

M
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ENSEMBLE
MAGAZINE

No. 113 / Spring 2021
CONNECTING | INSPIRING | LEADING

PART TWO
PARTNERSHIPS
RESOURCES FOR MUSIC TEACHERS



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WELCOME EDITORIAL



Keith Ayling
Editor

This is what binds us together.
This is what makes our association unique.
The MTA fosters excellence in music by a genuine sharing of experiences from music teachers across the UK and the world.

I wonder how it feels to be back in the classroom?

It is the day we have been waiting for - for what seems like a lifetime. The frustration of having to adapt teaching methods, observe students coping in different ways with the lockdown and placate parents who maybe expected more advancement by now, has lasted forever.

For some of us there was a renewed sense of hope - maybe even joy - as we returned to our music departments. For others, we are still teaching online, even though we are seemingly 'open'.

In my own teaching, the College is 'open' again, but the reality is that much of the teaching is still online. Testing increases, but close proximity group work, of which there is a lot in music, has not returned to a comfortable level. My students at Leeds Conservatoire are continuing to battle with a different academic life from the one they signed up for, but are thriving nonetheless thanks to the myriad of technological opportunities now available. This allows composition and songwriting to flourish in ways it never could twenty years ago. Lyrics can be originated by groups in real time on Teams chat, melodies written and sung on Zoom video and DAW mixes shared on dropbox or the College network. Work and creativity is apparently faster and more efficient.

There are no 'normal' answers yet. Or maybe we won't *return* to normal so much as move forward to create a new one. Whichever it is, we do have hope. And hope is increasing every day.

In this issue we feature Part Two of our focus on Partnerships, with our guest editor Tim Garrard. We hope you've been enjoying the articles and have been inspired to venture down these roads yourselves. The central feature section from page 19 onwards is full of hope and encouragement that music is flourishing.

MTA members have responded to our call for articles on Partnerships and it has been great to hear how our campaign to increase *Working Together Creatively* (this year's Conference theme) has impacted the wider music education landscape. Do keep sending in your experiences. This is what binds us together. This is what makes our association so unique. The MTA fosters excellence in music by a genuine sharing of experiences from music teachers across the UK - and from our international members across the world.

I believe this is the key factor that has seen our membership almost double during lockdown.

Yes! Almost double.

It's unprecedented in our history, but a sure sign that music is alive in our schools, that we as teachers remain passionate in spite of the climate and that our students deserve the best music education we can give.

Keith Ayling
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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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Foundation



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Community Primary
and Nursery School



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- composition
- audio production
- podcasting
- student assessment
- strategies for teaching in a remote- or blended-learning environment.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Simon Toyne
President,
Music Teachers Association



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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.

As I write this, we're eagerly anticipating getting back to school, seeing our students, teaching face-to-face, getting ensembles back up and running in a way that everyone can actually hear each other properly, and working with our colleagues in the same physical space. Even sharing coffee from the same cafetière (I trust no MTA member touches instant coffee) is a concept which holds unimaginable joy. I struggle to recall a time when teachers have been so keen to return to school. Assuming the students feel similarly (and experience suggests never to second-guess students – one of the great joys of teaching), then the coming weeks and months could be joyous.

Joy. That's what should be at the heart of education. As Ralph Allwood, my inspirational music teacher way back in the past millennium, has told me, the subtitle of his forthcoming book will be "A job and a joy". And yet it hasn't always felt that way. Too often, Music has been pushed to the sidelines – something to 'balance' an academic curriculum; to be there on the timetable to give students some time off from hard work; to satisfy the minority who will become professional musicians; to be a shop window for the school... and the music teacher has had to prove their worth in what has felt like a utilitarian, Gradgrindish world. Initiatives such as the EBacc or facilitating subjects haven't helped to relieve that feeling.

And yet... we have persevered. Why? Because, every day, we see the transformative nature of music education. That moment when a student masters a chord sequence; accesses their head voice for the first time; forms a band and spends Friday afternoon in the department; develops a connection with their instrument that

their practice time increases infinitesimally; has discovered a new piece of music and wants to talk to you about it; says 'thank you' at the end of a lesson – this is what renews us as music teachers. I heard the other day that one of my students has been sending WhatsApp messages to his friends with screenshots of the opening bar of Beethoven's 1st Symphony, accompanied by the words, "have you seen this? Beethoven begins his Symphony in C with a chord of C7? How cool is that?" Students always have had, and will continue to have, the capacity to surprise and bring smiles.

It may seem a cliché to observe that things will be different when everyone returns to normal, or a 'new normal', but I think that, in the case of music's place in education and in society at large, this will be true. The absence of face-to-face connection, of real, live music, has been keenly felt. It is a truth universally acknowledged that music is a primal need, Jane Austen would surely have written in March 2021.

#CanDoMusic, our joint campaign with ISM and Music Mark, has shone a light on the value that thousands of schools across the UK place on Music. Our challenge now as music educators is not just to return to how things were before the pandemic, but to create a future in which music occupies an ever more significant role in every school in the country. This edition of *Ensemble*, our second focusing on Partnerships, offers inspiration for the way ahead. We can't effect change on our own but, together, we can make a substantial difference and join the dots.

CONNECTING – INSPIRING – LEADING



Welcome to the 113th 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 Two of our Partnerships feature section (from page 19) which has valuable ideas and resources to help you through teaching in these times.

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.

Look at page 18 for more information and register your place now at musicteachers.org.

OUR CPD

You can access a wide range of CPD from the association including our three current online series.

- **Ask James** gives members the chance to get fast answers to unusual problems in the classroom through a monthly interactive zoom.
- **Teaching & Learning** - a series coordinated by Catherine Barker taking a deeper dive in to the curriculum.
- **The Hibbins Series** - webinars for students to support GCSE and A-level Music.

Dates and links for all of these are sent in the fortnightly members' e*bulletins.

SOCIAL MEDIA

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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.

Our year-round CPD programme of webinars, podcasts, e-bulletins and Ensemble magazine, supported by our Facebook Staffroom and Annual Conference, enables music teachers to connect with each other, share ideas, develop good practice and work together in partnership.

The MTA works with our partner organisations, HMC, ISM and Music Mark, to support and advocate for music in schools, inspiring a membership which passionately believes that every child should benefit from outstanding music education.

To join the MTA for only £68 per year, visit 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.

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



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, inspired members return to their school music departments and enthuse about the techniques learned, the experience shared and the encouragement they have received. Encourage a colleague to join us: go to www.MusicTeachers.org to download a membership form.

PARTNERSHIP PRESS RELEASE

HMC and MTA announce official Music Education partnership



Leading
Independent
Schools



HMC (Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference) and **MTA** (Music Teachers' Association) are delighted to announce the first official partnership in HMC's 150-year history.

HMC is a professional association of heads of the world's leading independent schools, with 298 members in the British Isles, a further 60 international members and 15 associates. HMC today is a thriving, proactive association of leading figures in school education.

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. It is an association run by teachers, for teachers.

Initially over a three-year period, this exciting new initiative will help to establish, grow, and support partnerships within music education, ensuring that schools remain very much at the heart of the provision of high-quality music education for young people, in collaboration with both local music hubs and national arts organisations.

Sally-Anne Huang (HMC Chair and High Master, St Paul's School) and Tim Garrard (MTA Partnerships Lead and Director of Music, Westminster School) will oversee the development of a partnership strategy designed for the benefit of all young people and their schools.

HMC Chair, Sally-Anne Huang said, "As someone who is truly passionate about music and other creative arts, I have seen how they can help young people to discover skills and talents which nurture them through life. At the same time, the arts and culture industry brings £10.8bn into the UK economy and will be a critical part of the nation's emotional and economic recovery post covid.

"I am delighted to help lead this partnership with MTA, which will support different types of schools to offer music and build on the extensive work HMC schools already do in partnership with others.

"Schools have a central role in the musical life of the nation, and we want to see that strengthen and grow."

Simon Toyne, MTA President, said, "MTA and HMC share a strong belief in the power of outstanding music education in schools. Where music provision is strong in a school, the school in turn is strong. Sadly, across the UK, there is a huge disparity in the amount and quality of music education able to be accessed by our children. Sometimes this is referred to as a postcode lottery, often reinforced by socio-economic circumstances. But outstanding music teaching is found in schools in many different locations - these are schools whose Head Teachers value music, understanding the impact of music upon school communities and the importance of music as a subject in its own right, and carefully nurture their music teachers.

"For every child to be able to access outstanding music education in schools, we need strong advocacy - not just from government, but from school leaders. Through our partnership, we will build a network of powerful leadership, offering practical support for schools to turn that belief in music education into reality."

www.musicteachers.org
www.hmc.org.uk

Helen Porter

Helen Porter was Director of Music at Dean Close School, Cheltenham, and very sadly died in October 2020, having battled cancer for more than 18 months. The following article has been written for Ensemble Magazine by Dean Close School.

Helen came to DCS in September 1987 as Helen Kingcott, a talented music scholar from The Cheltenham Ladies' College and a graduate fresh from Exeter University, to teach piano and some academic music and to be resident tutor in Fawley.

After working in the music department under three Directors of Music, Ian Little, Richard Knight and Andrew Cleary, Helen was appointed by headmaster Tim Hastie-Smith to lead the department herself in 2005, and it was an inspired decision. It was exciting to break with a male-dominated tradition with a woman at the helm. Helen quickly set her own stamp on the department: she was a person of great integrity in all she did – not least in academic lessons, where she would prepare assiduously to give her pupils the very best opportunities and results. It is a complete testament to HLP that department results over many years now have been amongst the highest and best in the school – star-studded is not an over-statement, given the number of A* grades littering the results sheets. In her time at Dean Close, the orchestra reached new heights – highlights include (inter alia) Rachmaninov *Piano Concerto no 2* with Ashok Gupta, Gershwin *Rhapsody in Blue* with Jason Richards, and Elgar *Cello Concerto* with Ed Marshall. The achievements in music in HLP's time were stellar: there were two Choral Scholarships to King's College, Cambridge, and many others (including Organ Scholarships) at Trinity, Clare, St John's; and also at Oxford – Christ Church and Exeter Colleges – the list is too long to mention every college and pupil. There were places at top music schools – Laurence Kilsby at the Royal College, Stephen Whitford and Brenna Tin at the Royal Academy, Ben Powell (currently in a glittering career in music in Hollywood after Berklee College, USA) and many others. Ex-pupils went on to play with nationally famous orchestras – Jess Hayes as a cellist with the Halle and Ashok Gupta at Glyndebourne, ENO and the Royal Opera. Helen appointed Rob Bishop as Head of Strings – Rob was the former leader of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, no less. It was Helen's brainwave to appoint a nationally-reputed string quartet, the Carducci Quartet, as resident string teachers – and string playing at DCS has gone through the roof. One example might be the astonishingly polished performance of *Introduction and Allegro for Strings* by Elgar at the annual Pitville Pump Room concert.

It was during HLP's reign that DCS took over the choir from the Abbey School, Tewkesbury. Along with this professional body of choristers and men came director Ben Nicholas, who headed up the choral side of music at DCS, and Helen was well aware of the musical riches which would endow the school through this extraordinary legacy. When Ben left to be Director of Music at Merton College, Oxford, Helen was also instrumental in the appointment of Simon Bell, former assistant organist at Winchester Cathedral, as the new

director of Schola. Just looking at the calibre of these two men is a testament to the music in the school under HLP.

One of HLP's demanding roles was to manage the large number of talented peripatetic music teachers and the hundreds of music lessons which happen each week: all of these teachers over the years have shown great loyalty and admiration for Helen and the department at DCS. And there are the members of Helen's department who have worked with her for three decades: Ciara Allen, her assistant director of music; Julie Kent MBE; and Sylvia Klemz, department administrator – all of their support for HLP has been unstinting and it is an absolute certainty that Helen would want any tribute to her to acknowledge these three remarkable ladies. It was the icing on the cake when *"The Week"* voted DCS Music Department "The Best of the Best" in autumn 2018.

One area which Helen relished was the biennial musical for which DCS has become noted. A few months before she was diagnosed with cancer, Helen said the following to us: *"I was with friends on New Year's Eve 2018, and someone said "Let's see if we can remember the three most important things that have happened to us this year". None of my friends chose things related to their work, whereas all the things I came out with were related entirely to Dean Close, which speaks volumes about how much I love my job. And the absolute highlight for me was My Fair Lady."*

This really tells us all we need to know: to see Helen conduct the orchestra, and her dazzling smile at the curtain calls, was a wonderful thing. The musicals she directed in collaboration with Lloyd Allington will be part of DC-lore for many years – *Cabaret*, *My Fair Lady*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *Fiddler on the Roof*. An especial memory for Helen and Lloyd was to work with Amy, her daughter, as the lead Cathy Selden in *Singin' in the Rain* 2015.

In the final months, Helen faced her illness with extraordinary fortitude and even humour: visitors to her home would leave uplifted by her sense of fun and eagerness to hear school news and the daily gossip she missed. It was a testament to her that, in her final year, before her illness forced her to stop work, all her pupils had scored As and A*s at A level, all GCSE candidates scored 9s and 8s, and Helen had conducted Rach 2, plus her favourite musical *My Fair Lady*. Quite a year.

All her visitors in the last few months have been moved by the palpable sense of love with which her family surrounded her, peacefully at home with Michael and the three children and her two beloved spaniels who rarely left her side. To know and work alongside Helen has been an inspiration: it was the rarest of privileges and joys to have been able to do so. We shall miss her so very greatly.

UPDATES FROM SCHOOLS & TEACHERS

The Crypt School, Gloucester

Director of Music, Julian Whitaker

Music has continued to thrive at the Crypt School during the recent lockdown. After a very busy term which saw a total of 14 bubble ensembles running weekly plus online concerts and a carol service, we returned to online teaching with great confidence.

Our mission statement has been to enable musical skills to continue to develop, by performing, composing and listening. We have ensured that we have kept all the students engaged in music making. All lessons have live content and start with singing. It was so wonderful to see our KS3 students singing, dancing and smiling through "Wellerman" and "Zimbe!"

KS3 topics remained as planned. Pupils have continued to compose (using Musescore/DAWs and any instruments they have at home). Performance has continued to be strong; pupils have performed via Google Meet and submitted recordings on Google Classroom. Listening skills have continued to develop. We have utilised excellent videos, devised Google Doc listening tasks and encouraged every pupil to explore new genres. We have launched a "Composer of the Week".

By ensuring that we deliver the very best musical education possible online, our pupils have continued to thrive. GCSE/ A Level students have continued to learn set works, analyse, improve harmony/listening skills through live lessons, pre-recorded videos and analysis. We have enjoyed weekly composition progress lessons, where students have shared screens and discussed progress.

In terms of co-curricular work, we have held a KS3 showcase concert featuring a range of stellar performances recorded at home. We launched a "Virtual Orchestra" project; a massed performance of Purcell's "Rondo from Abdelazar". We have held weekly online choir rehearsals, which have been well-attended. As a great opportunity for pupils (and staff) to enjoy some singing, we have also been able to rehearse repertoire for when we return to school on March 8th!



The Royal Ballet School

Head of Music, Sophie Cleobury

Whilst abrupt and frustrating, the about-turn into online learning in January was a more positive experience this time round. With greater knowledge of what was possible, combined with the support of MTA events and other webinars, I felt more confident that I could piece together an engaging number of weeks' worth of curriculum and co-curricular activities.

I tried not to change my planned curriculum too much. I used a mix of listening tasks (my new-found love of MS Forms came into its own!) for all year groups. Alongside a SoundTrap project for Year 8 came some practical work – playing along to different styles of music (e.g. Reggae, Blues) on whichever instruments were available at home (with 'virtual keyboards' for those with none). I branched out (further than I managed last summer!) with Noteflight for Year 9, which has been really great at keeping them engaged in lessons. My KS4 classes have enjoyed a greater level of independent-working on new compositions, learning new software (Musescore)

as well as having the time to engage better with their creativity - something with which I feel they sometimes struggle within the confines of a set lesson per week and waiting for the school bell to ring!

I took the decision not to do any ensemble work this time round. Instead, we organised for some online soloist concerts, and I opened up a school-wide composition competition to any level and style of music-making so students could develop their individual creativity. My hope was to gain some traction in the Summer Term (once back) with an exciting showcase of compositions performed by students.

So, we've certainly been kept busy! The various successes in our Department and others I have read about proves that we Music teachers are an inventive and adaptable lot. Lockdown has allowed our creativity to shine through, albeit in a slightly different manner from "normal", but... what is normal any more?!

Wellington School

Director of Music, Andrew Trewella & Head of Prep School Music, Ros Shaw



As a 3-18 unified department structure, we have adopted a unified and resolute #CanDoMusic attitude to every challenge the last 12 months of lockdowns has thrown at us.

All class lessons have moved online and are generally 100% live. Prep pupils have explored Rhythm through notation games and playing makeshift percussion instruments. Years 7 and 8 have focused on Riffs and enjoyed online tutorials from an OW, now professional rock musician. We were determined to facilitate some practical work for Y9s, so students have been using BandLab to work with mixing and studio effects.

Prep singing this lockdown has been enabled via video tutorials for the 6 songs in Michael Hurd's Jonah-Man Jazz followed by a pop-up singing session on Teams. The Chapel Choir and Y5-8 Chamber Choirs have produced an impressive series of virtual performances since the first lockdown in March and have learned much from the experience.

Our full one-to-one instrumental lessons provision has run consistently since September, initially in person with very detailed RA in place and this term remotely on Teams. We also enabled most of the stages of our inaugural 3-18 Wellington Young Musician online, the virtual Finals and Awards Show featuring Jess Gillam as adjudicator and keynote speaker.

We have enabled virtual concerts across the age range – pupils recording their performance at home to bespoke piano backing tracks we create for them. Prep and Senior orchestral and band players have been involved together in producing large-scale virtual performances of orchestral works and film scores such as Black Panther.

This term we created 'On the Record' – a series of online sessions featuring musical OWs, friends and contacts, covering a wide range of topics and our new music podcast series 'Cadenza' begins after half term.

Packwood Haugh School

Director of Music, Sarah Boutwood

Lockdown learning at Packwood

Lockdown online Music lessons at Packwood have been interesting – I have certainly had to think more creatively and, to put a positive slant on it, it has stopped me churning out some of the same old tried and tested lesson plans. BBC 10 Pieces has been a life-saver, along with other ideas gained from #Candomusic.org...body percussion and simple composition were ideal for the pre-prep, for instance – these lessons had to be pre-recorded for the (non-specialist) Year 1 teacher, who was teaching the majority of the pre-prep as key workers' children. Year 8's usual topics rely on group work, so instead they researched and created powerpoint presentations of their favourite songs/bands and presented these to the rest of the form. I learnt a lot!

Musical structure seemed to work well with Year 7, with some very creative examples: a beautiful rondo played on four differently-pitched glasses (by a musical boy who plays the piano but couldn't for that lesson as older brother was working nearby); and another lovely rondo using a combination of cereal packets, jars of pasta/rice, saucepans and wooden spoons (again, very musical boy with inaccessible piano). My 'first' in nearly 20 years' music teaching has to go to a Russian boy who smiled his way unintelligibly through every Music lesson last term with virtually no English and even less musical knowledge – but who clearly



understood my explanations of musical forms by demonstrating these accurately with a squeaky toy pig and a wine glass, from binary, through to ternary and then on to rondo – in which these items were joined by a brush for the latter!

Experiences which I would avoid in future online teaching: note-reading with Year 3 (and their accompanying parents)!

Woldingham School

Director of Music, John Hargreaves

How have you switched to online learning?

Through Autumn term we used hybrid teaching – live in the classroom, and on camera for girls overseas or in isolation. This was a real challenge with practical music work. At least with full lockdown we have the experience of a successful summer term teaching via Teams, so the transition this time has been easier. Lesson times are reduced to give us all breaks from screen fatigue and we are encouraged to give the students projects to work on, so this fits well with our music curriculum. We are able to offer practical lessons which is great. And it's nice to sit and teach with the cats taking turns to keep me company.

What has been successful?

We are lucky that all our girls have access to technology, many with GarageBand. KS4/5 teaching has been fine and largely unaffected. The students are composing, performing, and listening as usual, just with the

barrier or the screen. The use of Soundtrap and MuseScore has been invaluable in helping our students compose: year 7 are composing Soundscapes using household objects, or their instruments in unusual ways; year 8 are creating silent movie underscores to clips from Nosferatu; year 9 are working on pop songs.

What has been a struggle?

Extra-curricular is a challenge with the larger ensembles. The girls are willing, and attend rehearsals online, but we are asking them to find additional time at the end of a tiring day of screen exposure to record their parts. It's the fine line between encouraging ensemble participation and giving the girls a break. That said our choir and orchestra pieces are coming together.

What have you invested in recently and what repertoire has worked in lockdown?

Soundtrap is the most important investment.

In terms of extra-curricular we have been inundated with individual performances sent in by students to share with our school community allowing us to hold mini lunchtime 'concerts' twice a week. One of our scholars in year 9 has earned her first credit with the Summit theme for an Ed Byrne Ed Ventures video; she has been commissioned to write more. The most recent concert was a 20-minute video of songs from Into the Woods, including the prologue, submitted by one of our singing teachers who involved all her students, with costume and movement. It took her hours to rehearse and edit together. Members of staff have also been contributing to a mini Desert Island Discs (3 pieces) podcast that started in January.

50 Words of INSPIRATION #CANDOMUSIC



@AnnaBacon10

Look forward and be excited about each and every lesson you give. Pupils need teachers more than

ever during these difficult times. For some, you may be the only source of education, motivation and constructive positive feedback they receive. They need encouragement and be shown that, over the years, the small steps they take equate to big milestones that they can be proud of for the rest of their lives.

On a personal note, my youngest son has been awarded his DipABRSM in Violin Performance and is only 15. It was a test of perseverance with his exam being cancelled in July 2020 due to Covid and then rescheduled for December 2020. Anything is possible if you persevere, work hard and of course practice.

@CryptMusicDept

Keep believing that musicmaking can take place at home. Continue to inspire your students at a distance! Keep learning as a music teacher and only introduce new ideas if they have impact. Music is such a powerful force and the students need it in their life!

Julian Whitaker

@ReptonMusic

Despite fatigue with online music-making, I have been impressed with how students of all ages have risen to the challenge of creating online entries for music competitions and examinations. More than that, it has been heartening to see many students recording their music-making, listening back and then recording again to make even the smallest improvements to the overall 'product'. I am not sure that this striving for perfection has been so universally evident before. Every cloud!

Oliver Walker



Ask James

James Manwaring (Windsor Learning Partnership) presents here a new column in Ensemble and a Zoom series specifically for the Music Teachers' Association, helping members to find quick solutions to everyday questions that arise in the classroom.

As every week passes, more questions keep coming in regarding Music Education. As we being to return to a "new normal" we start to think about the "Road Map" for our departments.

What performances are you planning for the Summer Term?

The simple answer is that I am not planning anything just yet. Whilst I am hoping for some kind of audience in the future I am simply focussing on getting groups back together, rehearsing music for the purpose of well-being and student engagement.

What have you learnt from the pandemic that you will take forward in your teaching?

One of the key things I have learnt is that students will engage with learning, rehearsals, groups and clubs on zoom. Having run some extra-curricular sessions on zoom I think that I will continue these moving forward. I love the idea of music clubs that centre around music technology – and these can easily happen online when students are at home.

I am also going to continue to use the concept of teaching on a screen so that when students are sat at computers, I can

share my screen with them so that they can more easily follow what I am doing. I find that projecting onto my whiteboard results in students not always being able to see the finer details. I am going to definitely use my Wacom tablet in class to write on the whiteboard – no more board pens that have run out of ink! I got the Wacom One and I can't tell you how much it has changed my teaching!

What new teaching & learning ideas have you adopted in lockdown?

During lockdown I have put a fair bit of time into considering both Retrieval Practice and Generative Learning. I particularly like Generative Learning because it considers how we can encourage students to generate their learning. This has led me down the path of students summarising their learning at the end of lessons. I have also used the summary approach with analysing set works using 1 word, 3 words, 5 words & 1 sentence. Microsoft Forms has proved an invaluable tool for Retrieval Practice and almost every lesson now has some kind of short retrieval task at the start.

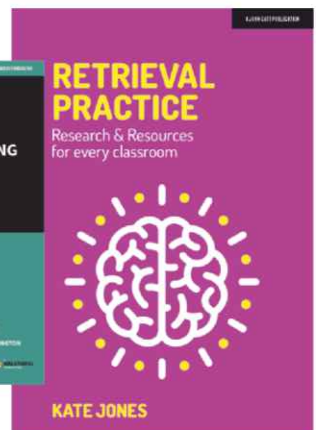
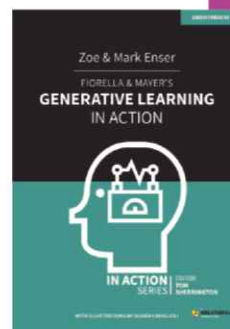
Recommended Books:

Generative Learning in Action – Zoe & Mark Enser

Retrieval Practice – Katie Jones

What have you enjoyed most about lockdown?

I have enjoyed lots of things – running, reading, time with family and walking the dog. Professionally I have enjoyed the chance to review my own practice, schemes of work and knowledge. Reading books on music, listening to music and pondering music have all been most enjoyable. As a music teacher I see it as crucial that I keep in touch with the wider world of music. I have read two great books – Music by Ted Goia & Handel in London by Jane Glover. I am now reading Beethoven by Jan Swafford.



Ask James
on ZOOM

Every month I will be hosting a Zoom session where I look at the questions that members send in. Please do look out for the zoom details and email me your questions. No question is too big or small and I, along with a small team of others, are here to answer them. All the best in the coming weeks.

Steinberg Media Technologies GmbH

Welcome to CAST!

WaveLab Cast helps you create perfect audio for podcasts and videos, ideal for publishing on YouTube and other social media platforms. With simple-to-use editing, mixing, refinement and distribution tools, it is perfectly suited to bring podcasts into a broadcast-ready state, easily and quickly.

It is also great for use with the new Graded Exams in Podcasting and Graded Exams in Vlogging, recently launched by **RSL Awards Ltd. (Rockschool)**. Students can now take Grades from Debut (including a 45 second podcast or 30 second vlog) through to Grade 8, with UCAS points available for Grades 6 to 8.



With WaveLab Cast you can use sound correction tools to remove unwanted noise or hum, rearrange different parts of an interview and add your favourite background music, which is automatically lowered when speech is detected on the voice track. The easy-to-use Inspector Channel Strip allows you to EQ your audio, enhance the presence of speech using the Voice Exciter or give it more punch using the compressor. WaveLab Cast connects you directly with five different podcast directories, including Spreaker, Podbean and Soundcloud. You can export your audio in various formats, including MP3, WAV and AAC.

Please check out the full details on the www.Steinberg.net/wavelab/cast website. For further information, please contact Richard Llewellyn (UK Education Manager): r.llewellyn@steinberg.de and tel: 07841 516 066.

The National Schools Symphony Orchestra (NSSO)

Planning for 2021 in these uncertain times has been a challenge, but we remain positive and barring a further lockdown NSSO will return to live music-making this summer.

Malvern College, the home of NSSO, has well developed and highly regarded COVID protocols in place and we are confident that we can run courses which are safe for all our players, staff and their families. Uniquely for 2021, numbers in each of the ensembles will be strictly limited, ensuring socially distanced rehearsals and coaching sessions; residential accommodation will operate at 50% of capacity, and other hygiene mitigations will be in place. The final concerts will be live-streamed. With shorter courses and fewer people on campus in 2021, parents can apply to NSSO with confidence, and in the knowledge that fees will be refunded if the courses cannot take place.

The new 20-piece **NSSO Big Band** will launch, as planned, and our unique **Conducting Course** will also operate (11-18 July) but the **NSSO Chorus** will not meet this year. **NSSO Academy** (grade 3-5) and **Sinfonia** (grade 6-8) will run 8-11 July, and **NSSO Philharmonic** (grade 8+), 15-18 July.

Courses will be residential only. Separate non-residential courses are currently planned for later in the year.

Auditions will be by video recording and, for this year only, will be conducted on a rolling basis rather than competitively against a fixed deadline. Broadly this will mean that if an applicant meets the standard required, supported by the recorded evidence, a place will be offered if there is one available. The earlier the application the more likely it is to succeed!

Full details are available on the website and enquiries should be addressed to hello@nssso.org.

Exclusive Play Now Pay Later™ Scheme from Viscount Organs Wales

Our vision at Viscount Organs Wales is to ensure that the Viscount Experience and instrument ownership is available to everyone in the current climate. We now offer an affordable solution to purchase an instrument with minimal initial outlay.

Play Now Pay Later™ provides a unique Interest-free plan and avoids the full initial outlay for a new instrument. We also offer this plan for churches, crematoriums and educational settings. St Anne's church in Margate and Queen Anne's School Caversham recently took advantage of this plan with us. www.bit.ly/St_Annes_Installation



Our most popular Instruments the Chorum 40S and the Envoy 23s are available from as little £189.00 per month. We can also provide a custom plan to meet your personal requirements. The plan cost is exactly the same as if you purchased outright. Please visit us at www.viscountorgans.wales or call 01792 721499 for more information.

The Royal College of Organists



Royal College of Organists TOSE Online, 27–29 July

With the possibility of running face-to-face courses (not least in cramped organ lofts!) still so uncertain, the RCO has taken its popular The Organ Student Experience course online for a second year. Under the artistic direction of Daniel Moulton, last year's course was extremely well received, but this year's will be even better! The programme offers coaching in performance, technique, keyboard skills and choral directing/accompaniment from top teachers, with the chance to have an individual organ lesson and to play in some of the classes new this year. Add in expert talks on applying to study at university (including organ scholarships) and conservatoires and TOSE Online becomes an essential experience for all ambitious teenage organists of c. grade 6 standard and above. For further details and to book your place please visit rco.org.uk/events.php. Bursaries available.

Hal Leonard

Hal Leonard Europe Announces Appointment of External Advisory Group to Focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Leading music publisher Hal Leonard Europe (HLE) has announced the appointment of a group of external advisors to work with the company, with a particular focus on initiatives around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The advisors are all exceptional individuals with expertise and experience in social justice activism, music creation, music education and the music industry, and will assist HLE in pursuit of its vision of **Lifelong Music-Making for Everyone**. The group is scheduled to meet at least twice a year to give feedback on HLE plans and monitor progress in respect of agreed actions.

The group includes the founder of inclusive executive search firm and diversity, equity and inclusion consultancy Blue Moon **Dr. Joanna Abeyie MBE**; Vocal leader and Animator **Naveen Arles BCA FRSA**; Musician, Researcher, Educator and Activist **Dr Diljeet Kaur Bhachu**; and Musician, Author and Music Education Consultant **Nathan Holder**.

“At Hal Leonard Europe, we're dedicated to meaningful, substantial action to progress and support our company values. We want to build upon what we have already achieved to further HLE's role as a force for positive change – enabling more people to learn, teach, create and make music. In 2020, we published a six-point action plan around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and the formation of this Advisory Group is a key part of that plan. We're very excited to be working with this tremendous team of people and learning from their insight and perspectives and sharing updates on the Group's work in the near future.”

Tom Farncombe, Business Development Director,
Hal Leonard Europe

Naxos Music Box nominated for prestigious award

Naxos Music Box, the newest education resource from the global recording giant, has been shortlisted for 'Outstanding Music Education Resource' by the Music and Drama Education Awards judging panel.

Naxos' Education Manager Julian Edwards says: "We're delighted that MusicBox has already caught the attention of music educators with this prestigious nomination. Over 300 schools and music hubs took up our free-usage offer in January and found it invaluable; many have gone on to subscribe for the year.

Released in summer 2020, MusicBox is an in-depth introduction to the world of classical music, aimed at KS2 and KS3. It offers comprehensive sections on orchestral instruments and well-known composers, as well as smaller sections on stage & screen, world music and history, all with extensive listening examples.

With lots of uncertainty still ahead over a full-time return to school for all pupils, there's never been a better time for schools to beef up the breadth of their online resources,

so as to provide more material for teachers delivering online or blended learning. At a time where some lessons are covered by non-specialists for Covid-related absences MusicBox provides much-needed support for teachers in the way of guidance notes, extended tasks, and clear pathways through the material.

As a partner resource to MusicBox, Naxos' long-standing Music Library remains a mainstay of classical music education: as well as over 2m tracks to stream, there are 40,000 composer and artist biographies, over 1000 opera synopses, study guides based around the UK curriculum and even an embed player to incorporate tracks into other teaching material.

Both resources have the advantage of reasonable pricing too: individual schools can subscribe to MusicBox from just from just £50/year for a class-full of user licences, and from just under £99/licence for Music Library. More information on free-trial options for both is available from **Julian: jedwards@naxosmusic.co.uk 07768 448381.**



NAXOS MUSICBOX

Naxos MusicBox is a beautifully presented music resource, offering a comprehensive introduction to the world of classical music.

MusicBox is aimed at students at Key Stages 2 and 3, and has a wide range of activities accompanied by excellent teacher support material.



For more information contact Julian Edwards
jedwards@naxosmusic.co.uk • 07768 448381



www.naxosmusicbox.com



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www.NaxosMusicLibrary.com



'You are far more capable than you think'

Marion Friend MBE
Executive and life coach,
mentor and consultant, arts
and education



These words have stayed with Bill Bailey since his time in the sixth-form. His music teacher gave him encouragement before giving a recital in his A level year and he remains inspired by her words when going out on stage solo to an audience of 5000, performing on Strictly or hosting a game show.

As inspirational and highly committed music teachers you're constantly encouraging and motivating your students to develop and reach for that extra step on the progression route. You're creating musical opportunities, opening up possibilities, introducing them to new ideas and concepts and instilling a love of learning despite the realities of reduced resources, remote working, intermittent classroom engagement and a pandemic. Doubtless you're also spending time with your students hearing about their anxieties and concerns and supporting them with their mental health. The music department is often a haven for young musicians where they feel they are understood and nurtured.

Let's turn this around.

YOU are far more capable than you think.

If you take all the statements above, how can you apply them to yourself? You may be spending all your time giving out to others, and attending to the needs of students and your departmental colleagues. What about you? Are you creating musical opportunities for yourself, opening up new possibilities for collaboration internally and externally, and remaining enthused about learning? Doubtless your role is challenging; are you able to ask for support and are there appropriate resources you can turn to when you're at a low ebb?

It may be time for some reflection. Maybe your confidence has taken a bit of a dip with all the upheaval of the past year. Start small – a few little tweaks to your approach and routine can be energising. Remember:

Your students and colleagues aren't the only ones who are far more capable than they think.

Marion Friend MBE
Executive and life coach, mentor and consultant, arts and education
www.marionfriend.co.uk

Reference:
Inspirational webinar/July 2020/Bill Bailey and Tamsin Greig /
National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain

Teaching Musical Skill

John Padley reviews an online course by
Michael Griffin

John Padley is
Honorary Treasurer
for the MTA and
Director of Music at
Queen Anne's School



During these strange times, I have to say that the thought of another online course did fill me with some dread but Michael Griffin's Teaching Musical Skill really inspired me and made me think about my approach to teaching and learning. The course is split into eight units each of which have a review section at the end which I found very helpful. I particularly enjoyed Michael's very measured and informative delivery.

Teaching Musical Skills focuses on how we teach students to practice effectively by developing their mindset and motivation. Michael takes us on a journey which covers how the brain develops as a result of playing music and that Musicians are the super-athletes of the World. Use of repetition is a key feature and Michael suggests many ways of approaching this and teaching students so that they understand how to work in their own time. Learning to practice slowly and making sure that mistakes are not embedded in the learning progress is vital.

Michael Griffin is a music educator and keynote speaker, based in Australia. He is the author of "Learning Strategies for Musical Success" and "Developing Musical Skill – For Students".

Demonstrating and observing how both teacher and student practice is an important part of the mutual learning. A really interesting point is that asking the student if they understand an explanation usually results in them saying yes but not really properly understanding it, so it is important to link understanding with action otherwise it is useless. I particularly liked the Dr Shinichi Suzuki quote "Only practice on the days you eat".

There are many useful tips in each unit and the course would be invaluable for instrumental teachers as CPD. Michael has a gift of being able to convey complex ideas in an easy to understand format that will be so useful and important for both teachers and students. Michael came to deliver a CPD session at Queen Anne's a few years ago and I look forward to being able to welcome him back in the future.

Michael is offering a 20% discount on all online courses for MTA members and their students. Visit <https://courses.professional-development.com.au> entering the discount coupon code **mta20.**



PARTNERSHIPS

for MUSIC in SCHOOLS

PART TWO



PARTNERSHIPS

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

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



Rat race

New Year's Day was celebrated on February 12 in the Chinese lunar calendar, welcoming in the Year of the Ox and bringing to an end the Year of the Rat.

The Ox is the second in the order of zodiac animals. According to myth, the Jade Emperor declared that this order would be decided by the order in which the animals arrived through the Heavenly Gate. Though the Ox was on course to arrive first, the Rat tricked the Ox into giving it a ride across a river. Just as the pair arrived at their destination, the Rat jumped in front of the Ox to cement its place at the top of the zodiac order.

The personality traits of the Ox are diligence, honesty, patience and humility. Perhaps, therefore, it did not despair at being pipped to the post. More fool the Rat, in any case, as it inherited the year 2020. And we all know how that went...

So much trouble in the world

The writer and music critic, Fiona Maddocks, made mention in a recent article in *The Guardian* of 'this swirling gloom', in what has been 'an incomparably tough time for musicians'. And the ISM, in its *The heart of the school is missing* report, highlighted the 'devastating impact of Covid-19 on music education'.

Following a global pandemic that has both crippled the Music Industry and done its utmost to silence our singing and playing in schools, there has never been a greater and more urgent need for interconnectivity and collaboration.

Cheer up

Oxen are apparently low-key, not seeking out praise or looking to be the centre of attention, but rather achieving their goals through hard work and determination. Surely, therefore, the stars are aligned for a year of partnership.

All in one

Etymologically speaking, partnership derives from the 14thC word, *partiner* ('sharer' or 'partaker'), after the late 13thC, *parcener* ('joint heir'), which in turn came from the Old French, *parçonier* ('associate' or 'joint owner'), originally from the Latin, *partitionem* ('sharing' or 'distribution'). But what does 'partnership' really mean in 2021, specifically in the context of Music Education?

Educational partnership, to me, is any collaboration between two parties or partners within an educational context. It is the sharing of one or more of best practice, resources, data, personnel, locations, and

anything in between, for the benefit of all those directly involved or indirectly affected as well as, hopefully, any other interested parties looking on from afar. It must be transparent, honest, always well-intended, and accepting of the fact that there will always be room for improvement or refinement. Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good!

Partnership can be a joint concert, a presentation or talk or performance at another school's assembly, a webinar or lecture series, a shared after-school club. All of these scenarios are potentially excellent examples of partnership. But they are all end products, and the partnership itself is much, much more; it's the connections made, the time invested, and the groundwork prepared along the way that are every bit as important.

One question often raised is whether partnership needs to be equal. For me, partnership should aim to be equal in terms of its mutual respect and mutually agreed expectations, though the equality of the partnership need not necessarily be measured by quantitative or qualitative analysis of the work of each of the partners; it may well be that one or more partners takes a lead on one occasion whereas roles may be reversed or redistributed on another.

Partnership relies upon a mutual understanding of the needs of every partner. Exactly what is in it for each of the partnership's constituents? And the only way truly to know the answer to this question is to foster a meaningful, sustained dialogue which can then shape the collaborative process in a coherent and well-informed way. At the risk of repeating myself, dialogue is key; we must never stop talking to each other!

Three little birds

Though the number three is apparently an unlucky one for the Ox, I'd like to highlight three layers of music-partnership activity, at micro-, meso- and macro-level.

At micro-level, so much meaningful partnership activity can take place within the (physical or digital) walls of our own school or educational context.

- Music ensembles are perfect examples of partnership. In particular, any opportunities we provide for our students to collaborate musically—in choirs, bands, chamber groups or orchestras—with anyone outside of their own form or class, let alone outside of their own year group, will expand their network and connectivity.
- Partnership between colleagues teaching different classes, year groups or subjects allows for the sharing of best practice and can therefore impact positively on learning outcomes. Cross-curricular schemes of work allow colleagues to learn about other disciplines, and students benefit from and enjoy making connections between different subject areas.
- Simply observing each other's lessons, sharing resources or data, or even discussing tactics over a cup of tea in the staffroom are all examples of supportive partnership.

At meso-level, the greater the number of connections we are able to make within our local area, the greater the chance of opportunities arising which will impact positively on our own school communities.

- Are you in contact with the other schools within your local area? Do you know the music teachers at both primary and secondary schools? Do you know how they have been coping with the pandemic? Would any collaborative projects benefit the students across your schools? Could any of your own micro-level partnerships be scaled up to meso-level?
- Are you in contact with your local music service as well as other partners within your local music hub? Do you know what their financial situation is at the moment, or what their plans are for the future? Do they have opportunities available for your students? Is there anything that you or your school could do to support the work of the hub?
- Do you have contact with any local arts organisations or music charities? What are their specific interests, if any, within music education? Could they help support students? Could in-school fundraising help support them?
- Are there any local music venues or professional/semi-professional ensembles within your local area? If so, are there any collaborative opportunities to explore?

At macro-level, it has been enlightening to look at the national picture and consider whether partnership work could be to some extent coordinated in such a way to ensure that no one area, school, or group of children were left behind, to enable access to good music education for every young person.

Get up, stand up

In Partnerships Part One, I posed the question, '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?'

Whilst there is still no doubt a long way to go, MTA has been busy #JoiningTheDots, and within the next few years we could genuinely see a national grid of partnership develop in which anyone and everyone involved in music education is part of one big collaborative web of interconnectivity.

Pass it on

Your work in developing and maintaining micro- and meso-level partnerships will be vital as we take this further.

Meanwhile, partnership is at the heart of everything the MTA does, as a membership association making connections, providing resources, and sharing best practice. Whether through our Hibbins Series, Rosenshine Zoom INSET sessions, Teaching Notes podcasts, weekly e-bulletins, social media accounts, or our annual conferences, we will continue to help better connect all music education professionals for the benefit of all.

TOGETHER IN PARTNERSHIP

Tim Garrard interviews Deborah Annetts (Chief Executive, ISM), Bridget Whyte (Chief Executive, Music Mark) and Simon Toyne (President, MTA) to discuss the partnership between our three associations.



Tim Garrard
Partnerships Lead



Deborah Annetts
CEO of the Incorporated
Society of Musicians



Bridget Whyte
CEO of Music Mark



Simon Toyne
President

TG: It's very exciting that the three associations are working together in the way that they are. Has there historically been a bond between you or is this a new development?

DA: I think we've all worked together in lots of different ways for many different years. ISM has always worked with Music Mark, and I think MTA were even part of the ISM!

ST: That's right! The then MMA joined in 1930, and it was an official affiliation until around 1980 when it went in separate ways. But we are becoming closer now and, of course, we've got a joint membership which is really significant. But I think there is something about our three organisations that naturally complements each other when we're looking at music education. With all three of our organisations there are certain things that we can do individually, but lots of sense in us working together; we've developed lots of symbiotic moments, haven't we?

DA: Yes, that's true. I'm not sure the government has valued music education as much as it should've done, and we can see that in all kinds of policy areas. We have had to work really hard to extract from government the guidance in relation to music education and managing the pandemic. It hasn't been a straightforward process. So, I think we are facing a bit of an existential crisis which means we have to come together as a sector.

ST: Absolutely. And through lockdown - I'm going to make a huge sweeping statement of generalisation here, but... a lot of middle-class children and families have done perfectly well, and okay musically, actually. But what about everyone else? That sense of music really reaching the parts that other subjects can't reach, so to speak.

BW: I would agree with Simon. Music Mark's members—the Music Services and other music education organisations who work across the

country—were really concerned that, as schools began to plan for full reopening back in September, music would be side-lined. Indeed, that is why we came together once more to express our concerns to the DfE as we knew a school without music would have a devastating effect on not only creative learning but also on pupil wellbeing and mental health.

ST: I think there was a sort of 72-hour period when things began to turn. But we keep on having to fight these corners, don't we?

TG: That's a good place, then, to talk about these '72-hour' scenarios. Describe some of the ways that you've collaborated in recent weeks and months, and the impact you think that collaboration has had.

DA: Well, I think now we've got into quite a good routine, almost, in that somebody sees something terrible happening and sends an email to the other two and says, 'have you seen this?! Don't you think

we should do something?!' The answer is almost always yes!

BW: Quite, and then, depending on who's got a bit of capacity, somebody drafts the letter; we knock it into shape as a group of three and get it out. And, hopefully, because we are now quite swift and incisive in our analysis, this does tend to lead to DfE sorting itself out.

DA: I think as a sector we are pretty clear on what we need and what is necessary for young people. But I think it's actually getting it through to the politicians, and I think that's where we still struggle. Because sometimes we need a bit more than just positive words; we do need things like the national plan to be properly formulated and properly funded; we need proper settlements for the music education hubs; we need things like bursaries properly sorted out so that we have some kind of career-planning structure going on.



TG: You've talked about where you've needed to come together to talk to government. Can we now focus on #CanDoMusic, which has obviously been such a brilliant thing?

ST: Well, actually #CanDoMusic is a really good example of us just subtly changing tack in the middle of all this discussion about what government should be doing. Whilst holding them to account, we can actually say, "look - there are lots of places in the country with schools that really value music!"

When we've got schools that are taking the opposite approach; maybe being fearful; maybe saying, "we can't do music because of Covid"; let's actually show how you can do it and, what's more, let's show quite what a difference this makes to individual students, to school communities and the wider community at large. So, the invitation there was for schools to promote what's going on, to help others, which has had a marked impact on thousands of schools. And we were talking about this earlier, before we came online, about the impact this had on music in schools, particularly following new government guidance. We saw schools change decisions for the better within 48 hours as a result of seeing what other schools had been doing.

BW: And the campaign is also reinforcing that message that school is the one place in a pupil's life where they are (or certainly should be) guaranteed to experience music.

TG: So, where next then for this axis of awesome?! I guess that through necessity most of this collaboration recently has been reactive to current events, but is there any (and, if so what is the) scope for strategic partnership within the future?

DA: I think to some extent it slightly depends on the government agenda with what it's going to be doing with music education, and I think all three organisations will be watching that very carefully. In particular, the national plan for music education.

ST: Yeah, I totally agree with that. And, longer term, what we all want – let's think blue sky, okay?! – is universally accepted value placed on music in the profession; in our culture; in our schools; at home. So we're not always having to fight, you know? We don't seem to find people fighting about maths. The power of what Jimmy Rotherham said has always struck me, and what he is able to do at Feversham Primary Academy where he won the 'global teacher of the year'. Money helped,

certainly, but it's really about value.

DA: But for the government to say that music isn't viable; I think they've done so much damage to our profession as a result of these comments from various government ministers. Music isn't about viability, but I would say it's deeply viable anyway. You only have to look at the contribution of the creative industries to the economy to see that. But it's more than viability; it's also about what it is to be a human being. And the government doesn't seem to understand that we clearly have a cultural issue which we need to be addressing.

BW: I couldn't agree more with that, Deborah. And, actually, we are in one of the biggest crises that we have seen in this country in peacetime, and music, playing, composing, producing, learning, has been a vital way of keeping us all going. I've heard so many great stories (and read lots of research) of the power of music over the years, and in the last few months we've all seen its power in action! What we now need to do is ensure that the memory of how music helped us through lockdowns isn't lost when schools think about their Recovery Curriculum and supporting pupils' learning and their wellbeing as they return to school.

DA: Absolutely. So, I think when we are talking to government we need to be re-emphasising the intrinsic value of music. Because I think, sometimes, there is a tendency for policymakers to forget this.

ST: Yes. And I think that we as teachers have got to take some responsibility for that. If we think about

music and the universal access to music education, to what extent has the universal experience of that been positive through history? I'm trying to push in schools this sense of investment in music, and one of the biggest challenges I've had is to articulate, to decision-makers and to headteachers, exactly what outstanding music education looks like because they may not have experienced it themselves.

DA: I think that's true. I think what we need, Simon, is many, many more of you out there!

ST: Ha! They're called the members of the Music Teachers' Association!

DA: Yes! But we do need to keep up with messaging to government so that you don't all end up working in cyber security! [a reference to the government's Cyber First campaign advertisement, 'Fatima's next job could be in cyber (she just doesn't know it yet)']

ST: Well, maybe you should get all the musicians working in cyber security because then the whole thing would collapse. That would be the biggest act of subterfuge!

DA: That thought did go through my mind, but that's absolutely not for broadcasting!

CanDoMusic.org

COLLABORATION for musical development IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Jimmy Rotheram

Jimmy Rotheram is the Senior Music Leader at Feversham Primary Academy in Bradford, and an education advocate shortlisted for the Global Teacher Prize.

Imagine for a moment that we taught maths in the same way that music is provided for most children in the country. Would it be acceptable to only cover maths in 20 minutes of 'golden time', on a Friday? Or 20 minutes with a single year group using a specialist from an external provider, with no interest taken by the school in how the children are developing? A maths lesson once a month, on a carousel with English and science. Even with a brilliant teacher, would we expect children to be fluent with their times tables? To add and subtract efficiently? I think one or two children might thrive in such an environment - they would be seen as 'gifted' in maths and encouraged to pursue it. Everyone else would be left feeling that they didn't have the 'talent' for maths. OFSTED would inspect maths on very rare occasions, and schools would prioritise other subjects which they were held truly accountable for. Many schools would not have access to a maths specialist, as very little training would be provided. If maths were not valued as a subject in a great number of schools and systematically discouraged, instead of maths competency tests for all trainee teachers, we would see maths delivered by people with only 2-8 hours of training (the average ITT coverage, according to ISM). Would we accept maths being taught by people who didn't feel confident with the basics of counting? I think if maths were happening like this in primary schools across the country, there would quite rightly be uproar about it, and considerable umbrage taken.

But this is what is happening with music lessons. Before I found my dream job at Feversham, I was a peripatetic music teacher for the music service. In one school I came in for 30 minutes per week, to work with a

handful of children who had chosen to learn piano in an after school program. It soon became clear that this was the only music these children were getting. Despite this, I did have one student with a proclivity for working out Chopin pieces by ear. I suggested that she perform some of this in an assembly and was told "assemblies are not for music". So instead I suggested that she perform in class and was told that there simply wasn't time for this. Having a musical child in the school was clearly an inconvenience.

To musicians, the need to practise seems unquestionable. Good luck with your musical development if you are only practising for 20 minutes on a Friday. If we want all children to develop musically, we need to do more in primary schools.

And whilst a musician may have the musical ability, skills and knowledge, if they have not been trained as a teacher they may struggle with anything from behaviour management to inclusion. Having Grade 7 oboe will not be an awful lot of help without teaching skills. We can learn from each other.

So we are often left with good classroom teachers not always feeling confident in their musical abilities, and good musicians, sometimes not always able to deliver sustained musical progression without the necessary support from the school. However, often never the twain shall meet, leading to music teachers feeling isolated and separated from school life, and non-specialists lacking support and guidance, including that of the ITT system (and I carefully don't blame Primary ITT providers; even if they do have the capacity to provide a good standard of training, often the local placements for teaching music are

simply not available, and teachers are not assessed on their music education abilities as they are systematically undervalued).

If we want all children to develop musically, we need to do more in primary schools.



The solution is simple in theory - collaborate. Make the music specialist part of school life - involve them in your planning, in your school decision-making processes. Make them part of the team. They can pass on their skills to empower classroom teachers to deliver music confidently and effectively. You don't need to be an accountant to teach maths, and school science is often not rocket science. Likewise, you don't need to be a virtuoso musician to teach the basics of music. Specialists, whether based in the school or as part of the music hub, should be empowering class teachers to take music education up to the next level. It's what our children deserve. Meanwhile the class teachers can also take responsibility for the musical progression of every child in their class, and support the music specialist and the children with regular practice. Senior leaders can support music programmes with CPD opportunities, musical assemblies and concerts. Good, musical schools can collaborate with ITT providers and music services for CPD and look to improve the system.

It takes a whole village to raise a child, and in the same way it takes an entire school and its support structures to raise a musician. We can be greater than the sum of our parts and raise everybody's game through more collaboration.

Clearly, many such opportunities for collaboration have been severely dented by the Covid crisis. At Faversham we have had to put an exciting project on hold. A collaboration between several local primaries and secondaries and with a remit to show other clusters how to do the same, in partnership with ABRSM, has now been scuppered. This was to be a two-year programme to train Year 6 teachers in delivering the basics of musicianship in a way which could then be developed and added to by secondary teachers in

Year 7. The schools cannot collaborate in person, and it was based on pulse and singing activities - you can't synchronise a pulse on a Zoom meet due to latency, and you can't sing in many schools, making the project impossible to deliver in its planned format. We are back to the drawing board.

However, we have been forced to embrace the online teaching world with much greater depth, and to seek ways of connecting to the community when the physical schools 'closed'. The former has meant much improved offers for training courses in terms of accessibility, with more flexibility and less travelling required. We have seen incredible online collaborations and work to keep music lessons going online by organisations like The Beat Goes On and The Benedetti Foundation, as well as the work the likes of Help Musicians, ISM and MTA have done to provide support. It has also meant that some professional networks have been strengthened. The situation with children studying from home has also compelled schools to make even more effort to connect with those 'hard to reach' families - breaking down language barriers, understanding local communities better and improving outreach and communication through innovations such as community radio broadcasts, community newsletters and online events.

So, whilst the situation has not looked too rosy as we have slipped into another lockdown with many best laid plans scuppered, I am also seeing lots of green shoots of innovation, improved networking and communication and improved relations between educators, schools and their wider communities. Collaboration has helped us get through a dark winter and, post-covid, it will mean we music teachers are stronger and wiser together to provide a brighter future for children in any circumstances. As H.E. Luccock said, "No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it." Can you imagine a music education system with the structural genius of a symphony, bringing together all the working parts to create a masterpiece where every role enhances and supports the other? Where children are given the collective support to develop into the musicians we need? Not a single child left behind? Isn't that a whole lot better to imagine than 20 minutes of 'golden time' every third Friday? We may not ever get there, but the journey together towards it could be spectacular.



THE FUTURE OF MUSIC EDUCATION: courage, openhearted generosity and sharing everything



Producing music is not easy; we in the profession all know this. But we also know that, at its best, it is endlessly inspiring and rewarding, especially when we see the spark kindle and take hold in a student.

This is a very difficult time for arts education in the UK. Even before the Covid-19 pandemic, funding was hard to come by. Fewer pupils have been taking music at GCSE and A Level, which has led to a fall in the number of qualified music teachers. A dangerous spiral has formed, with the distressing thought that music education might even disappear from UK schools completely. The pandemic and its restrictions, which impact disproportionately on practical music making in groups, has added a further layer of frustration.

It is understandable to become dispirited. A career in music seems even more uncertain now than it always has been. The pressure to turn elsewhere is very powerful. So we risk losing a generation of musicians who will choose other, safer career paths. This generation must be the ones that inspire the next, so the fear is that the fallout could be terminal.

We must not let this happen. Music is too important, and we must keep trusting in its power to inspire, to create possibilities and to boost pride, optimism and joy. I truly believe there

Alex Laing: King's High School
Warwick, National Children's
Orchestra of Great Britain,
Benedetti Foundation



is strong hope for the future. We can succeed by sticking together, forging partnerships, collaborating and sharing everything we have: our facilities, our knowledge, our experiences, our energy and perhaps, most importantly, our generosity of spirit.

My own career has led me to the fortunate position of being able to work with some of the best music educators around. I am Artistic Director (Music) of the King's High School in Warwick, one of four music departments within the Warwick Independent Schools Foundation (WISF). I also coach the violins and conduct for the National Children's Orchestra of Great Britain, and coach, conduct, teach and mentor for the Benedetti Foundation. I am lucky to be constantly surrounded and inspired by like-minded musicians and teachers. A strong message keeps coming out: we are not dictating how music should be done or taught, rather sharing whatever we can, and providing opportunities.

At WISF we are blessed with the very best music facilities in the region. It has always been important to us that these are also open for use by the

community. We have a strong association with the Warwickshire Music Hub. Until the pandemic stopped it (temporarily), we hosted weekly rehearsals for a string orchestra comprising young musicians from Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull. This formed the basis for a symphony orchestra, performing three times a year, with professional conductors. Similarly, the Warwickshire Music Children's Chorus rehearses at our Prep School before their concerts.

We also try to facilitate musical experiences more widely. Louise Sharp (Director of Music at Warwick Junior School) has set up and hosted 'Making Music Days' for KS2 pupils from over 14 schools. These provide a fun day of music making and workshops culminating in the young musicians giving a short performance to friends and parents. Particular joy has come from Samba workshops and the 'WOOFYT' organ. Louise has also been working with local primary schools to put together schemes of work for KS1 and 2 for non-music specialists.

She says: "My aim is to create a music curriculum, deliverable by a non-music specialist, that is worthwhile and that the pupils genuinely gain knowledge, understanding and appreciation of music."

Our facilities also enable professional ensembles to deliver their education work to larger groups. On two successive BBC Music days, we welcomed to the Foundation Ex-Cathedra Education (led by Rebecca Ledgard), who have delivered their incredible Singing Playgrounds workshops to hundreds of children. The children learn the songs and actions, compose and develop their own, then take what they have learnt into their own school playgrounds - and the music spreads.

Last year, to celebrate the 140th birthday of the King's High School, we commissioned from Brandan Ashe an oratorio for choirs and orchestra: 'A Warwickshire Will'. The text was taken from Shakespeare, and the music brilliantly allowed for different levels of choir to perform. Professional singers, representing Ex-Cathedra and the Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick, shared a stage with pupils from King's High and Warwick Prep, along with over 200 children from local primary schools. Rebecca Ledgard and I visited these schools to facilitate the participation and partnership. The concert had more than 400 performers and 1000+ people crammed into the Warwick Hall to hear it. What a joy it was to hear and see children singing about snakes, dogs and lizards as they threw ingredients into the witches' cauldrons. There was even some musical vomiting!

I am lucky to have been included as a conductor and coach for the Benedetti Foundation. Nicola Benedetti and Laura Gardiner (the director of the Foundation) have set up an extraordinary organisation with inclusivity and inspiration at its core. The four (pre-Covid) Live Sessions saw hundreds of young musicians from Glasgow, London, Birmingham and Dundee experience orchestral playing at beginner, intermediate and advanced level, with workshops also for music teachers. The team includes top class performers, educators, composers, arrangers, presenters, musicianship leaders, specialists in wellbeing and physical freedom. The team also fosters mentorship with the role of 'ambassadors': professional-level performers at music colleges, who act as big sisters and brothers to the

younger musicians. The Benedetti Foundation thus creates a seamless transition from the youngest musicians through the generations to fully-fledged professionals. The common strand is that we are all real, human and make mistakes. In fact, as Richard Michael (the great jazz pianist) says to huge appreciation: "Mistakes are cool".

The fearlessness of Nicola and the Foundation enabled it to cope, and even grow, despite the pandemic. The online Virtual Sessions were attended by over 7,000 musicians and learners from around the world, from as far afield as Chile, South Africa and Canada. These sessions are designed to support and not replace normal music lessons. While the Virtual Sessions can never be as wonderful as meeting together, they do provide the opportunity to reach many more people. Online Mini Sessions continue to support string techniques, but also offer help, specifically, to teachers. The ethos remains strongly collegial and supportive as we all share our strategies, our weaknesses, our worries and our passion.

Nicola says: "As we look to the future, one thing we can say for certain is we are resolute in our commitment to you, to building and empowering a community of musicians, to sharing and making high quality music



education more accessible on a larger scale to young musicians regardless of background or geographical location and to supporting and uplifting the work of teachers".

A revelation for me has been the power of team teaching. Nicola Benedetti, Jenny Lewisohn (a viola specialist) and I taught beginner vibrato together. We each brought our own strategies and were able to learn from each other. When Suzie Collier and I teamed together, we discovered that we each say similar things but often come from different angles. The session ceases to be a masterclass, where one person 'gives' and the rest 'receive'. Instead, it becomes a friendly, informal discussion of issues among peers, with positivity and exploration at the core.

So my message to all music teachers is 'take heart'. I know that many of you are already doing innovative and imaginative projects. These initiatives do not have to be glamorous or world beating. Working away with simple things at a fundamental level is also crucial, and can make a huge difference to students and colleagues. Covid can make us feel isolated, but it also encourages new forms of communication. We are creative people and we should continue to find ways to share and support each other. Sometimes asking a friend, a peer, a colleague or a fellow professional for help is the best thing we can do. A problem shared is not only a problem halved, it can lead to a solution that is mutually enjoyed, celebrated and built on. Whoever we are, we have our difficulties and our vulnerabilities. We owe it to each other to share these as well as our strengths.



Teaching Primary Music

Lessons Plans and Resources for KS1 and KS2 Primary Class Teachers



The Benedetti Foundation have recently released *Teaching Primary Music*, resources and lesson plans for primary class teachers, written by Jimmy Rotherham (Feversham Primary Academy).

The resources are designed to be accessible, easy to use and deliver a high-quality music offer to children despite any COVID-19 restrictions and have been created with non-specialists in mind. There are two levels - age 4-7 and age 7-11.

All resources are FREE to download and available here: www.benedettifoundation.org/primary-music

Teaching Primary Music (KS1 and KS2) was created by Jimmy Rotherham, primary music specialist at Feversham Primary Academy, in Bradford and edited and developed by the Benedetti Foundation. It is a resource designed primarily for teachers working in KS1 and KS2 in England.

Originally created in response to the Covid-19 crisis to support primary classroom teachers, who are non-specialist musicians, and bring music into the primary classroom on the return to school, we hope these activities will enable all teachers, teaching assistants, or those responsible for delivering music in the primary setting build their confidence and skills to teach this subject regularly and embed it within the school day.

The resources are designed to be accessible, easy to use and deliver a high-quality music offer to children despite the current COVID-19 restrictions. The videos have been created so that they lead the activity in the classroom, but once teachers have viewed them a few times and built some confidence they can have a go at leading it themselves.

“ Music and arts ignite the spark of true learning - they tap into something deeper, something that no intervention or booster session can bring out of a pupil. The power of music improves maths, English, behaviour and attitudes to learning. At Feversham primary we have harnessed this force of human nature to bring happiness and academic success to young hearts and minds.

Together with the Benedetti foundation, it is our vision and ambition that teachers across the world are supported to use music to transform the lives of children and lay the foundation of a happy, fulfilling and successful life. A life that can transcend the mundane and connect with the sublime.

Naveed Idrees OBE, Headteacher at Feversham Primary Academy, Headteacher of the Year, 2019 TES School Awards



Teaching Primary Music will enable your pupils to:

- develop confidence and social skills
- develop an accurate sense of pulse as a group
- develop an accurate sense of rhythm, from the simple to more complex
- ensure children understand the concept of pulse/beat
- develop listening skills
- explore music of many genres with ACTIVE listening activities embedded throughout
- develop “thinking voice” or “inner hearing” - the cognitive, internal conceptualisation of music
- provide a daily, moderate physical work out
- prepare notation (music reading and writing) skills
- develop expression and understanding through movement

DRAGONSONG

a case study in partnerships

Richard Quesnel

Richard is the Director of Music at City of London School and former Director of Music at St George's College, Weybridge

St George's College, Weybridge celebrated its 150th anniversary in the academic year 2019-2020. The Music Department's main contribution was the creation and performance of *DragonSong*, an original interpretation of the story of St George and the Dragon, intended for performance by children, adults and professionals.

The College commissioned a libretto from Ben Kaye – renowned author of several operas and texts for large-scale choral works – and I composed the new musical score. From its conception, this project had partnerships at the very heart of its strategy for delivery. The project coincided with the 125th anniversary of the Royal Society of St George who provided a grant to support educational partnership projects; this included inviting children from across London to take part in the weekend performance at St George's Hanover Square, the church attended by George Handel himself!

This musical work is written for two professional soloists, a small professional instrumental ensemble, unison children's voices, mixed chorus and student instrumentalists. The score is specifically intended to include primary school voices, secondary school choir and auditioned Chamber Choir singers along with a mixed voice adult Choral Society (comprised of parents, staff and alumni). At various points during the performance the audience are also invited to sing familiar hymns.

Children from central London state primary schools were invited to take part in this project. In particular, we worked with the teachers and pupils of Years 5 and 6 from St George's Hanover Square Primary School, as well as with Tom Daggett (St Paul's Cathedral; Hackney Children's Choir)

and children from St Paul's, Whitechapel (attached to the parish church of St George's in the East) whose school was also celebrating its 150th anniversary. Singing days were organised and the children from St George's College met and worked with state primary school children sharing repertoire and performance ideas. The children were asked to write articles about their experience, and these were shared with both College and Royal Society.

A new setting of the College prayer was set to music as an integral part of the work's structure, but was designed as a stand-alone piece of music for use throughout the year on other occasions. *DragonSong* aimed to be a whole school project for the anniversary and beyond. The new College prayer has a refrain that can be sung by all, and this new setting was included as a performance component in a new KS3 scheme of work based on 'Famous Georges', from Handel to Aperghis, including Bizet, Gershwin, Crumb, Harrison and George Michael!

The project was also embedded in a wider programme of study. Student performers were given worksheets to allow them to reflect on questions such as: 'How does the organ make dragon noises?', 'How does the orchestral accompaniment and vocal writing suggest the four elements?'. There were also opportunities for musical analysis, aimed at KS4 and KS5 students: 'How does the melody of the College prayer appear in different disguises from overture to final full statement – can you spot the correct number of appearances of the familiar opening motif?' and these questions fuelled composition work at GCSE and A Level.

This project brought together several partners that had common goals, shared history and a desire to work together.

DragonSong was also at the heart of a shared school-wide vision for the anniversary year. KS3 students were encouraged to work on dragon-inspired projects and A-level Art students provided artwork for the poster and programme cover. The English department were really involved in coordinating creative writing projects with librettist Ben Kaye, who came to visit on National Poetry Day.

This project brought together several partners that had common goals, shared history and a desire to work together. The project was rooted in a desire to support spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to contribute to the promotion of fundamental British values. Boys and girls from primary and secondary, state and independent educational backgrounds worked together in a variety of ways to bring this project to life.

POCKET GUIDE TO PARTNERSHIPS

Richard Quesnel is the Director of Music at City of London School

- ➔ Identify the core stake-holders and work with pre-existing networks. Mutualising experiences and contacts is precious and saves time and information gathering. Some networks that are already active may be keen for some new energy and input (hubs, local, regional, national level). Are there successful projects that can be reused/recycled? Don't always reinvent the wheel!
- ➔ Partnership is about more than the event. Remember and consider the value of the process for all - include your partnerships project in shared development plans, departmental CPD opportunities, renewed programmes of study etc.
- ➔ Identify the time-frame for action. Aim for long-term/perennial outcomes; accept the one-off. Choose the 'right' generation/cohort of students to launch and pursue the project. You may find it useful and interesting to take 'snapshots' over time. Consider a 'feedback loop' using the same year groups at appropriate points in their cycles.
- ➔ Associate the students. Remember to transcend the institutional targets. Involve the students in a creative way at different levels; they should be empowered to take ownership of the projects and become its very best ambassadors. Rehearsing & performing is obvious but help the students to understand the partnership projects, be involved in writing, logging, archiving, recording... Student-led documenting of the project, process and outcomes is a valuable tool for review – and they'll enjoy it too.
- ➔ Make it relevant to all partners and consider the context: institutions, politics, students, parents, alumni, general public... Do any partners have a shared history? Anniversary dates and big milestones provide an obvious easy win, but there will be other parallels to help keep partners engaged and committed over time.
- ➔ Align with funding cycles and plan ahead. Be aware of how the project intersects with academic and civil timelines as well as institutional grant budget deadlines. Give yourself time to put together a water-tight proposal, formulate objectives clearly and respect your outline trajectory.
- ➔ Provide legacy resources (linked to programmes of study, schemes of work) which can irrigate future projects and teaching initiatives within and without the partnership hub.
- ➔ Consider modular packages and different levels of entry and participation. Some partners may only be able/want to take part in certain aspects of the projects. Accept this and build confidence. Remain flexible.
- ➔ Experiment with In-house collaborations/trials before a wider roll-out... For example, try a collaboration between Year 7 and Sixth Form within your school before attempting to collaborate externally. Road-test the resources and the project, build up the core, identify strengths and areas for improvement, be comfortable with your project!
- ➔ Create a shared rhythm and shared expectations to consolidate a working method, a template for action and a timetable familiar to all.
- ➔ Communicate clearly and regularly. Designate, delegate, prompt and pilot as necessary but...
- ➔ Accept/avoid partnership fatigue! The expectation of an annual event can lead to inertia, stagnation. Share the leadership/rotate the pilot committee... but remember the common goals, the desired outcomes and the expectations with regard to the quality of productions. Be exemplary, which includes being kind and reasonable!
- ➔ It's not all about the music! Don't overload yourself and the Music Department. Aim to work with other departments/subject specialists in and out of school. What can we learn from the learning/education teams of other institutions in the partnership? Can we contribute or enrich existing resources/initiatives rather than building everything from scratch? Can music be the 'accompanying' partner rather than always taking the lead? Don't forget that there are other things going on 'outside' - every 'partner' also has their own complex realities!

WORKING TOGETHER

Bob Cuff

Bob Cuff is the Headteacher of Manor Lodge Community Primary and Nursery School



'Working together' has been a central tenet of stories since ancient times. And for good reason. Anecdotes have been crystallised into narratives detailing how humans have formed alliances to create or defeat and become triumphant. The result: a synergistic relationship where the sum is greater than the parts of their labours. The central (root) word within collaboration, is 'labor.' For it is not without work that we can – together - forge the stars.

With just a tiny twist and crack of poetic seasoning, I offer you the birth of a recent constellation through musical collaboration at the school I serve.

Heroes and heroines can be born from monsters. One such creation, incarnate from the blood of the mighty Gorgon, Medusa, is our dear winged horse of hope. And it is from this ancient winged warrior that one of the first stories of partnership; collaboration and success were recounted bringing hope to the world. Bellerophon, united with Pegasus, defeated the deadly Chimera before flying into the heavens as a permanent, sparkling, reminder of what 'togetherness' can achieve. Join me, in medias res, around the hearth of Autumnal comfort whilst Hestia tells a contemporary story of a hardworking pupil from a community school in Sheffield. The fire is crackling; the evenings drawing to a close; the warm sound of the stylus on the vinyl.

All schools are filled with gods; demi-gods; Titans; heroes and heroines. 2020's villainous Gorgon is real. Omnipresent. I shall not speak its name. But with the help of our multiple characters, we're about to witness a (hopefully) 'happily ever after' moment. A child whose serendipitous lyre became the clarinet and is now on her way to her new, stellar home.

It is impossible, in our school's context, for our protagonists not to collaborate. Isolationism is futile. The titans and

demi gods- of our school community - serve nearly 70% of pupils who, on paper, have very real barriers to overcome. Economic disadvantage. Social disadvantage. Musical disadvantage? English as an additional language. Different orthodoxies/ideologies. A population with roots from across six continents. Increasing poverty. Furlough. A widening societal gap. Sadly, the average life expectancy of this community is circa ten years different to some communities less than two miles away. Being alive, for some, is a graft.

Music is the Apollo of our community. Music cuts across these aforementioned barriers and, in some instances, brings them down crashing into the Asphodel Meadows enabling our heroes and heroines to enjoy life to the fullest. And our heroine is one example.

The list of enabling collaborators, in our context, ranges from, parents; community groups; local development trusts; social prescribers; social care; the voluntary sector; religious figures of authority, educationally specialist services (such as the Sheffield Music Hub) interest groups such as the Refugee Council and its Gateway Protection Project; EAL/SEN support; IT support...

I'm worried that the list would become prosaic. For it is not.

With the skills and knowledge of the above; the heart and soul of the above and, most humbling of all, the 'magic time' of the above, we see our narrative unfold.

Understanding the support for each and every child is where my staff and peripatetic staff (Music Hub) excel. True collaboration means that there are also meaningful relationships across these support networks. Relationships that one can call upon, at any time. And they can call upon you too. Relationships should be grounded in

trust; respect and reciprocity.

To spare the blushes of the pupil, if you took a handful of the above support, and were to flavour the story with it, you'd not be far from reality.

The heroine of our story was provided with school-based musical experiences (clarinet) from the Sheffield Music Hub. Using collaboration, with other external agencies, the child's first live orchestral experiences were opened up in one of Sheffield's Concert Halls, pre-the-Gorgon. Awe and wonder seeped through every pore. As time went on, one demi-God (from the Sheffield Music Hub) identified increasing potential and applied to the Furthering Talent programme from the Awards for Young Musicians organisation. They were successful.

Then the Gorgon entered the room. Lockdown.

We needed I.T - and quick. We needed a home-based instrument and quick. We needed support – and quick. Cue the relationships that have been fostered over the years. Cue the heart and soul of the community – cue the magic time of staff. Cue the interest groups. Cue the IT guy (we call him the IT guy). He has a name; he's great. Cue the learning mentor doing home visits. Cue the Music Hub. Cue the extraordinary list of other support. Cue delivering an iPad; and internet access; ISP etc and other electronic acronyms in lockdown.

Cue music.

And now cue 'Orchestras for All.' The application was sent in; the child has been successful.

Could we have done this on our own? No. And when we can go and see her, in front of a live orchestra, with 'real' people in the audience? When that time comes I will smile, as we may have our own community star being born.



Working in Partnership to Break Down Barriers to Music-Making

Anna Williams-Haines, Head of Programmes

Orchestras for All (OFA) is a national youth music charity with a vision of a country where no young people face barriers to the life-changing experience of ensemble music-making. To achieve this vision, we run three programmes:

The Modulo Programme: Which enables under-resourced state secondary schools to establish mixed instrument and mixed skill-level ensembles (Modulos). We provide bespoke arrangements and rehearsal resources and bring everyone together at Modulo Meets - pop-up orchestra days at inspiring venues.

The National Orchestra for All (NOFA): One hundred 11-18 year-olds facing barriers to music-making, nominated to the orchestra by their teachers for their commitment to music in the face of challenging circumstances. There are no auditions or fees and all instruments and skill levels are welcomed. The orchestra rehearses and performs at school holiday and weekend residential courses.

Music Leadership Training (MLT): An online and face-to-face (currently webinar-based) CPD programme for music leaders working in all contexts, focusing on developing inclusive ensemble leadership skills from conducting to rehearsal leadership approaches and music arranging.

Partnerships Break Down Barriers

Our three programmes have evolved over the last ten years, and in that time we have proven how high quality music-making transcends educational ability, socio economic status and disability, and that it is possible to enable young people facing the biggest barriers to access music-making. The biggest lesson we have learnt is how vital strong partnerships are to successfully breaking down barriers and ensuring a long-term positive impact on the young people and schools we work with. We view everyone we work with as a partner in this mission - including young people, schools and families as well as external organisational partnerships.

Here, we share three partnerships that are key to our work reaching young people facing the biggest music-making barriers:

1 Music Education Hub / Music Service Partnerships

OFA is passionate about contributing to systemic change to equalise music-making opportunities for young people. The organisations best placed to ensure sustained change are schools

and music hubs and services, who know the specific needs of their local and regional communities.

OFA's role is to support these organisations. When Modulo first started, we were keen to identify the young people who the programme could have the biggest impact on, but sometimes found it difficult to identify them. That changed in 2017, when we began partnering with music hubs, including Coventry, Croydon and Sheffield, who identified the schools with the biggest gaps in music participation.

A key part of this step change was the support the combined efforts of the hubs and OFA could provide to often isolated and overworked classroom music teachers. Jon Regan at Croydon Music Hub used the Modulo resources to bring together four schools whose students had limited contact with their Hub activities. He arranged a Croydon Modulo Meet which led to students from the area joining the national Modulo Meets for their first ever experience of large-scale orchestral music-making.

"Modulo supports us to reach out to the pupils who might find it most difficult to access playing in ensembles. It's really effective in enabling us to engage with new schools in our area" – Jon Regan, Croydon Music and Arts

2 **Orchestral and Artistic Partnerships**

One of OFA's core aims is to enable the young musicians we work with to participate in high quality music-making processes - both at rehearsal and performance stages. In supporting schools and music leaders, we aim to offer opportunities that are going to inspire young musicians and introduce them to role models.

The Modulo Programme partners with three of the UK's top orchestras: BBC Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and City of London Sinfonia. These orchestras

work regionally with Modulo schools, visiting them to rehearse Modulo repertoire, running online sectional rehearsals and coaching instrument sections at the Modulo Meets. Modulo supports schools wherever they are on their musical journey, providing parts for all instruments at all skill levels. The orchestral partners enable personalised and ongoing relationships for individual students helping them to make the jump from small-scale in-school rehearsals to large-scale Modulo Meet days.

We value partnerships that provide expertise in specific areas of inclusive

ensemble leadership, and this was at the forefront of our approach when developing our Music Leadership Training programme. This aims to support music leaders working in all contexts to develop confidence as ensemble leaders. We invited experts in inclusive music-making, including the English Folk Dance and Song Society and Ollie Tunmer of Beat Goes On, to contribute content ideas and short, practical films. These are followed up by reflective tasks and activities that support the user to plan their own versions of the activities for students that they work with day-to-day.

"Our Modulo masterclass with members of the City of London Sinfonia was a special moment: there was an incredible energy around the room. You could feel our pupils reacting to the music around them... That was the first time it really felt like we were forming a new ensemble." - Ellie Page, music teacher at Hackney New School, London

3 **Youth Voice**

OFA is for the young people it works with. We believe strongly that young musicians should have a clear voice and influence in how we work and what we do, and over the last year we have challenged ourselves to embed this at all levels.

NOFA alumni spend a year advocating across the organisation as Ambassadors, and within NOFA acting as role models for NOFA members, supporting and leading activities. Meanwhile, NOFA's 16-18 year-olds take on roles as Young Leaders whilst

still participating in the orchestra, achieving their Bronze Arts Award through leadership during NOFA activities, including hosting a recital night for the whole orchestra. Having successfully piloted this approach, we're looking forward to introducing the Young Leaders programme to Modulo in 2021, with opportunities for Modulo members to advocate for music-making in their school and lead aspects of Modulo activities.

In recent months, two recent NOFA alumni have been recruited to the Board of Trustees, and are already

contributing fresh perspectives to our governance. One of their key roles has been to establish a Youth Advisory Board to listen and consult with young people across all OFA activities. At their recent first meeting, we were blown away by the board's insight into OFA's visual identity and how we could continue to develop our approach to diversity and inclusion.

"OFA is inclusive, supportive and accepting - it's a safe environment where you can make mistakes, be welcome and included" - OFA Youth Advisory Board member

We wouldn't be OFA without every person involved in our activities. For us, partnerships are a frame that ensures that everyone we work with has a voice and a role to play in breaking down even more barriers to music-making.

Come and join us...

We would love for all music teachers to partner with us to break down these barriers to music-making, so get in touch at info@orchestrasforall.org! We'd love to hear how you are making an impact on young people and will support our vision of bringing equality to music-making for young musicians across the country.

INVESTING IN PARTNERSHIPS

James Day

Rather like the extinction of the maestro, the conductor with a reputation of uncompromising, vicious and dogmatic genius, the decline of the use of the word outreach, the concept of the privileged helping out the underprivileged, is so very welcome. The term partnership expresses a joining together to create fresh opportunities; the result is a fusion project which is the sum of its parts where everyone is a beneficiary. I vividly remember meeting up with Tim Garrard (Partnerships Lead for the MTA) and being so impressed by his vision for developing this idea of localised partnership across the country. Thank you for asking me to write a little about my experience.

Partnership plays a major role in all three of aspects of my working week as Director of Choral Music at Tiffin School, and Artistic Director of both the Pimlico Musical Foundation and the Barnes Music Festival. It's impossible to summarise my experience in just 600 words but, thinking about the ever-growing list of partnerships, I realise they fit into four broad categories.

Firstly, and most importantly, there is partnership within our musical organisations, in its most primary form, from the moment we start to make music, the moment you conduct your upbeat, breathe and anxiously wait for everyone to join in. This means picking good music that I know the singers will love. It means developing an atmosphere in which singers feel confident to breathe and sing beautifully, and encouraging our singers to be daring musically.

Secondly, partnership is the lifeblood of any department or organisation – our colleagues are our greatest partners. How often do we lean on their good will and flexibility (I write this having just been told to isolate for eight days)? We ask them to take a quick rehearsal, to give up their weekends and holiday

James is Director of Choral Music at Tiffin School and Artistic Director of both the Pimlico Musical Foundation and the Barnes Music Festival.



to staff trips, to keep watch over a bunch of children while you dash to the photocopier - the list goes on. Within the staffroom: liaising with the sports department to ensure your Year 8 trebles can take part in both Rugby and Choir on a Thursday; roping in the Biology teacher to sing tenor in the carol service; and, begging for forgiveness when you take Year 11s off timetable for the fourth Wednesday in a row. And, so often overlooked, our relationship with parents – who fly the co-curricular flag when the teenager refuses to get out of bed for an early morning rehearsal – I could list so many more examples.

Schools are in the business of education. I'm very fortunate that two of my projects – the Pimlico Musical Foundation and Barnes Music Festival – are geographically local to several top independent schools. I've been staggered by the time, expertise and financial commitment these schools have given us. In Pimlico, this ranges from negotiating a Sixth Form volunteering programme in which sixth-formers help staff rehearsals, observing our work and gradually taking on more responsibility across the year to organising gigantic choral/orchestral opportunities in London's biggest concert halls, and creating opportunities for my choirs to sing in services with the best cathedral choirs in the world.

With the Barnes Music Festival, we work with two secondary schools and a post-school chamber choir to deliver our Schools Programme. Teachers and sixth form mentors deliver sessions in all six local state primary schools developing a composition which is then sung as a massed performance (it does help that the Director of Music at one of the schools has a former life as a film composer)! The Festival regularly offers side-by-side instrumental opportunities with our professional orchestras.



Hansel and Gretel, Regent's Park Open Air Theatre in a co-production with English National Opera. Pimlico Musical Foundation. Photo Johan Persson.

Finally, at Tiffin our partnerships are mainly professional. We regularly work with all the London Orchestras (last year we provided 100 children for a concert with Sir Simon Rattle and the LSO) and in both London Opera Houses. We have collaborated with the Philip Glass Ensemble and recorded Handel's Samson with the Dunedin Consort. The choir take part in film recordings - just before lockdown we spent a week recording on set for the upcoming Batman film (I'll be using this for recruitment for years to come!). We collaborated with Madonna on her last album. These gigs can be tough – generally speaking, the organisations do understand that they're working with children. There are a number of amazing orchestras who are seriously engaging with education, and increasingly we love to be a part of these.

I'm fortunate that I have the flexibility to pursue partnerships and really believe they form a core part of my work. These partnerships are absolutely vital to invest in, make such a difference to the output of work undertaken, and the opportunities that our children can access. For me, it also provides the most brilliant CPD. So, the one bit of advice I would give is to write an email, go for a coffee (or pint), and see what can happen!



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A reflection on a year of unforeseen musical opportunities

Adam Assen is
Director of Music at
Caterham School



Many Music Departments, when plunged into Lockdown 1.0 in 2020, sprang into 'online creativity mode' and forums and message boards on social media became alive with the sharing of these ideas. It was wonderful to see and hear some of the ingenious ways that Music Departments were adapting and seeking to engage and enthuse pupils in music-making projects. In September, schools faced so many challenges; bubbles, new timetables, social distancing, access to performing spaces, provision of VMTs etc. There was certainly no standard approach across schools - something that was very apparent in the plethora of performances that were shared online at the end of the year. There were some ensembles which were spread across a vast space and others performing in a small area with pupils of mixed year groups. Clearly, interpretations of the guidance were left to schools and individuals.

Some ideas were more obvious; the split-screen choir video made news both in the educational world and mainstream media. Whilst many set about rolling these out with ease it was clearly a challenge of technology for others. We all discovered just how laborious this was and, perhaps came to the same conclusion that this method of assembling a choir in fact, achieved the very opposite of what both director and singer enjoy about working together.

Other, less obvious ideas also flooded in and as educators found their pace (particularly with the technology), what emerged were some truly worthy and highly musical projects.

What of these ventures? Will they simply be consigned to the archive folders once normality is resumed (if you believe that will actually happen!) or, may some of these credible music-making concepts remain?

After a year of thinking 'outside of the box' and with the uncertainties of the next academic year, it is interesting to reflect on what has really worked beyond expectation- what are the benefits to young musicians and will these new approaches replace or co-exist with the 'traditional'. We did of course all have access to the technologies we are now reliant on; why did we not exploit these before?

Online performances- audiences like never before and advantages for the less confident

A particular delight has been the number of views for some of our smaller events - recitals and events that have always been in-house and to smaller audiences have been viewed online by hundreds, all around the world. Parents, keen as ever to show their children's talents to family and friends have shared links and distributed performances like never before. For pupils who are anxious about performing to an audience and for those who need to build confidence- recorded performances have allowed them to flourish. In our Live Lounge acoustic platform, the self-taught and most humble of vocalists have become revered amongst their peers. So, perhaps here there are advantages to consider for the future.

“For pupils who are anxious about performing to an audience and for those who need to build confidence, recorded performances have allowed them to flourish.

Focus on composition

How wonderful to be able to promote and encourage musical composition beyond the requirements of the examination boards. Pupils engaged in composition for pleasure and a fantastic competition, judged by Bob Chilcott in Summer 2020 created a buzz and excitement never seen before. Entries submitted online and a remote adjudication enabled this to happen with ease and slickness. Pupils and staff alike became familiar with the great (often free) apps and software that facilitate composition very effectively. Minimal guidance could be given with these compositions so most impressively, pupils were left to start and complete pieces themselves. Does this make their work more authentic perhaps?



Lessons with VMTs more flexible than ever

VMTs discovered that the holiday periods (synonymous with a decline in practice) were no longer such a 'void' in the term. Parents were happy for lessons to continue through school holidays and missed lessons were made-up over the weekend when necessary. Boarding pupils returning home were able to continue their lessons remotely. VMTs who were displaced due to travel restrictions were able to teach from wherever they may be; one teacher continuing her lessons from a sunny terrace in Madrid. Whilst most would agree that remote lessons cannot be as effective as physical ones, there may be perhaps a counter argument for having almost no break in lessons.

Technology fully utilised

All means have been explored by staff and pupils for effective music-making at home and at school. Instagram Recitals (as previously reviewed in *Ensemble*) were hugely popular with the whole school community and the Music Department's YouTube channels are full of excellent performances. These avenues existed long before our need to exploit them of course. Pupils learning how to create, edit and upload their performances have quickly become standard practice. Providers such as the ABRSM embraced technology with their Performance exams allowing teachers and pupils to continue along their graded development path. Pupils are now really listening and watching themselves in a way they did not before - may this have a positive impact on their performing?

Partnerships developed online

Workshops delivered online were an unexpected success. String players attending a Masterclass with a member of Soul II Soul/Reggae Philharmonic were perhaps more engaged than they may have been in-person. Inhibitions were set aside as the excellent workshop leader guided them through their performance introducing movement into their performing- highly unusual for young string players! Supporting the local Coulsdon and Purley Festival was easier than ever online and parents and pupils were able to record and submit entries easily from home. Nothing can compare with the thrill and rush of adrenaline felt in an actual competition or in a performance at the end of a workshop day - but will an online option enable inspirational musicians and leaders to reach out to greater numbers if this use of technology continues as a viable medium?

Focus on Chamber Ensembles

With so many restrictions preventing large ensembles from performing together attention turned to smaller ensembles where musicians and singers could be placed a safe distance apart. The fear shared by all is the success of those larger ensembles when normality is resumed. But some of the skills developed in those small, intimate ensembles may have an impact on those bigger musical forces.

Perfecting the recorded performance

The quality of recording was an issue. As the only outlet, both visually and audibly, of any performances emanating from the Department,

attempts to achieve perfection kicked the Recording Studio into high gear with components pushed to their limits - including the music staff, who rapidly became more efficient in uploading and editing performances.' It has been great to see this equipment being used to its fullest extent. Equally, every device and laptop has been pushed as staff edit and upload performances with increasing speed and confidence. For the pupils part of the learning experience has been in the attention to detail- the nuances of recording and the developing 'ear' for perfection. Visual recording has also required more attention - shaky iPad footage has not felt acceptable when replacing actual concerts. With support from other departments in the school and with professionals in the domain brought-in, an ever-growing media bank of high quality recordings is fantastic for pupils and parents. Hearing and seeing their own performances may have such a positive impact on pupils' confidence and pride.

What will go and what will remain from this snapshot of 'work-arounds' in an unusual musical year? There must be a huge number of other observations from our collection of amazing music departments. And, conversely there must be some ideas explored that nobody would wish to attempt again! But in a year of such uncertainty a bit of reflection on the positive aspects should be shared. Through all manner of means; *Ensemble*, the podcasts and various resources, the MTA is the forum for this discussion.

SUCCESSFUL PARTNERING

David Liggins from Corporate Member The Ocarina Workshop reports on a new exam partnership with Music Teacher Board

We all have plenty of partnering failures and successes. The question is how to partner successfully... in music, in teaching, in life. What marks out a partnership that is worth pursuing? Here are a few considerations.

Successful Partnerships Involve:

1) Reward: for a partnership to be worthwhile, there has to be something 'in it' for both sides. One party cannot do all the work, for the other to take all the glory. Talk realistically about expectations and what you aim to achieve, and maintain continuous dialogue for the duration of the partnership.

2) Balance: effort/commitment must match on both sides. In dynamic relationships there is no such thing as a 'sleeping partner'. Having said that, reciprocity comes in many forms. For example, one may offer finance/expertise to enhance another's skills/plans, as exemplified in BBC2's 'Dragon's Den'.

3) Results: a partnership should be 'greater than the sum of the parts'. If you can attain a goal without help, go it alone. If working with someone will more than double the quality/quantity of what you want to do, or halve the strain/effort needed to achieve your goal, then partner.

Partnership Failure

Since 1990, we searched for a music exam board that would offer ocarina exams. Established boards didn't share our vision for children's early instrumental success, or respect the ocarina as a 'proper' instrument. Equally, we were unsure that ocarina players would benefit from exam pressure, since pupils really enjoy the freedom and fun of making music with ocarinas.

David Liggins is the Director of The Ocarina Workshop



Having 'kissed many frogs' and failed to find our 'prince', we gave up. The desire remained unfulfilled in our hearts, and teachers continued to ask for external ocarina exams. We hate to disappoint.

As the years progressed, practices gradually changed. Exam boards realised they needed to offer pre-Grade levels to catch pupils early and reduce the formality of testing. The English 4-hole ocarina does this. A pupil can master the ocarina long before playing other wind instruments. However, exam boards were still not receptive.

Partnership Take-off

Finally, rewind to March 2020 and the Music Education Expo – a last outing before lockdown. What timing! The Music Teacher Board (MTB) visited the Ocarina Workshop stand and that was the start... MTB exams had recently become Ofqual Accredited and were looking to expand. We had just launched the 'Adventurous Music-Making' series, thereby increasing the number of pieces available to ocarina players from 137 to 271 published arrangements.

The MTB had also launched an app to support their online examining. The idea of pupils taking exams with their teacher anytime and anywhere attracted us. This would become a major factor in accepting their invitation to submit ideas for ocarina exams. As Covid-19 took hold, their innovative music exams suddenly made even more sense. And, like most teachers, we now had time to work on it from home.

Potential Obstacles

At the outset, we discussed possible sticking points with the MTB Chief



Examiner, Mark Kesel, to check that our mutual time would not be wasted. These included use of backing tracks in exams, the inclusion of tablature in printed repertoire, and the perceived limitations of the ocarina in terms of its range: one octave with the 4-hole ocarina, and a ninth with the 6-hole. We soon realised that we could work together. Mark confirmed that backing tracks and tablature are totally acceptable with MTB exams. And scales and exercises could be adapted to provide a valid test.

We proposed five exams, from pre-Grade Introductory and Higher, to Grades 1, 2 and 3. As time went on, and feedback was received, it became clear that our standards were more demanding than the accepted norm; some of our advanced material had to be moved up to create new Grades 4 and 5.

Syllabus Preparation

We began preparing syllabuses by comparing ocarina repertoire with that of other instruments. We analysed existing recorder and flute repertoire in order to select equivalent ocarina pieces. We then enlisted other woodwind and brass specialists to compare the levels of difficulty of our proposed material with that played across the full range of wind instruments.

In order to maintain standards with scales and exercises, we made use of some existing MTB recorder exercises, adapted and transposed others, and added new ones where necessary. Scales made use of the English ocarina's natural chromaticism. For example, chromatic scales begin at Grade 1 on the ocarina, and Grade 3 on the recorder and flute.

With the addition of Grades 4 and 5, we added more chromatic, blues and whole-tone scales and wrote ocarina-specific exercises. Grade 5: Exercise 2, was inspired by the flutter-tongued ocarina solo in Ennio Morricone's score to 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly'. Whilst flutter-tonguing is too advanced for Grade 5, a glissando and trill appear in this exercise, and trills and tremolos are introduced as early as Grade 2.

Special Consideration

We have consciously developed ocarina repertoire in a variety of styles. Vessel flutes were originally found all over the world, from prehistoric times onwards. Their ocarina sound is 'chameleon' in quality, blending well with other instruments and voices, and fitting naturally into any genre of music. This is because air vibrating within a vessel, not down a tube, creates few upper harmonics. The remarkably pure sound adapts easily to whatever music is being played.

The English ocarina repertoire can thus be all-embracing, crossing genres, continents and eras, and sounding natural in each time and place. The use of backing tracks makes pupil performances even more stylish. In the Grade 2 'Song of the Maya', 2,000-year-old Mayan ocarinas from our own collection can be heard in the accompanying backings. With similar authenticity, the horn in 'Royal Hornpipe' introduces baroque trills for



ocarina players to imitate at Grade 4.

Whilst the ocarina appears simple, it is technically difficult to play in some keys. Playing from D upwards, the ocarina naturally fits the major keys of D and G. The note F sharp is easy. F natural involves half-covering a finger-hole on the 4-hole ocarina, or opening a thumb-hole on the 6-hole ocarina. Scales that include F natural and E flat are particularly challenging: I find them more difficult to play on the ocarina than any Grade 8 scale on the flute. Practising in E flat major on a 'D' ocarina prepares the candidate well for performances of chromatic Grade 5 pieces such as 'The Entertainer' (Joplin), 'Salut d'amour' (Elgar) and 'Romance' (Mozart).

Listening

We gathered a panel of ocarina-teaching experts around us to advise, and frequently discussed issues with MTB as they arose. The presence of tablature under the staff on all our music up to Grade 5 was universally approved. As one teacher commented, this is "such an inclusive element – you must keep it!" However, opinion was split over whether tablature should be included with scales and exercises. Should pupils be expected to read music when playing these?

In listening to all opinions, the two most experienced teachers' comments were accepted and tablature is included. As a compromise, all ocarina scales and exercises can be downloaded with and without tablature so that individual teachers can decide what is most suitable for their own pupils. Listening and compromise are essential elements of any partnership.

The MTB Ocarina Syllabus was published online on 14th October 2020, just seven months after our first encounter. It is there for all to download. We are happy to advise any school wishing to include ocarinas in their music curriculum, and MTB will advise regarding their exams. See both website links below.



How does Ocarina Workshop's partnership with MTB measure up?

1) Reward: Ocarina Workshop now has high-quality ocarina exams to offer schools. MTB has a new instrument and brand-new syllabus to add to its online exams. Schools have a benchmark for assessing progress with solo and whole-class ocarina-playing. This is a win-win partnership.

2) Balance: we spent three months reviewing repertoire, and preparing and submitting the syllabus. MTB put in time and expertise to test and approve this offer, and will ongoingly host and promote the exams for new generations of musicians. This is a fair balance, pleasing both parties.

3) Results: the combined expertise of Ocarina Workshop and the Music Teacher Board has created exams that neither could have prepared independently. There was plenty of 'give and take' all round. Schools can now choose to offer the ocarina and its repertoire to students, on a par with flute, recorder and any other instrument up to Grade 5. Our thirty-year search has reached a happy conclusion.

Timing

Waiting 30 years is not a prerequisite for a good partnership. Partnerships may be forged swiftly for specific purposes. However, getting what we want immediately is not always good for our character, and the right partnerships are worth waiting for, and investing in, with time and effort. Good luck!

www.mtbexams.com/syllabus/ocarina
www.ocarina.co.uk

Engaging Pupils in School Music During Lockdown

Gareth Hemmings is Director of Music at Portsmouth Grammar School



We have found pupil engagement during lockdown 3 a little more challenging. Screen fatigue and virtual rehearsal overload has meant that it has been harder to keep the momentum going this term. Three things we have tried which have had some positive impact are:

1. Use of Soundtrap and Noteflight in ensembles and for our House Music Competition.

I am sure you have come across both of these cloud-based music packages. Initially we used these for class music teaching, but we quickly realised the benefits that these could have for ensembles too. We have ensured that all our ensemble members have accounts in both Noteflight and Soundtrap. Music is shared with the ensemble in Noteflight which also allows them to play along with not only midi versions of their ensemble, but there is also the option of syncing YouTube and Soundcloud recordings to the score for a much more satisfying quasi-ensemble experience. When the ensemble members feel ready to record they work on a collaborative Soundtrap file which has midi versions of the whole ensemble as a template. They record their part and then when we have reviewed it, the midi guide track can be deleted. For chamber choir we recorded real guide tracks of each vocal part. Gradually the ensemble builds and there is more of a feeling of playing and singing together and responding to the music already laid down by other ensemble members. At the end of the process there is a ready made recording, without the need to spend hours syncing individual wav/MP3 files in a Logic file! Our House Music competition is being assembled by pupils in the same way later this term. This requires no particularly sophisticated equipment. Both Soundtrap and Noteflight work on surfaces, phones, laptops and desktop PCs and Macs to great effect. The main financial cost has been the subscriptions the department has taken out with Music First for this software.

2. Music Department Website.

During lockdown 1 we created a Music Department website using Google Sites. This is an easy and intuitive programme to use and we have kept this site running as a way of sharing information, performances and curriculum work with the school community and the wider community. During lockdown 3 we have been using this to create challenges and projects that pupils and families can involve themselves

in outside the classroom. Year 12 and 13 pupils have been curating our weekly Music for Mindfulness series which we email out to the whole school each week. We have created composition challenges to encourage pupils to use Soundtrap and Noteflight creatively outside the classroom. We shamelessly stole from the National Children's Orchestra online Summer Course their Music Taskmaster Challenge where we set a weekly 20 sec video challenge to hand in. Challenges have included: pull the most unexpected thing you can out of your instrument case, film the inventive way of turning your page whilst performing, how many 1 octave scales can you play in 20 seconds and multi-task whilst playing your instrument. This has engaged our juniors and seniors in some amusing music-based family activities.

3. Year Group Workshops

In an effort to break up the learning week for our pupils the school has run off-timetable days for various year groups to work on curriculum enriching projects which can also get them away from screens for some part of the day. There has been a Renaissance Art day for year 7, a business enterprise day for year 9 and the Music Department ran a Body Percussion workshop day for our juniors and year 7 & 8 (with the amazing help of Ollie Tunmer from Beat Goes On). Whilst pupils were still effectively using their screens, they were at least not having to type into their computers and were up and active! We also hosted a series of short workshop recitals with Harry the Piano for each year group and he improvised live on themes of each year group's choosing and showed how he did this. We encouraged Mums and Dads working from home to be part of this too and it was really well received.

Whilst these things are no replacement for our usual work we do feel it has been a way for us to continue to allow Music to be part of the school day outside the usual timetable in the same way that it would be during "normal" times. It has also been a lot of fun to plan and organise these programmes and events and relieves the monotony of endless lessons on Google Meet!

Our website is viewable at:
<https://sites.google.com/pgs.org.uk/pgsmusic/home>



Music, Medicine & Mozart

Our backpage columnist, Jonathan Varcoe, explores the healing properties of music

Recently in a serious complementary medical journal there was an article about research being done on humming to allay the worst of a threatened migraine. Readers will appreciate that atoms, particles and molecules that make up everything that exists, are in a constant state of flux: all movement creates vibrations, however minute. Sounds are vibrations (and vice versa) and relationships are made by vibrations being part of a family (as in overtones or the harmonic series). It is therefore not surprising that human beings when subjected to sounds are influenced via their external organ: the skin, and in their internal organs by closely related resonances, the more so if these sounds are created within the body itself (hence the humming – see below), and of course the brain is the 'clever-clogs' that interprets these experiences and promotes them for different areas of our body. We know music can heal all kinds of sickness.

Novalis: Every disease is a musical problem; every cure a musical solution.

Plato ; Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.

Mridha: Music can heal wounds which medicine cannot touch.

A recent short paperback *'Music as Medicine, particularly in Parkinson's'* by Daphne Bryan is a fascinating overview of much research that has been going on all over the world into music and Parkinson's Disease and the wonderful effects it can have on severe sufferers.

The recent aforementioned article told of a man from Oxford who had a severe migraine. He was driving and lost his

temper and started to yell and shout. The migraine was stopped in its tracks. He decided to yell and rant the next time he felt a migraine coming on. This had the same effect.

He happened to be interested in ancient forms of sound healing and knew that sound could have powerful effects on the brain. He settled on a method involving humming a particular frequency close to that used for the OM mantra sound, specifically 140 Hz or very close to the C sharp below middle C. He mentioned his experience to the Professor of Physiology at Oxford University and, with the help of third year undergraduates, set about testing if the humming technique helped with other people's migraines. Nearly all found it beneficial.

A controlled clinical trial is being set up in India shortly. Migraines are nasty and debilitating. If you know of someone who suffers from them, encourage them to hum a C sharp, and hopefully they will suffer much less. The suggestion is to hum for 10 seconds, then take a deep breath through the nose, then hum again for 10 seconds. Repeat that sequence until you have done 10 hums. Rest for two minutes. Then repeat the series again as before. After the 2 minute rest repeat it all again a third time. Finish by resting for 10 minutes. The humming should take 10 minutes, the whole thing, with the 10 minutes rest, a total of 20 minutes. Of course you have time.

Recent research from Canada has found that Mozart's music has a curative effect on those suffering from epileptic seizures. This is not new, but new research specifically mentions Mozart's Sonata for two pianos K448 in D as the music that works best of all, and is having a success rate far beyond the drugs usually prescribed.

A neurosurgeon commented that this music has unique components to it, typically its rhythm which helps to alter

brain activity and lessen the likelihood of seizures. I heard a recording on YouTube recently, not knowing the work, and was surprised to find how effervescent the first movement was; a veritable cascade of energy. I expected something more calming but that just shows how much we laymen know about these illnesses. It certainly perks up your mood and I suppose that is pertinent.

Albert Einstein writes of this piece 'The art with which the two parts are made completely equal, the play of the dialogue, the delicacy and the refinement of the figuration, the feeling for sonority in the combination and exploitation of the registers of the two instruments – all these things exhibit such a mastery that this apparently superficial and entertaining work is at the same time one of the most profound and mature of Mozart's compositions.'

Claims are still made for Mozart's music increasing young people's IQ. An obituary recently of Gordon Shaw, an American physicist, mentions experiments Shaw carried out with, you've guessed it, K448, testing intelligence tests with several groups of people. The Mozart listeners scored 62% better in a controlled second test than those who had listened previously to a relaxation tape (14%) and those who had sat in silence (11%).

What magic is music! Even if some rebels have poured scorn on the whole 'Mozart effect' bandwagon: don't believe them.

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

At last - Spring is in the air! Officially starting on the 20th March 2021 it is very welcome after the dark, dreary, depressing days during this 3rd and final (?) lockdown (cue Europe's subliminal 1986 hit - 'It's the Final Countdown Lockdown!'). Yippee! Are we finally coming out of the pandemic, and is the end in sight? With Schools now back, it will be necessary to see if the students have made any progress and where the major problems lie. The music business is already calling this period, with the depleted number of students taking up instruments: 'The Lost Generation'. It's going to be hard to rebuild and get things back to where they were. Hopefully, the joy of playing together in groups will help, and the cacophony of noise you get as you walk down the music department corridors will return.

One useful element of learning and practising a musical instrument or singing during the pandemic has been the number of music minus one available recordings. Jazz saxophonist, Jamey Aebersold started this way back in 1967 with 'How to Play Jazz & Improvise', a vinyl record and book, but since then, the vast majority of sheet music books have a downloadable backing track.



This has moved on to much more adventurous content with online subscription services to programs that

include some excellent practice tools. For example, a Tuner, Metronome (and the ability to alter the tempo of any piece, e.g. start off slowly and then build it up to the correct speed), fingerings, the ability to loop specific passages and to record yourself.

Smartmusic (www.smartmusic.com) was one of the first programs to come out in this format. Launched in 2013, it was revolutionary and before its time in many ways. If wrong notes were played, they'd automatically go red, with correct notes turning green – topped off with an overall percentage grade for a piece's performance of a piece, the plan being that you'd keep practising the piece until it was 100% correct and all green! Costs now are from \$40 a year for teachers giving you access to over 5,400 ensemble titles and 150 method books, and more.

Now there are many other companies offering similar packages, be it for your laptop, tablet or phone. A word of caution, though. The monthly subscription packages can add up to a fair lump of money. Still, several free trials are available to see if they are worth the investment and offer useful repertoire.



Tido Music (www.tido-music.com) is a good app for pianists and singers, available for both iPad and desktop browsers. At £4.99 per month (hence £59.88 annually), it gives access to over 6,000 classical, jazz and educational piano and vocal scores, automatic page turning and video masterclasses.



Enote (www.enote.com) is a new Berlin based start-up company offering a similar package. Currently, still in a beta stage, it's starting with Classical solo and chamber works and aims to launch in 2021 with various similar concepts, concentrating on Urtext editions.





Tomplay (www.tomplay.com) from Switzerland is a newer, cross-platform app available for iPad and Android tablets and for PC and Mac computers. Costs either £99 a year or £9.99 a month, or you can pay for each piece or collection of pieces separately as you go. With over 20,000 scores and 200 new scores added each week it covers 24 instruments with pieces in many different styles. As well as the slow down/speed up tempo options, record facility, loop facility and the option to print, you can also annotate and mark elements with the piece (e.g. fingerings, highlighting key changes and accidentals).

One interesting addition to Tomplay is its recent partnership with the **Music Teachers' Board** (MTB). MTB has integrated Tomplay pieces into their syllabuses. No more issues on trying to find an accompanist for an exam; you can use the Tomplay backing track instead during the exam. There is also a discounted offer for a yearly subscription to Tomplay of 20% using the MTB2020 promo code.

You can, of course, always make your own backing tracks from within a DAW or notation software program. This is done by simply muting the solo part you wish to perform. With Cubase, you could also import a full MIDI file and by using SpectraLayers One, let Cubase

split the main vocals away from the track.

Musial Futures – Online!

Musical Futures was born in 2003 when the Paul Hamlyn Foundation instigated an initiative to find new and imaginative ways of engaging all young people in meaningful musical activities. This led to a program of informal learning, and students working more in popular music and its creation. It is based uniquely on a pedagogy that is driven by the musical culture of the participants.

Musical Futures have now launched 'Musical Futures Online' with over **500 resources** to help teachers to deliver practical, authentic and relevant music lessons that have been developed by teachers. There are now over 3,000 schools using Musical Futures resources, aged 7 to 16 (KS1 to KS4), and these new resources include Music Technology in the 'Ultimate' pack. These resources include video tutorials for BandLab, 'Inside Rap' for learning how to create a Rap track, and 'In the Style of' with remix samples by popular artists; both of these include video tutorials for Ableton, Cubase and GarageBand.

The three different packages available are: 'Standard' £10 a month/£99 a

year, 'Premium' £15 a month/£149 a year and 'Ultimate' £20 month/£199 a year. For more information, please check out:

www.musicalfuturesonline.org

The Dunedin Consort Guide to Opera

This brand new six-part YouTube series explores the history of opera and has been specially created for primary school-aged children. Each video episode introduces children to a different element of opera. From staging and costumes to conducting and composing, through to the backstage team and looking at the many other elements that make up an opera, the series includes contributions from various special guests. These include the composer Errollyn Wallen, director Frederic Wake-Walker, choreographer Ricardo Barros, writer Wesley Stace, conductor Holly Mathieson, baritone Matthew Brook and Scottish Opera's Head of Costumes Lorna Price.

<https://dunedin-consort.org.uk/>

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NEW MEMBERS



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

Amy Colyer	Music Teacher	Chase High School
Tim Costello	Teacher of Music	
Amy Hambrook	PGCE Trainee	
Chamari Wedamulla	Teaching Assistant	
Gareth Leather	Head of Music	Queen Elizabeth School
Dan Hollingshurst	Peripatetic Music Teacher	
Emily Boxer	Deputy Principal and Music Lead Practitioner	Oasis Academy Silvertown
Laura Hayward	Assistant Director of Music & Head of Junior Music	Music Rendcomb College
Lucy Simmonds	Director of Music	The Royal School Wolverhampton
Mrs Perry	Assistant Director of Music	Bedford Modern School
Hazel Wellcome	School Business Manager	Leechpool Primary School
Matt Perry	Trainee teacher	
Rebekah Sturge	Secondary Music Teacher	The Tiffin Girls' School
Zoe Ansley-Green	Teacher of Music	Kew House School
Naomi Charatan	Head of Music	Ark John Keats Academy
Serena Shah	Graduate Teacher of Music	Lancing College
Olivia Sparkhall	Head of Academic Music	Godolphin
Giacomo Pozzuto	Head of Academic Music	Ardingly College
Danusia Adamska-Baszko	Music teacher	
Eleanor Mills	Student	
Angela Wellman	Head of Music	The Emmbrook School
Liz Dunbar	Director of Music	Huntington School, York
Luisa Rosina	Director of Music	The Hall School
William Gimson	Head of Music	Coombe Boys' School
Caroline Law	Director of Music	Saffron Walden County High School
Matthew Taylor	PGCE Music Student	The Thomas Alleyne Academy
James Leveidge	Teacher of Music (KS3 Coordinator)	Brampton Manor Academy
Elizabeth Davis	Music teacher	Newton Prep School
Rachel Hopkins	Teacher of Music	Malcolm Arnold Academy (DRET)
Rebecca Kamis	Music teacher	Humberston Academy (DRET)
David Wilkinson	Faculty Lead - Vocational and Arts	Barnes Wallis Academy (DRET)
James Hellard	Teacher of Music	Charnwood College
Tadeusz Kaznowski	Teacher of Music	City of Norwich School
Michael Schlamm	PGCE Trainee Secondary Music Teacher	Dover Christ Church Academy
Susan Looseley	Subject Leader Music	Broadwater
Gregory Elliott	Secondary Music SD ITT	Outwood Academy Adwick
Sean Barnes	Trainee Teacher	Ripley ITT
Molly Lawes	Graduate Music Assistant/Trainee Teacher of Music	St George's School Windsor Castle
Rhonda Browne	Singing Teacher	
Liza Field	Head of Curriculum and Singing	Cambridgeshire Music (Hub)
Katherine Bentham	Acting Director of Music	Wakefield Girls' High School
Randeep Kaur	Year 6 Teacher/Music Coordinator	Medway Community Primary School
Sarah Al-Hanoush	Director of Creative Arts	Ark Boulton Academy
Richard Lake	Director of Music	The St Marylebone CE School
Victoria Cooper	Head of Performing Arts	Backwell School
Paul Showell	Director of Music	Eltham College
Thomas Leech	Director of the Schools Singing Programme	Diocese of Leeds Music
Sarah Lofthouse	Learning Manager - Expressive, Musical and Performing Arts	Deyes High School
Helen Rayner	Director of Music	Moreton Hall
Mark Forkgen	Director of Music	Tonbridge School
Janos Imre	Teacher of Music	
Harriet Kirk	Vocal Coach and Piano Teacher	
Rebecca Temple	Teacher of Music	Loughborough Schools Foundation
Ben Wingfield	Director of Music	The Perse School
Chris Akitsiou	Piano & Music Theory Teacher	Music School of Corfu
Ben Steenton	Head of Music	Bartley Green School
Laura Hodges	Head of Performing Arts	Thetford Academy

NEW MEMBERS

Hannah West
Ashley Williams
Sophia Liu
Sharon Stafford
Lucy Smail
James Copley-Dunn
Kate Ortoft
Fay Sargeson
Rebecca Temple
George Edmondson
Shiven Limbachia
Thomas Morley
Chloe Patrick
Joe Sharples
Sarah Walsh
Hedydd Edge
Gwenllian Lewis
Jake Rommer
Emma Carter
Matt Hindle
Kirsty Hobkirk

Freelance instrumental and classroom teacher
Lead Teacher of Music
Teacher of Music and VMT
Music Administrator
Assistant Principle: Curriculum
Head of Music
Class Teacher
Head of Music
Teacher of Music
Trainee Teacher
Violinist
Teacher of Music
PGCE Student
Trainee Music Teacher
Music Trainee - Cambridge PGCE
Teacher of Music
Teacher of Music
PGCE student
Student
Head of Music
Graduate Assistant, Music

Newark Academy
Our Lady of Sion School
Woodbridge School
John Smeaton Academy
John Smeaton Academy
Chapel Street CP School
Kings Langley School
Loughborough Schools Foundation
Ripley St Thomas

Matthew Moss High School
Corby Technical School
St Patrick's Greater Manchester Alliance

Cardiff High School
Waldegrave School
Tiffin Girls School

Oulder Hill Community School
King Edward's School, Witley

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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

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.

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

OUR COMMITTEE



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



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



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 Music 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.52



A sideways look at music education from Jonathan Varcoe

“It just goes to show how urgent our task is to open young minds to as wide a range of music as early as possible.”

I was always an enthusiastic reader of the regular columns in *The Listener* magazine by Hans Keller, the brilliant maverick music critic. Keller was quoted in a Sunday Times review by Paul Driver way back in March 2020 as follows:

Keller claimed that **Beethoven** possessed the greatest mind, greater even than Plato, Shakespeare and Einstein. He claimed that Beethoven philosophised about music, not in words but in the language of music itself, 'in a far-reaching, fantasticated yet sublimely inevitable discourse that the music still feels challengingly, even uncomfortably, modern: a modernity that, by art's paradox, will never relinquish its grip on the future.'

Paul Driver quoted this as a preamble to a critique of a superb performance of the piano-duo arrangement of Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*. Igor Levit and Markus Becker drove the piece at speed with critical earnestness leading Driver to speculate if they or the audience will ever be able to get to the end in one piece. Indeed, he was sure no-one present would ever get to the end of what the piece has to say. Driver goes on, 'In its non-verbal way, it speaks, I feel, of music's capacity to be meaningful. One has the impression hearing this work, especially in keyboard form - more 'analytical' than the original string quartet texture - that nothing further is to be done with notes, and that Boulez and Stockhausen toiled in vain'.

Listening to some decent **performances of school ensembles**, I am struck by how many of them are spoilt by intonation problems. Some time ago I wrote in this column of the need to take plenty of time to make sure all the

players were tuning correctly at the beginning. As part of this, pupils must be encouraged, little and often, to listen, really listen, to the music going on around them. Not just hear but listen intently. Young players are understandably primarily focused on reading the music in front of them and coping with the fingering, and this can lead to the detriment of tonal awareness and possible need for adjustment. Pupils need to be encouraged to be aware of fine tuning possibilities. Real listening is a skill that has to be worked at. It is not a given. Large ensembles incorporating as many pupils as possible are great value and a valid educational experience, which parents love, but the risky intonation can be less than mellifluous. There is perhaps too much clutter to enable players to hear what they themselves are playing, and it is easy to hide behind the noise with approximate tuning. Maybe the small ensemble/chamber group is the best way to inculcate serious attention to subtle tuning and the feeling of being one important personal cog in a vibrant, small musical group.

Having said that, I am aware that many young players are often unable to know if their instrument is slightly sharp or slightly flat. They know it doesn't sound absolutely in tune but is it a tiny bit up or down? Only experience will iron that out. Maybe that could become part of instrumental coaching?

I was interested to see that data from **Spotify** claims that the musical taste of listeners expands greatly between ages 15 to 25 and matures to age 30. By the age of 33, however, taste stagnates, after which a majority are

unlikely to get into new music. To those of us with curious minds, that is extremely sad, especially if the same goes for the other arts as well. Assuming this is true, it just goes to show how urgent our task is to open young minds to as wide a range of music as early as possible. No harm in a reminder, but of course we all knew that already.

Finally, I loved the report in the press in early July about the newly appointed organist of Leon Cathedral in Spain. At interview, he was found to be missing a few fingers, and a bit of a spat ensued in the examining panel. All is well apparently and we were (helpfully?) told that an organist can specialise in certain types of music including that of Bach (!). I always felt when playing his music that I could have done with extra fingers, but there you are. However, think of the reputation of the late organist and director of music Douglas Fox with just one arm/hand and two musical feet and marvel.



Virtual Conference

FRIDAY 14 & SATURDAY 15 MAY 2021

This year's Conference will run via a virtual platform and will be hosted by St Paul's School, London (the host school of the cancelled 2020 Conference). The Conference title remains Working Together Creatively, bringing together the twin themes of Composition and Partnerships. With so much upheaval in how music can be delivered and shared in the last year or so, these two strands are as important as ever as we tentatively look towards rebuilding our musical connections.

In addition, there will be panel discussions for Administrators, VMTs, and those who are looking for a little inspiration to sprinkle on their own department, or have aspirations to lead their own department at some point in the future. There will also be virtual exhibitions from our Corporate Members and regular fixtures like the AGM and Douglas Fox Prize.

Starting on Friday afternoon and running through to early evening on Saturday, the Conference has been designed to fit in with your busy week whilst not unduly impacting on your already Zoom-heavy lives. As a bonus of the virtual nature of this year's Conference, ALL CPD sessions will be available to delegates afterwards, so there will no longer be the internal wrangling over what to choose and what to lose!

CPD sessions will focus on ways to develop creative responses from young people, not just through dots on paper but also by taking first steps with jazz and improvisation, through world traditions, or a variety of technology-based resources. There will also be important advice on how you can get started with new partnerships, and see how existing ones have benefited all parties and led to amazing positive outcomes.

CPD sessions include:

- GCSE Composition with Rachel Shapey
- Body Percussion workshop with Beat Goes On
- Discovering the BBC Ten Pieces with Rachel Leach
- Composing with World Music with Andy Gleadhill
- DAWs: Music Technology as an Authentic Composition Tool with Dan Francis
- Music: The Beating Heart of the Primary School with Jimmy Rotheram
- Discovering the purpose of music in schools with Simon Toyne

Plus many more to be announced.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS on: Partnerships, Curriculum, Instrumental Teaching, Music Administration, Singing and Running a Music Department

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