocate of the Arts. We've really enjoyed that! Why are you this way?**

The arts have been a massive part of my life. There was always music at home. My mum played the piano. My dad was massively into things like big band and swing, so there was always Glenn Miller and Louis Armstrong in the background.

On my 13th birthday, my parents took me to the RSC and we randomly saw an unknown Kenneth Branagh as Henry V, aged 23, so I lucked out! I came out thinking that this is life changing, so theatre for me has always made me think; it's taking me out of comfort zones; it's allowed me to imagine other things. It's just a massive part of life and I can't imagine life without it.

In lockdown I felt this even more, that when people were stuck at home they needed the National Theatre's online productions; they needed their music to be playing; they needed to be reading literature. And it really demonstrated to me: I have a huge respect for science - my goodness, I know we need that - but, also, as human beings it's a primal thing: we need the arts and our mental health suffers if we don't have them. And life is massively enhanced by the arts, as are our relationships.

So, whilst I know that our pupils on average will make more money if they do Maths or Engineering degrees, I know how much we need the musicians, the artists, and the writers for life to be worth living. So, as an educational leader, I think we have to be pushing these things as well.

“ The arts have been a massive part of my life.

There was always music at home.

“ But I think the single most important thing is relationships. Once human beings work together and concentrate on what they have in common rather than any differences, that's when all kinds of magic can happen that you didn't necessarily predict!

**How does this tie in to your work with HMC, and what are you hoping to achieve as Chair this year?**

It's a huge privilege to be Chair of HMC. I feel very conscious that I was elected by my peers, so it's been a massive privilege to advocate for and represent other heads at this time. Even before Covid-19, I always thought that I would use this time to advocate for the arts because they were underfunded, particular in the state sector.

Children should do what they love, and they'll probably be the best at it because they love it. So, I was always going to try and have a performing arts focus and, as you know, I was already talking to you and Simon and to MTA about how we can get these institutions working together.

HMC schools have a voice; they have experience; they're champions of these things. If I can leverage some of that and expand it to other people, particular through cross-sector partnerships, then that's the right thing to be doing. So, I started off trying to build a relationship with MTA which is pushing at an open door. Simon came to speak at conference and we had fantastic feedback from HMC heads who want to respond to his challenge as to how we can help music to flourish. And of course, in a Covid and Post-Covid world it's even more under threat than it was beforehand.

So, it's vitally important, and I want to use this year to initiate partnerships and projects. It ought to be about some kind of legacy and I would be really pleased if I could make a difference by setting up relationships that could run well beyond my time as Chair whether I'm directly involved or not.

**What does meaningful partnership mean to you?**

For me, partnership is exactly that. It isn't outreach, and it isn't one party saying we are really good at this and we'll come and help you because you need it. I learnt most about partnership, I think, during my time as Head of JAGS where I was part of the Southwark Schools Learning Partnership which is one of the oldest state and independent partnerships in London. It was formed in 2003 as part of the London Challenge so, by the time I got involved, the relationships were really established.

I think all partnerships do depend on structures because you need a framework and you need goals. Increasingly we're under pressure to measure our impact, and that's a good thing. So, we're never just doing this to signal our virtue; we can actually see the impact, so all of those things matter. But I think the single most important thing is relationships. Once human beings work together and concentrate on what they have in common rather than any differences, that's when all kinds of magic can happen that you didn't necessarily predict!

So, I think it starts off with frameworks, and targets, but it ends up being about people.

**What can MTA members expect to see as a result of MTA and HMC working together in partnership?**

In some ways it would be helpful for us to know what MTA members would like to see happening. I think a greater involvement in events would be good, so perhaps HMC could be more directly involved in the MTA Conference. A network of events and projects, and hopefully some music coming out of it as well!

We'd like pupils at all schools to work together. We've started off with some very specific things with the 'Bach to School' idea - just the name alone makes it worth doing! The idea is to involve lots of HMC pupils, and I've challenged HMC Heads and their Directors of Music to sign up.

I'm sure MTA can benefit from HMC's resources, and experiences, and communities, but there is absolutely no doubt that HMC will benefit from talking more with other MTA members about good practice in schools. I know already, having had to reopen again after the first lockdown, that there was incredibly informative good practice coming out of MTA that I stole as an HMC Head! So, it's about sharing good practice as well, but my hope is that before the end of this academic year we'll have more formal things to announce about how our relationship could move forward into the future!

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## SCHOOLS TOGETHER

Peter Hatch (Director of Partnerships & Outreach and Head of Academic Music, King's College School Wimbledon; Chair of the Schools Together Group Research & Policy Committee) interviews Nicki Mattin (Principal of Spires Academy, Canterbury, and member of the Schools Together Group Steering Committee) about cross sector music partnerships



### What is the educational context of your school?

Firstly, we have the Kent context. In Kent 'normal rules' may not apply as the selective system distorts everything. The impact of selection is profound. It impacts on primary schools; it creates a hierarchy of secondary schools; it concentrates the academically able/affluent in some schools and concentrates the vulnerable, academically less able and less affluent in others, with predictable consequences on results and attendance. Approximately 33% of students are in grammar schools in East Kent.

Spires Academy is a secondary modern or high school. The students here have typically failed: they have either failed to be entered for the Kent Test, or were entered for it and failed. Almost 50% of the student population is identified as disadvantaged which is well above national average. It is therefore a school facing challenging circumstances, where aspiration and access to the 'cultural capital' that is so crucial to enabling confidence and self-esteem is often limited.

### Which music cross-sector partnerships are established at your school and how do these partnership activities take place?

Spires Academy is part of East Kent Schools Together (EKST), a group of three independent schools, five state schools and a local university. All members work together to foster the common aims of raising aspirations and widening horizons by enabling collaborative educational projects involving children from a variety of backgrounds, with pupil wellbeing at the centre.

Now in its third year, The Big Sing was made possible by a number of successful bids for grant funding. A choir director, Lemon Otter, was appointed to enable a joint choir to be established made up of pupils and staff from all EKST schools. The aim was not to attract the best singers, but instead to help those students who were generally lacking in confidence by giving them the opportunity to sing together with a professional conductor.

The choir has performed at a number of events, including the Kent teacher of the year awards.

During lockdown, wellbeing was taken as a theme across EKST and a song was chosen every two weeks. Students and Staff from all the partner schools were encouraged to record themselves remotely and Sue Wood, the music teacher at Spires Academy, put the performances together and shared across our social media platforms. A whole range of pupils were involved, including boarders from independent schools who had had to return home, often far away from Kent.

### How did you go about setting up the Big Sing?

It was felt that a choir would be the perfect music project since it was something in which all could take part, with all of the benefits associated with group singing, which fitted perfectly with our joint aims. The professional conductor added another dimension, since sometimes if a teacher from one school is running a project it can feel one-sided. Initially, schools were asked for six students each and they rehearsed in independent – state school pairings before the whole group was put together. The number of participants was expanded as it grew. We even secured funding to purchase choir T-shirts.

The EKST is hoping to build upon the success of the choir and establish a joint orchestra in the future.

The schools together group was founded in 2016, both as a nationwide discussion group for individuals working in primary and secondary schools from the state and independent sectors who are responsible for running partnerships, and as a forum for those who are interested in creating cross-sector projects. The group organises termly events based on themes of interest to partnership coordinators, such as measuring outcomes and funding models. It aims to encourage partnership projects which are impactful, sustainable, and provide a mutual benefit for all involved and challenge disadvantage.



Pupils involved in the project said –

“Confidence is something that might not come easily to people but standing with people in the same situation, as one whole group, boosts our confidence and makes us want to perform to our best ability.”

*Kierney and Eva, Herne Bay High School*

“Although sometimes talking to people for the first time can be scary, when I sang with them it made talking so much easier! I also think it's a really non-judgmental environment, and so even if you are not the world's best singer...you have no reason to feel uncomfortable.”

*Eliza, The King's School, Canterbury*

### **What impact have these had on your pupils?**

One of the main differences between the sectors is the freedom which independent schools have in terms of the curriculum, especially in terms of the arts. State schools must prove various progress measures and therefore there is not always the time available to spend on these subjects. In fact there is a fear that the arts will disappear from the state sector altogether.

The pupils at Spires Academy have benefited greatly from music partnership projects. In addition to the Big Sing, the students have been invited to concerts and talks which have been really helpful in expanding the curriculum and widening their experiences.

The impact of all partnership work has been measured through research carried out by our university member, Canterbury Christ Church, which undertakes an annual study investigating parent, pupil and staff views of the collaborations.

### **Have there also been benefits for the independent schools taking part?**

Absolutely, this has given them a real opportunity to be involved with a project taking place across a range of schools with a professional conductor. Friendships were established across schools. There was also an added dimension for boarders who were far away from home and found themselves meeting the families of the singers from

different schools at concerts. Barriers between pupils from incredibly different backgrounds are really broken down in these situations.

Furthermore, the choir gives all pupils involved the opportunity to sing in a variety of locations. They also have the chance to meet student ambassadors from the university partner who look after front of house at concerts.

### **How have teaching staff from both sectors benefited from the project?**

Teaching staff have been actively involved, with some singing in the choir. Moreover, connections have been made so that on a regular basis different subject areas get together to share best practice and discuss the curriculum. This means that relationships have been established beyond the Head Teachers of the partnership schools and the co-ordinators of the projects. In terms of music, there is an opportunity to share best practice from co-curricular perspective as well.

### **What advice would you give to other state schools who are interested in working with the independent sector on similar partnership projects?**

Take the plunge, you never know where it will lead. There are huge advantages to be gained from these projects. Don't go into it feeling that your school is the poor cousin, you will be surprised at how partnerships can enrich the experiences of your teaching staff, as well as expanding students' horizons. A lot rests on the independent school too

and there must be respect from both sides so that clear aims are established which will lead to a mutual benefit for all, it certainly cannot be either condescending or elitist. My experience is that the independent schools involved in Canterbury never look down on students or staff. In fact, they go out of their way to be as welcoming to us as they are to any alumni or donors who may also be attending a particular event.

It is important that a staff member from your school accompanies your pupils to events; a passionate music teacher who attends and gets excited about sharing the experience, helping to increase cultural capital and giving pointers on conduct, is essential since it may be an unknown world for the pupils.

Music is such a quick win in terms of partnership work, helping young people from both sectors with mental health and wellbeing. It is just about finding something which is mutual and can be shared by all and choir is a perfect opportunity. I would recommend that you use outside professionals so that it is not an extra pressure for school staff and so that they can participate in it themselves. The sky truly is the limit.

[www.schoolstogether.org](http://www.schoolstogether.org)  
[twitter.com/schoolstogether](https://twitter.com/schoolstogether)



# USING ASSEMBLIES TO BUILD SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Janella Ajeigbe is  
Principal of  
Mossbourne  
Parkside Academy



On a wet Tuesday last November, the year 6 helpers put the afternoon's music on the visualiser ready for the after-school choir club to start. After explaining how to pronounce the words, the children began to learn the first parts of *Et in terra pax hominibus*. I happened to walk through the hall and sat down with our sixth form helpers (who attend a local independent school) and listened as they helped to build the harmonies and guide the children through the piece.

As the music swelled, I knew that I was listening to a piece of music that would change me. I (not coming from a choral background) had never heard the piece before and like the children from my school (55% qualifying for free school meals, 79% speaking English as a second language and 94% of pupils coming from ethnic minority backgrounds) I remain grateful that I popped into afternoon choir and that I was introduced to Vivaldi.

For many Head Teachers, the impact of the corona virus crisis means that stretched budgets now need to cover extra equipment and shifts for cleaners. It is difficult to see where we will find the funds for singing or guitar lessons but I have found that, with a few phonecalls, partnerships can significantly enrich the music offer for many primary schools. Assemblies are an easy way to start and so here are three tips for using assemblies to introduce partnerships between your secondary school music department and local primary schools.

## Assemblies

### Tip 1:

Offer your time to a local school and be the guest for an assembly. The format can be simple: introduce yourself, tell a short story which explains to the children why you started playing your instrument (or why you love to sing), play a few short but famous melodies, play your instrument's highest, lowest and loudest notes and then ask if the children have any questions.

Many children have never heard a trumpet or listened to someone sing an aria, and your passion for music will be infectious. It's usually important to maintain order by letting the school staff lead the assembly – let them introduce you and then let them pick the children who ask questions. It can also be useful if the children think of their questions in advance, otherwise you tend to get asked 'have you ever played with someone famous'.

### Tip 2:

Return once a term, bringing your Y10 or Y12 students. Remember, your assemblies don't have to just feature adult staff. Develop the partnership by thinking of ways that your pupils could share their passion for music with local primary schools. In the past I've had KS3 students singing Christmas carols to the children, the jazz band playing party songs at the end of the school year and A-level students giving a (short) violin recital to our reception class.

Many of these links are still possible despite the current lockdown as I have found my pupils (once the connection is good) will participate in a digital assembly and find it similar to watching TV rather than a lesser version of a live performance.

### Tip 3:

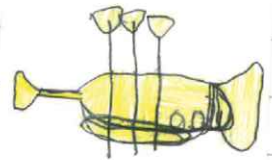
Plan a small-scale music project together. Why not choose a simple song or arrangement and work with a school, over a series of three or four rehearsals, to perform together. Use your rock bands, chamber groups or orchestras to give the children at a local school the chance to perform together with live instruments. If you work in a school with a strong musical programme then you may not realise how sparse musical provision is elsewhere. Many children go through primary school never having sung along with a piano; only ever having had a CD to accompany them.

Start simply by planning a song that you could learn together. If you have a school choir then many songs are surprisingly easy – intersperse the primary pupils (once it is safe to do so) amongst your sopranos, altos and (possibly, for some Year 6 boys) the tenors/basses and allow them to learn a part. Your older students will enjoy the energy of the primary pupils and the younger children will be excited by having older mentors.

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Dear Tom, Ben and Stuart,

Thank you for playing for us today. We learnt lots about brass instruments. I enjoyed the lovey music. My favourite instrument was the trumpet from Luan, class 1



Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Dear Katie and Angela,

I was delighted to have you in our School Singing like Sweet birds living in harmony.

I wonder when you'll ever come back to our School and sing to us again. Having opera singers at our School is great, so you could help us tune up our voices which will help a lot. It was a pleasure to have you with us. You are our harmony heroes because ~~when~~ if we have a ~~not~~ bad day, you could help us feel good again with a melody in our minds. I adored listening to pieces from Mozart and an aria from Carmen.

In Sometime, I would hope you could come ~~and~~ back and sing some more melodies. Because of your visits I am back to singing just like ~~to~~ you! When I went on holiday, I was singing in the car for about an hour. That is how much time I take for singing. I'd like to say another thank you. Don't forget to come again!

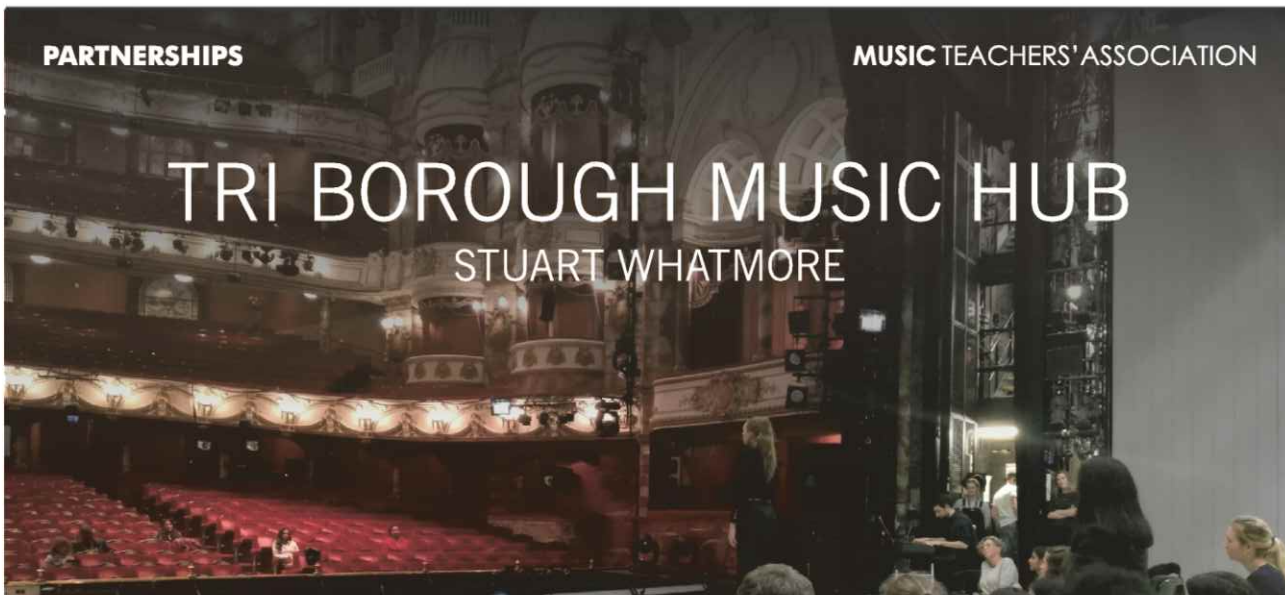
Best Wishes,  
Rafiah

Do consider the safeguarding requirements and go over these with both sets of pupils. Key things to remember are reminding your students not to exchange contact details with younger pupils and to consider their language. We also remind our pupils to respect other people's personal space and avoid spontaneous hugs!

Music departments are the custodians of our children's inheritance. You have possession of the pieces of music that have sustained us over the centuries and will guide us in the future. Many schools, particularly in deprived areas, do not have their own music department. Think of partnerships, even when they are as simple as offering to perform in an assembly, as a way to broaden the reach of your department and to share that inheritance with a wider group of children.

# TRI BOROUGH MUSIC HUB

## STUART WHATMORE



In my role as Head of the Tri-borough Music Hub (TBMH), a large amount of time is spent on working together with people and organisations in order to get the best opportunities for the key stakeholders we serve – children and young people: schools, the workforce, and the community.



At its base level, partnership working is a balance of clear communication, listening and talking to others, and an agreed focus for the change we collectively want to make. A focus on audience, purpose, and outcome helps ensure we make sound decisions about who we work with, why we work with them, and when we work with them.

Our Music Education Hub (MEH) is predicated on joined-up thinking that covers three separate Local Authorities (LAs): Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, and Westminster. This large area covers twenty square miles with 155 state-maintained schools; c. eighty independent schools; and c.300 private early years settings, and serves c.32k children aged birth to four; c.58k students aged 5-15; c.12k young people aged 16-18. People often tell me that the TBMH's MEH geography is affluent and privileged, and of course there are parts that are like all areas. However this does not tell the full picture, so context is essential. Of our state-maintained pupils, we have 560 Looked After Children; 13% with an Education and Health Care Plan; more than half of pupils have English as an Additional Language; a quarter of pupils on Free

School Meals; a third registered as Pupil Premium; and it is essential to state that the Grenfell tragedy was an horrendous demonstration of the divide between communities in our area. We aim to support all our young people to access high-quality music education, irrelevant of their circumstance. We can't do it on our own which is why partnership working is so vital.

As a LA service that sits within Children's Services the TBMH is well-positioned to connect with schools/settings and we actively engage with multiple LA teams, including Early Years, SEN, Local Offer, Short Breaks, NQT, 14-19, Safeguarding, and Admissions. These connections afford us detailed information about our local education provision. Sitting alongside the three LAs, the TBMH has two other Strategic Partners, the Royal Albert Hall and Royal College of Music. Together this strategic partnership is able to steer an effective interconnectivity across multiple music education strands. On the part of the Strategic Partners there is a genuine drive to support grass-roots music and the progressive musical pathways that emerge, irrelevant of the direction our pupils take. It is not lip-service, rather a commitment from the most senior

figures in these organisations, to effect positive change for young people. We recognise we are lucky to be able to take advantage of working with world-leading organisations in our area.

The partnership work across the TBMH can be broken down to in-kind and hard cash, and since 2012 we have worked with a wide range of Delivery Partners who are signed up to a top-level music strategy which meets all the service priorities. This unified approach to music delivery has key strands, each with objectives and all mapped to outcomes for shared responsibility.

We rarely commission organisations to deliver work, but rather we work with organisations that bring something to the table, who are experts in their field, and with whom we can together enhance the opportunities that young musicians can access. We are only interested in joining up the dots in provision and ensuring that opportunities are clearly communicated to as many young people as possible.

At the core of our partnership work is the notion that organisations bring added value to, and complement, the TBMH's offer; and importantly that there is a reciprocal and collaborative relationship. The TBMH evaluates and quality-assures all existing and potential partnerships to establish that all organisations:

- Offer clarity about how they meet the TBMH strategic priorities and contribute to the holistic TBMH offer;
- Are committed to Child Protection/Safeguarding best-practice, with robust policies in place and regular training for all staff;
- Demonstrate how they positively contribute funds (in-kind or cash) which could be used to provide opportunity for TBMH pupils/schools;
- Have in place their own reflective practice procedures through ensuring they engage in evaluations of their own activity.

Partnerships are not solely with music/arts organisations but also those key relationships with, and between, schools. Through our extensive CPD programme, we help build partnerships between teaching professionals. A strength of this is to see how music teachers take others under their wing with support, advice, guidance and sharing of knowledge. It would be great to see even more of this developed between all schools, and also to cross the divide between the state and independent sectors. There is a lot to be learnt in both directions and obvious benefits to all parties. How to develop and strengthen these relationships is going to be a key challenge for the future to ensure meaningful support that is not tokenistic or patronising.

From a MEH perspective, it is simply not possible to work with every single organisation or person, there just isn't the capacity. However, it is possible to be open, understanding and aware of what is happening with activity that we are not directly involved with. We are always keen to know about what is happening, rather than feeling the need to have direct control and ownership of the activity.

There are many challenges to make partnerships effective and there is a fine line to balance the needs of all parties involved. Things don't always go well, there can be hiccups and there can be issues, but these are nearly always due to a breakdown in communication or a misunderstanding. Covid-19 is having a significant negative effect across music education and sadly some partnership working has been halted and/or cancelled. The TBMH will continue to communicate with partners and work together to rebuild delivery and respond to new needs and challenges in the future. As a strategic lead organisation, we must do our best to help lead a positive response, where we are able to.

We hope to encourage more partnerships to evolve in the coming years that can diversify our offer and bring more high-quality music education opportunities for our community. It is not sharp elbows that we need but open arms and a willingness to listen to each other.



Stuart Whatmore has been Head of the Tri-borough Music Hub since 2014. Previous roles have been at Tower Hamlets Arts & Music Education Service, and East Sussex Music Service; and before this a freelance musician performing with English National Ballet, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, and various contemporary ensembles.

Since 2016, Stuart has steered an innovative workforce development project focused on the role of music in the Early Years Foundation Stage, funded by Youth Music. This shines a light on the importance of ensuring all children from birth to five years old, and beyond, have an entitlement to receive high-quality arts and music education.



  
tri-borough  
music hub

# SINGING PARTNERSHIPS

## RADLEY & ABINGDON

Sam Gladstone is the Precentor and Director of Music at Radley College

Developing partnerships with musicians outside of Radley has been a key aim for the school in the last few years. It can be daunting, for our teachers and pupils, to step outside of the relative safety of our familiar environment but for us, as a full boarding school, regular opportunities for our boys to make music alongside children from other schools is essential and can be transformative. Like many schools, we have enjoyed some incredible projects with local schools, involving hundreds of young people in performances. These have largely been through singing. In our most ambitious project, in 2019, over 300 young singers from local primary and secondary schools joined together in the Sheldonian Theatre for two concerts alongside the King's Singers and the Radley community choir – including the premiere of a new song by Cecilia McDowall as part of the inspirational Friday Afternoons project. This raised money for Kamran's Ward at the John Radcliffe Hospital, where one of our choristers was being treated. A pupil from a local secondary school who was singing with us spoke movingly about his treatment there, and the power of music in his recovery.

There have been many other highlights. Dominic Peckham's Chamber Choir of London led a brilliant series of rehearsals with a youth choir formed of teenagers from the Abingdon and Didcot area in preparation for a concert of music for Remembrance. New small groups of singers were formed from schools across Oxford for a day of close harmony workshops led by Apollo 5. Boys from Radley worked alongside music therapist Lizz Lipscombe and children from the Footsteps Centre for intensive rehabilitation, leading to a memorable joint performance in Dorchester Abbey.

These have all been amazing opportunities. We've learnt huge amounts from them and formed some brilliant relationships with teachers and

pupils in other schools. In addition, leading singing assemblies with year groups in local primary schools, alongside their teachers, has quite simply been huge fun. Now, we are really keen to build on these experiences to develop something more sustained in the Abingdon area.

We have experienced something of the power of this already. Our Choristership Scheme involves around 25 boys who continue to attend their own schools but come to Radley to sing in the choirs, receive free instrumental lessons, theory tuition, singing tuition, perform in Cathedrals and Concert Halls, and join our choirs on subsidised tours. We are hugely proud of this tradition, which enriches the whole school.

Lockdown, 'virtual school' and the return to live music-making have provided an opportunity to talk and to share some of these ideas with teachers and schools from across the area. There are now discussions with a local academy trust, a network of local primary schools and more widely with schools from all sectors in the Abingdon area to form a new Singing Partnership, supported by a new group of Young Music Leaders drawn from schools across the area. The aspiration is that children aged five will still be involved in music-making when they are eighteen, both in school and also with young people from across the area. We have already received excellent guidance from the Voices Foundation and Cathy Lamb at Lichfield's MusicShare. The next few weeks are full of Zoom meetings to plan further.

From conversations with teachers in the local area, new ideas are growing. A guest recitalist and workshop series will be launched at Easter, with each including work with local musicians. We are exploring a performance and ensemble coaching project to bring together small groups of performers



both as solo musicians and, particularly, in Chamber Music. As a newly accredited institution with the Royal College of Organists, we are looking to develop opportunities to encourage young organists, develop new resources for organ tuition and build links with local churches.

The challenges we have faced as music departments over the last few months have underlined how crucial it is for us to work together for all of the young people in the area and to explore ways to do this beyond one-off collaborative concerts. It is wonderful to now be part of a network of teachers all keen to make this possible. The next few months and years look hugely exciting.

“ The aspiration is that children aged five will still be involved in music-making when they are eighteen, both in school and also with young people from across the area.



# PROMOTING WELLBEING THROUGH BODY PERCUSSION

OLLIE TUNMER OF BEAT GOES ON

This term has presented many challenges to music teachers. One of these is a need to promote wellbeing, after months of isolation and anxiety. Another is how to deliver meaningful music lessons with limited resources, whilst maintaining social distancing.

Throughout the summer Beat Goes On have delivered online body percussion CPD sessions and workshops for music

hubs, arts organisations and educators across the world. We've aimed to equip participants with fun, engaging activities that draw upon participants' own creative ideas and our many years experience delivering in-person workshops. As a former cast member of STOMP I ask how we can develop the visual element of rhythms, so that they look as good as they sound, and get bodies moving (also promoting

physical wellbeing). Based on my collaborations with Pie Corbett of Talk4Writing I also explore the rhythmic potential of words, and how they can be used as a stimulus for composition. Below are three activities that explore these areas. There are video demonstrations of each one. The 'sound sequence' activity is taken from my body percussion book *Body Beats*.

## 1-8 sound sequence (inspired by STOMP's *Pipes* routine)

In eight small groups, each group is given a number between one and eight and chooses one percussive sound to play on their number, resulting in 8 different sounds.

- Start with everyone whispering the numbers one to eight as a group in a loop.
- Build the rhythm up, one group at a time, until all are playing.
- Ask only groups with odd numbers, even numbers, prime numbers etc to continue, to create new rhythmic patterns.
- Vary dynamics and tempi.
- Shutting eyes can help to internalise the feel of the pulse.

Keep this going for as long as you wish. I once did with this with a class for twenty five minutes, and when the finished they commented on how happy, calm and peaceful they felt.

## Two part 'wellbeing' polyrhythm

Here are a couple of grooves that work nicely together. The first is a variation of a 'clave' rhythm (a key element of Latin American music, that I explore in *Body Beats*). This groove has a lovely calming feel when performed at a steady tempo and provides positive momentum when performed faster.

### Variation of 3/2 son clave

View the video demo here - [https://youtu.be/\\_J\\_R0GK2CGg](https://youtu.be/_J_R0GK2CGg)

|     |   |    |   |    |   |       |   |   |      |     |    |
|-----|---|----|---|----|---|-------|---|---|------|-----|----|
| 1   | 2 | 3  | 4 | 5  | 6 | 7     | 8 | 9 | 10   | 11  | 12 |
| ST  |   | ST |   | ST |   | cl    |   |   | CL   | cl  | cl |
| '1' |   | 2  |   | 3  |   | click |   |   | clap | and | a' |

ST - stomp cl - click CL - clap ch - chest

Try building this groove up gradually -

- just the stomps for four bars
- add the click for four bars
- add the clap for four bars
- full groove

The second is an example of the use of the rhythmic potential of words as a stimulus for composition. To model the idea, I've used the dictionary definition of 'well-being'. Students can of course create their own rhythmic sentences, perhaps with a theme of 'my silver lining of lockdown' or similar, and then develop these into body percussion routines.

**'comfortable, healthy, happy being'** (based on Oxford English Dictionary definition of wellbeing)

View the video demo here - <https://youtu.be/BQw6kemALFM>

|        |       |     |     |   |   |       |   |     |     |     |      |
|--------|-------|-----|-----|---|---|-------|---|-----|-----|-----|------|
| 1      | 2     | 3   | 4   | 5 | 6 | 7     | 8 | 9   | 10  | 11  | 12   |
| ch     |       | cl  | cl  |   |   | h     |   | h   | cl  | cl  | b    |
| 'comp' | 'ort' | un- | ble |   |   | heal- |   | thy | be- | ppp | ing' |

ch - chest h - hips th - thighs b - belly

When playing around with these two grooves you could try:

- clave (A) x four bars, wellbeing (B) x four bars, A and B x eight bars, repeat all sixteen bars;
- just the words on their own x four bars, just the body percussion on its own x four bars, together x eight bars;
- varying dynamics, tempo, body timbres;
- giving students opportunities to lead the ensembles, using visuals signals to cue and play with the above elements.

I hope you enjoy exploring these ideas with your students (or just for yourself). All of these are adaptable to suit all ages. For any questions, online and in-person workshop / CPD enquiries, free downloadable resources and to buy *Body Beats* please visit [www.beatgoeson.co.uk](http://www.beatgoeson.co.uk) and follow us @BeatGoesOnUK

# MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

with Richard Llewellyn



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

## The latest news in Music Technology

I don't know about you, but I'm finding our current situation tiring. I think I might have over zoomed! It is becoming a new way of life, and I still doubt that everyone (parents and Senior Management) have really understood the additional strain it is having on teachers. The one positive my partner has acknowledged is the extra mileage of walking from a classroom at one end of her school, to the other: her step count is amazing!

There has been a growth in the number of online offerings, and I worry about the number of schools who may get caught out in dodgy subscription deals (especially apps and 'premium' memberships), where the price can suddenly rise, and there's no easy exit.

Music Technology has undoubtedly seen massive growth during the pandemic with companies recording record sales for both hardware and software. The main issue has been getting hold of hardware following temporary global factory closures and other issues. I'm sure this will all fuel a rise in the number of new software products and services.

### Should I study Music Production at University?

Interview with David Ward

I have recently been talking to David Ward, about student's progression to University and courses in music production. David is the Executive Director of 'JAMES' (Joint Audio Media Education Support) and also Managing Director of 'Technology in Music Education UK' (TiME) so is extremely well placed to answer some questions.

#### What benefits are there in studying Music Production at University?

Other than finding a career in the industry, the content of good courses prepares people for work in any industry. This includes critical thinking, decision making, language and mathematics.

#### How do students work out which courses are better than others?

It is important to read any marketing very carefully and ask questions. There is an industry process run by JAMES that gives accreditation to courses that meet rigorous criteria. Check if a course is JAMES accredited on their website.

#### What is a JAMES accredited course and how would it benefit my students?

An accredited course goes through a rigorous but supportive process to ensure that the curriculum, facilities and staff are suitable to prepare students for work in the industry. This is done on behalf of prospective students and their parents as well as the institution and the music industry.

#### What would my students learn that I don't already teach them?

This, of course, depends on the level that you can bring to them. The advantage of an accredited University course, is that the students are taught good industry practice,

transferable skills, entrepreneurship and knowledge of a rapidly changing industry.

#### What are the current job prospects?

Like most sectors of the arts industries, work in music technology is essentially freelance. Outside of sound engineering, there are immense opportunities in this rapidly changing industry. Building a portfolio career and knowing something of other people's disciplines is going to be essential in the future. Pandemics aside, there are great opportunities in Film and Television, sound for Games and importantly sound and music in all aspects of therapy, as well as teaching at all levels, particularly for disadvantaged people and accessible technology.

#### What do employers look for?

As well as technical aptitude, a candidate's attitude towards clients, fellow workers, and their skills of innovation are paramount. Effective communication skills and the potential for great leadership are also at the top of the list.

At TiME our main job is to raise awareness of the great potential of music technology to inclusively bring the joy of music making, composition and songwriting, to all generations, genders, races and physical capabilities. Please sign up on the TiME website to keep informed.

For more information, please check out: JAMES (Joint Audio Media Education Support) – [www.jamesonline.org.uk](http://www.jamesonline.org.uk) Technology in Music Education UK (TiME) – [www.techmusic.ed.org.uk](http://www.techmusic.ed.org.uk)





**Naxos – MusicBox**

Naxos is an award-winning, world leading classical music label, known for its new repertoire recordings with exciting artists. Founded in 1987, it has grown to be a globally recognised and respected company. Naxos have recently launched a brand new online subscription programme called 'MusicBox'. It's aimed at students aged 4 to 12 (KS 1 & 2) and is a valuable resource for Primary school music teachers, as well as non-specialist music teachers. Even though it's only been available since the summer, it's already won 'Online Music Education Product of the Year' !

The website has lots of activities, with everything designed to appeal to young musicians. It has eight key areas that cover topics such as History, Composers, Instruments, Dictionary and Activities. Because it's a live online program, the activities will be continually be updated and expanded. These include interactive listening questions, quizzes and puzzles, as well as printouts and lesson plans for teachers. There are over 4,000 varied audio tracks and lots of World Music in the pipeline.

The subscription price starts at £50 a year for 25 users (students), so about £2 per student per year, and there are different price bands depending on how many log-ins you want to use. This is great, as it means students can use their own log-in at home (ideal at the moment!). The really good news is that Julian Edwards (long time MTA friend member) has recently become their Music Education Manager and so will be able to answer any of your questions and discuss a free trial.

Please contact Julian at [jedwards@naxosmusic.co.uk](mailto:jedwards@naxosmusic.co.uk) or 07768.448381. Website: [www.naxosmusicbox.com](http://www.naxosmusicbox.com)



**Introducing The Spire Studio!**

The Spire Studio could be a useful tool for your music department. If you're looking at trying to get a quick recording made without too much fuss, then this compact Bluetooth unit could be the answer. Made by iZotope, an American company better known for their audio plug-in software (RX, Ozone and Neutron), the Spire Studio is a chunky cylindrical unit, about 12cm tall and 11cm wide that would sit on any desk. On the top is a multi-colour LED ring that helps set sound levels, along with some simple intuitive control buttons. Below is an omnidirectional built-in condenser microphone and 3.5 mm headphone output. At the back there's a second headphone output, two XLR/TRS inputs and a 48v phantom power switch. It can run on mains or battery power (about 4 hours). This all connects up to a very nifty free Spire app that will help you layer up to 8 tracks and turn them into MP3 or WAV files, or download the stems into any DAW. There's also loads of features, tips and tutorials in their dedicated Spire website and Spire Newsletter.

This is a simple to use bit of 'kit' that can help capture performances quickly. Costing around £319. For more info, please check out [www.izotope.com](http://www.izotope.com)



**Yamaha Digital Sax**

So whilst schools have been banned from brass playing, woodwind playing and singing - it's been OK to play electronic bagpipe chanters! So, how about the new Yamaha Digital Saxophone (YDS-150)? This is a new instrument that I'm sure a lot of saxophonists will end up buying. We all know about the issues of noisy practice – hence silent pianos, brass practice mutes and drum pads, but it's always been an issue for saxophonists. Well, with this sax you can plug in your headphones and practice to your hearts content, but that is only one small feature of this unique new instrument.

It looks like a soprano sax but with a black plastic middle body (called the 'Integrated Bell Acoustic system'). It uses a normal sax mouthpiece and reed, but with a brass bell. You have fifteen volume levels, 73 different voices (including 56 sax voices) and you can turn it into anything from a soprano sax right down to a baritone. There's also a free dedicated app for the instrument that allows you to change your sound, fingering, instrument settings, breath sensor, reverb and much more. Power-wise, it's a USB power adapter, 4 x AAA's or a phone bank charger. Tech-wise, it can be used as a MIDI controller as it has a micro-USB port that you can connect to your DAW or notation program. Price on the street looks to be £699 (RRP £839).

## We may lose a generation of musicians, say educators

Club Europe reminds us how inspiring music tours can be

Fears are mounting among music educators of the long-term impact of Covid on our young musicians. While schools get to grips with all the new Covid safety structures, spare a thought for music teachers in the UK who are facing even tougher challenges.

With their students restricted to year group bubbles, they are also grappling with the potential risks of 'spitting' and the social distancing rules. All of which leaves the possibility of students playing in ensembles or singing together in choirs still a distant hope.

Nic Adams is Director of Music at Castle School, in Somerset: "Covid aside, it's important we carry on promoting music in schools, that we keep music alive. I worry about the long-term impact of Covid, of its lasting impact. My fear is that students who are missing the team feeling they previously found in music, will look for it elsewhere where it is accessible, such as in sports. We may lose a generation of musicians."

Jane Werry is Head of Music at Hayes School in Kent: "Many of my students have said that they desperately miss making music together. Being part of a joint venture, and creating that communal magic is such a rich part of our school life that is entirely missing at the moment. Students risk feelings of isolation as well as missing out on the joy of music-making, the laughs we have in rehearsals, and the sense of purpose that it gives them."

International concert pianist Panos Karan performs all over the world and also runs a worldwide music education charity: "Music has been a form a group therapy for our young musicians around the world. It is like a medicine that they do not have access to right now. The sense of selfworth, and confidence that was achieved through the musical activities is, for the time being, lacking. Change is stressful, and at the beginning of this crisis, most of us faced this as a temporary shift, with our foot ready on the gas for as soon as the switch goes back on. It becomes, however, a lot harder to come back, when this crisis takes longer and becomes more permanent. The longer it takes, the longer it will take to start again, like a slow train starting on an uphill journey."

"Most importantly, our musical activities are a lifeline for mental health for many young people living in extraordinary circumstances and provide a safety net of hope and encouragement to children that needed it the most. The longer it takes to come back, the bigger the mental health and wellbeing issues our students will face."

Another casualty of this new Covid-confined era is touring. Werry again: "Our annual music tours are the glue that holds my department together. It's what creates lifelong memories and keeps them coming back to rehearsals week after week. The longer we are prevented from touring, the more there will be a sense of building everything from the ground up when we eventually do return to a more normal way of working. I've been at my school for so long that extra-curricular music was like a big snowball that only needed a little push from me every now and then, in order to keep on growing. Tour was an absolutely essential part of that. At the moment I feel like my snowball has stopped and is beginning to melt!"

Lucy Szymonski is Head of Concert tours at specialist youth music tour operator Club Europe: "I really feel for both students and their teachers, in that one of the real highlights of their school year is now sorely missing with the absence of the much-loved music tour. So much excitement builds in the months that precede it, with students working together to fundraise, rehearse intensively and help each other to make it all happen. And once on tour, lives are changed!"

"Children grow by having these incredible new experiences, forming sometimes unexpected but long-lasting friendships and by working together as a team in all sorts of ways. Stories and memories are created that will never be forgotten, and forever shared with those with whom they travelled. I, like countless music teachers and their young performers, simply can't wait for the touring ball to start rolling once more!"

Adams is thinking positively; he is one of the few music leaders to have already booked his ensembles' music tour to the Black Forest: "Touring is a tradition at Castle School. We've always toured every two years."

He adds: "Touring gives students a unique experience they don't get from any other trip; it's a unique mix of visits and excursions and social interaction."

"They have to rehearse and perform like professional musicians. It takes a special kind of person to be willing to lug a heavy instrument for miles in hot heat to perform!"

"We've already had lots of students sign up for the tour. I like to believe there will be light at the end of this long tunnel and we'll get there!"

Club Europe Concert Tours is a specialist youth music tour company; they have been in the industry for 40 years.  
[club-europe.co.uk/school-music-tours](http://club-europe.co.uk/school-music-tours)



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# NEW MEMBERS



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

|                      |  |  |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Helen Davidson       | Head of Department - Music   | Countesthorpe Leysland Community College   |
| Caroline Cowan       | Teacher  | Eppleton Academy Primary                   |
| Ewan McIntosh        | Director of Music  | King Edward VI Handsworth School for Girls |
| Samantha Caffull     | Head of Music  | St Thomas More Catholic School             |
| Rosie Shakespear     | Head of Arts Faculty   | Heartlands High School                     |
| Rachel Tweddle       | Head of Academic Music   | Ryde School with Upper Chine               |
| Emma Cowper          | Music Teacher  | Carterton Community College                |
| Alan Duguid          | Director of Music  | St Ignatius College                        |
| Alison Porter        | Teacher of Music   | The Henry Box School                       |
| Rhianwen Bedford     | Head of Music  | Bohunt School Wokingham                    |
| Zara Tobias-Tyrrell  | Teacher of Music   | St Michael's Catholic Grammar School       |
| Monica Georgiadou    | Head of Music  | Prendergast Vale School                    |
| Maurice Chernick     | Director of Music  | Henrietta Barnett School                   |
| Nick Charlton        | Head of Music  | Cranbourne                                 |
| Callum Bates         | Teacher of Music   | St Martins                                 |
| Dave Wilson          | Music and Computing Teacher Ed Tech Project Manager                |  |
|                      | Senior School Leidschenveen, The British School in The Netherlands |  |
|                      | Music Coordinator  | Reigate St. Mary's                         |
| Sara-Jane Whitehead  | Teacher of Music   | Royds School                               |
| Samuel Catterall     | Head of Music  | The Ursuline High School                   |
| Anna Lush            | Music Teacher  | Haygrove School                            |
| Carmel McGill Wright | Music Teacher  | Teach First                                |
| Jordan Cajigal       | Self employed singing & piano teacher                              | Wrexham Music Cooperative                  |
| Meriel Enston        | Teacher of Music   | St Crispins                                |
| Sarah Turvey         | Director of Music  | City of London School                      |
| Richard Quesnel      | Teacher of Music   | King's Ely                                 |
| Helen Briggs         | Music and Vocal Teacher  | Moreton Hall School                        |
| Eleanor Diack        | Musician in Residence, PGCE Teacher of Music                       | Music Pangbourne College                   |
| Anthea Ma            | Director of Music  | Ark Schools                                |
| Margaret O'Shea      | Teacher of Music   | Queen Anne's School                        |
| Harriette Wimble     | Head of Academic Music   | Trent College                              |
| Rosemary Reynolds    | Curriculum Leader of Music   | Carshalton High School for Girls           |
| Sarah Ogden          | PGCE trainee   | Matravers                                  |
| Robynne Calvert      | Teacher of Music   | Yarm School                                |
| Chris Reeve          | Graduate, Trainee Instrumental Teacher                             |  |
| Mahaliah Edwards     | Music Teacher  | Park Community School                      |
| Chris Armstrong      | Director of Music and Performing Arts                              | Ballard School                             |
| Victoria Gray        | Head of Music  | The Royal Ballet School                    |
| Sophie Cleobury      | Music Teacher  | The Totteridge Academy                     |
| Tricia Drummond      | Teacher of Music (3 days a week)                                   | Hayes School                               |
| Emma Foster          | Director of Learning - Performing Arts                             | Onslow St Audreys                          |
| Tristan Bloska       | Director of Chapel Music   | Somerville College, Oxford University      |
| Will Dawes           | Teacher of Music   |  |
| Klaudia Kulawik      | PGCE Music Graduate / NQT  |  |
| Jason Taing          | Teacher of Music   | Wellacre Academy                           |
| Sophie Quinn         | Music Teacher  | Loughborough Schools Foundation            |
| Rob Connolley        | Head of Music  | Academy of St Francis of Assisi            |
| Samantha Williams    | Director of Music  | Laleham C of E Primary School              |
| Alison Walker        | Assistant Director of Music  | Ipswich School                             |
| Maria Williams       | Higher Level Teaching Assistant & Music Subject Lead               | Minchinhampton Primary                     |
| Denise Young         | Director of Music  | Giggleswick School                         |
| Darren Everhart      | Teacher  |  |
| Jonathan Fenwick     | Head of Music  | Wren Academy Enfield                       |
| Aleksandra Zembron   | Head of Performing Arts & Associate Member of the Leadership Team  | The Heathland School                       |
| Christopher Holman   | Freelance Conductor  |  |
| Paul McCreesh        | Teacher of Music   | Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College       |
| Clare McKnight       | Trainee Music Teacher 2020-2021                                    | Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School           |
| Claudia Baum         | Assistant Director of Music  | Woldingham School                          |
| Matthew Tait         | Director of Music  | Hazlegrove Prep School                     |
| Nicola Sclater       | Head of Music & Creative Arts & Technology Faculty                 | Kemnal Technology College                  |
| Julie Dyer           | Head of Music & Music Technology                                   | Haydon School                              |
| John-Paul Bowman     | Music Teacher  | Haggerston School                          |
| Joe Woods            | College Organist and Music Teacher                                 | Bradfield College                          |
| David Quinn          | Subject Leader Music   | Plasht School                              |
| Louise Carne         |  |  |

## NEW MEMBERS

|                        |  |                                       |
|------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| James McEvoy-Stevenson | Assistant Director of Music                        | Queen Elizabeth's School              |
| Hendrik Marais         | Head of Music and Creative Arts                    | Rustenburg Junior School for Girls    |
| Charlotte Jenkins      | Saxophone/Flute/Music Theory Teacher               |                                       |
| Una Murphy             | Music Teacher                                      | Francis Holland School                |
| Galina Juritz          | Violin Teacher                                     |                                       |
| Ian Richardson         | Deputy Head Pastoral & Assistant Director of Music | The Prebendal School                  |
| Sarah Henderson        | Director of Music                                  | Woodford Green Prep School            |
| Catherine Buczak       | Director of Music                                  | King's Ely Junior                     |
| Clare Woodall          | Director of Music                                  | The Manor Preparatory School          |
| Jonathan Tyack         | Teacher of Music                                   | Parmiter's School                     |
| Andrew Brown           | Music Teacher                                      | UCL                                   |
| Alexander White        | Self Employed singing teacher                      |                                       |
| Kay Gilmour            | Music Teacher                                      | Robert Gordon's College               |
| Michael Servant        | Teacher  |                                       |
| Clare Lawrence-Wills   | Director of Music                                  | Durham High School for Girls          |
| Elliot Mercer          | Music Assistant                                    | Francis Holland School, Sloane Square |
| Angela Wellman         | Head of Music                                      | The Emmbrook School                   |
| Carole Carpenter       | Performing Arts Coordinator, Prep School           | Ashville College                      |
| Stuart Bates           | Director of Music                                  | Parmiter's School                     |
| Stuart Adamson         | Music Teacher                                      | Ousedale School                       |
| Nicola Gower           | Private Piano teacher                              |                                       |
| Marcio Dowgan          | Teacher Trainee University of Sussex               |                                       |
| Liam Comer             | Student Teacher                                    | LJMU                                  |
| Aidan Maier            | Trainee Music Teacher                              | Marshalls Park Academy                |
| Angeline Samson        | Student Teacher                                    |                                       |
| Rachel Kelsall         | Trainee Teacher/ PGCE student                      | Silverdale School                     |
| Toby Nelms             | Teacher  | Twynham School                        |
| Amy-Louise McKay       | Student Teacher                                    |                                       |
| Teresa McCormick       | Trainee Teacher                                    | Dixions City Academy                  |
| Maria José Blasco      | Non-employed                                       |                                       |
| William Whiting        | Teacher of Music (NQT)                             | Emanuel School                        |
| Charles Fok            | Program Director                                   |                                       |
| Atefeh Einali          | Music Teacher                                      |                                       |
| Emma Nish              | Teacher  | Christ the King RC Primary School     |
| Jeorgie Brett          | Music Teacher (Training Year)                      | Chislehurst School for Girls          |
| Craig Baker            | Head of Year/Music Teacher                         | The Judd School                       |
| Lucy Askew             | Music Secondary Trainee (PGCE)                     | The Ongar Academy                     |
| Kirsty Hesse-Clark     | Trainee Teacher                                    | Joseph Clarke School                  |
| Nathan Maskell         | Trainee Music Teacher                              |                                       |
| Holly Race             | Student Teacher (secondary music)                  |                                       |
| Hayley Condon          | PGCE Trainee                                       | Liverpool Hope University             |
| Christine Miller       | Teacher of Music                                   |                                       |
| Jemima Moran           | Music Teacher Secondary Trainee                    | Uffculme School                       |
| Katie Staggs           | Director of Music                                  | Yarm School                           |
| Liam Gray              | Full Time Student                                  |                                       |
| Lauren Hayhurst        | Class Teacher                                      | St Faith and St Martin Junior School  |
| Jason Ching            | School Direct Music Trainee                        | Ursuline High School                  |
| Clare Cocks            | Music Development Coordinator                      | Moreton Hall School                   |
| Samuel Jones           | PGCE Student / Associate Teacher                   |                                       |
| Susanna Blamire        | PGCE Secondary Music student                       |                                       |
| Stephen Levey          | Director of Music                                  | Immanuel College                      |
| Elin Roberts           | PGCE Course  |                                       |
| Dan Cullum             | Head of Music                                      | Vyners School                         |
| Sarah Cobon            | Teacher of Music                                   | Nishkam High School                   |
| Gemma Salmon           | Visiting Music Teacher (Piano)                     |                                       |
| Tze Yun Gan            | Music Teacher                                      | British International School of Tunis |
| Sophia Rees            | PGCE   | IOE                                   |
| Geoffrey Garner        | Trainee Music Teacher                              | Debden Park High School               |
| Aimee Presswood        | Trainee Music Teacher                              |                                       |
| James Lyon             | Music teacher and lead practitioner                | Up Holland High School                |
| Anna Golitzin          | Piano and Singing Teacher                          | University of York                    |
| Owen Somerville        | Director of Music                                  | Albyn School Ltd                      |
| John Bird              | Teacher of Music                                   | Ellis Guilford School                 |
| Jenny Woollett         | Guitar & Drum Tutor                                |                                       |
| David Sanchez-Brown    | Assistant Principal                                | Cowes Enterprise College              |
| Amy Hambrook           | Student  |                                       |
| Abigail Nicholls       | Trainee Music Teacher                              | Ark Kings Academy                     |
| Michael Pearce         | Trainee Teacher                                    |                                       |
| Poppy Wheeler          | Teacher of Music                                   | Brookfield Community School           |

# 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.



Acting Honorary Secretary / Caroline Robinson  
crobinson@warminsterschool.org.uk

Caroline believes that everyone should feel comfortable to take part in music-making in a vibrant, friendly and inclusive environment. She strives for all concerts to be as glamorous as possible, with quality rather than quantity always being a main feature.



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 is Director of Arts and Music at Wellington College. He is an accredited Specialist Leader in Education and is particularly focused upon bringing independent and state schools together within the arts.



Keith Ayling  
Media & Publications  
01926 512005  
keith@musicteachers.org

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  
sophie@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

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.

Committee members serve a term of three years. Positions are advertised when vacant and if necessary, voted on by the membership. In the first instance, please contact either the President or a member of staff for more information.



# OUR COMMITTEE



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



Catherine Barker (Co-opted)  
Catherine.Barker@unitedlearning.org.uk

Catherine Barker is the Head of Music and Performing Arts in United Learning, the largest national schools' group. She also leads national performance events and the Singing Champions programme.

**CURRICULUM LEAD**



Dr Steven Berryman (Co-opted)  
Sberryman@odysseytrust.org.uk

Dr Steven Berryman is Director (Arts & Culture) at the Odyssey Trust for Education, and a Visiting Research Fellow at King's College London and Guildhall School.

**CURRICULUM LEAD**



George Bevan (2021)  
bevangd@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 (2022)  
enaandjonathanburgess@gmail.com

Jonathan is Director of Music at Kensington Prep School, where he has set up a Kodály based classroom music programme. He specialises in teaching primary aged children with a view to including everyone in quality music making activities and performances.



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

Tim is the Director of Music at Westminster School and a trustee of Musical Boroughs Trust, the charitable arm of the Tri-borough Music Hub. He is a huge advocate of sustained partnership in all its forms, linking together teachers, pupils, music departments from both the state and independent sectors.

**PARTNERSHIPS LEAD**



Andrew Henderson  
a.henderson@stonyhurst.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).

**PODCAST HOST**



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 (2023)  
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.



Caitlin Sherring (2022)  
csherring@harrowschool.hk

Caitlin is the Head of Lower School Music and Assistant House Mistress (Prep) at Harrow International School Hong Kong. She previously worked for nine years as the Music and Arts Lead at Woodcroft Primary School (Winner: Outstanding Music Department) in London.



Oliver Walker (2022)  
omw@repton.org.uk

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

# THE FINAL WORD

## DIVERTIMENTO

### Op.51



## A sideways look at music education from Jonathan Varcoe

Keyboard players, how is your hand-span? A recent review about the gifted but petite pianist Yula Wang performing Rachmaninov's piano concerto no.3 in a Prom concert stated that her hands could stretch twice as wide for their size as normal. I can't quite visualise this but take the point that to play Rach 3 you need huge stretches. Apparently Rachmaninov himself could stretch twelve white piano keys with each hand tip to tip. My own hands (comfortably) stretch one octave and that is very convenient for consecutive octaves of course but tenths are only usually just uncomfortably possible. Never mind, even organists with smallish hands can boast of simultaneously playing with hands on different manuals and both feet, (often) independently, on the pedal board at the same time.

I recently had two cataract operations. There was a lengthy gap between the first and the second operation which is common. My normal glasses became less useful especially after the second op. A visit to the optician is not wise until the second eye has 'settled', so for several weeks I was dependent on a rather intriguing gadget I had bought in advance thinking it might come in handy, and it certainly did. It is a pair of glasses with adjustable lenses. My organ playing days are over but playing the piano I now find that these adjustable glasses enable me to turn the little wheels to bring the music into focus for the exact distance between my eyes and the printed music, a fairly precise distance which is different from that needed to read my various electronic screens, and different again for reading books. There may be a reader or two who recognises similar problems dependent on their specific eye condition. If so, do look up Eyejusters on the net.

In an obituary of Paul Badura-Skoda in The Times the writer quotes B-S after saying that he had little time for the 'noise' of avant-garde composers: "I

could not really point out where the frontier between music and noise lies, but I believe that in the most fantastically sounding music, the noise ought to be organised. If it's just chaotic, if it's disorganised, then for me it ceases to be music."

Modern classical music has moved on from the strictly serial idiom and many composers have now returned to a more orthodox style clothed in a new manner where tonality is not entirely displaced but is excitingly experimented with and expanded. Can contemporary composers provide sufficiently attractive music to get the general public keen to listen and be challenged? A tall order given the poor state of musical education in schools and the ever-repeated idea that classical music is elitist. When the bald/white/grey heads of today's concert hall audience have gone who will replace them?

For the man and woman in the street tonality or modality holds sway as does repetition and a sense of knowing where they are in the music. Harmony, melody and a clear form are the pegs onto which people still need to hang their listening. Also clarity, not just music run riot with orchestral possibilities: composers who over-orchestrate 'because it's there', bing-bang-wallop: bring on the ear plugs.

Manchester University research has found that musicians are nearly twice as likely to develop tinnitus than office workers (not to mention going deaf). No surprise there. Music apart the world is becoming louder and louder as if sound is a drug people want more and more of. Go to a clavichord recital and, attuning your ears, wonder how 18th century people's hearing must have vastly differed from ours. Preserve your hearing and don't put your daughter in a professional orchestra, Mrs Worthington. Or indeed, much worse, in a pop group.

You may have read some time ago that some French pupils were hypnotised the better to learn foreign languages. How tempting to wonder how we could use this in our music departments. 'Now, Johnny, I'm just going to put you to sleep for ten minutes and when you wake up you will be able to play these scales perfectly'. Magic!

Two issues ago I mentioned Helston's 'King Arthur by Mr H Purcell'. Here is a little story told to an MMA Conference years ago, by the then Cornish-born Headmaster of Haileybury, Dereck Jewell. Visiting his home town of Porthleven, a couple of miles from Helston it so happens, he attended a performance of Messiah in the Wesleyan Chapel. Afterwards a young member of the choir approached the familiar figure and said. 'Mr Jewell can I ask you a question? I know what darkness is but, you see, the Bible text says gross darkness. Can you tell me what that is?

'Gross darkness' Jewell replied after a bit of a pause, 'is a hundred and forty four times darker than ordinary darkness'. Satisfied customer went on his way. Don't we love Heads with a sense of humour.

From the ridiculous to the sublime. Gustavo Dudamel finished a recent talk at NYO's Turning Into Change course by saying there are no limits to making music and art. 'Music is the soul of society. Culture, art is the identity of society. It's not an element of entertainment. Performing together creates a space where we can learn. I was asking you, generally, to listen to each other, so you learn and you grow, and in music we have to listen and respect each other. If you learn that as young people, you are really changing the world.'

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