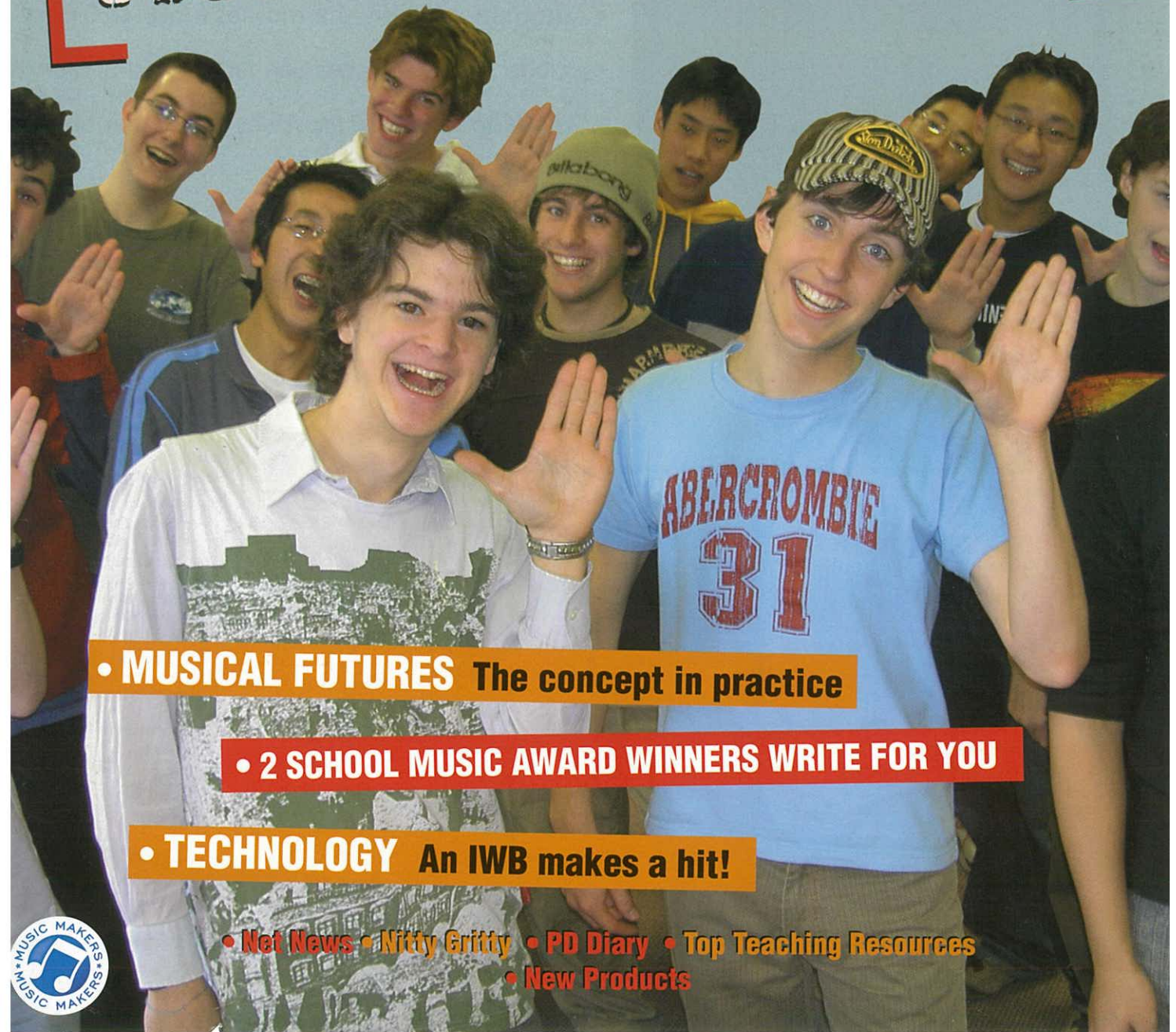


# MUSIC in ACTION

AUTUMN 2009 • Vol. 6, Issue 4

FOR AUSTRALIAN EDUCATORS

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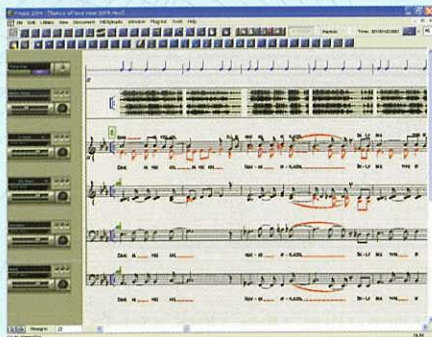
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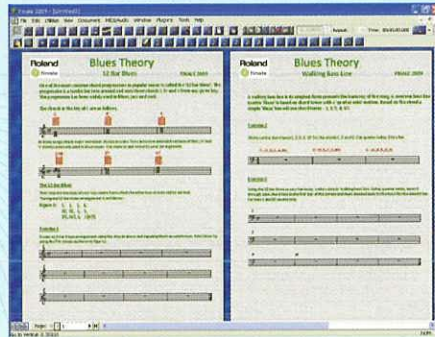
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# MUSIC in ACTION

AUTUMN 2009 • Vol. 6, Issue 4

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## FROM THE EDITOR



As earlier articles on the topic of gender in music education (Summer 2003, Winter 2005) drew such good response, the principal focus for this issue of *Music in Action* is 'Boys and Music Education'. We are again pleased to be able to draw on the research work and classroom teaching practices of some of the leading music educators in the field. In our lead article,

Anita Collins discusses some of the findings from her 2005 research on what motivates boys to engage with music at school. Then, drawing on his extensive research in this area, Scott Harrison explores the ways in which the popular image of 'the Australian male' influences boy's music-making at school. And in our 'Top Tips' for this issue, recent doctoral graduate, Kathleen Bennetts, draws on her observational research study to offer some practical suggestions for engaging boys in school music activities. Resident Web explorer, Andrew Swainston, focuses on a favorite instrument for boys—the guitar—with a review of some motivational Internet sites.

Nicole Mengel outlines a valuable model for engaging boys in singing, through interaction with elderly people in their community. Nicole's teaching has been influenced by the Music Education Outreach approach promoted by Susan West of ANU's School of Music. Another writer who bases her teaching on this approach is Carolyn Soeters who, as a previously 'non-musical' generalist primary teacher, undertook the professional development course at ANU and was the recipient of a 2008 National Award for Excellence in School Music Education.

The second focus for this issue is 'Musical Futures', an innovative approach to music education promoted in English schools by its inspirational proponent, David Price. Well-known Melbourne music educator, Mandy Stefanakis, outlines the approach and reviews a professional development workshop held last year for Victorian music teachers. A related article is by former professional rock violinist, Henry Vyhna, who offers a model for implementing a similar approach to that of 'Musical Futures', with a unit of work for lower secondary school students.

Our Technology feature always aims to explain how to make best use of some of the myriad of devices that become available for use in music education. In this issue, Ken Owen of Soundhouse.com.au discusses the use of IWBs (interactive whiteboards) for classroom music applications.

The Music in Action team hopes that this issue makes good reading and wishes you well for your work in music education during 2009.

Robin Stevens



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# A NEW INTERNATIONAL VOICE

DAWN BENNETT reports on a new international working forum of ISME, created last year to address the needs of instrumental and singing teachers.

## Background

For over 50 years the International Society for Music Education (ISME) has been at the forefront of promoting the cause of music globally, at all levels of education. Many Australian music teachers are members and have occupied key positions in the organisation; and there are always healthy numbers in the Australian contingent attending ISME world conferences. However, much of the work that has practical application for music teachers is done through seven ISME Commissions that gather, collate and disseminate information on developments in specialised fields:

Research

Community Music Activity

Early Childhood Music Education

Education of the Professional Musician

Music Policy: Cultural, Policy and Mass Media

Music in Schools and Teacher Education

Music in Special Education, Music Therapy and Music Medicine.

By working through the Commissions, ISME members share mutual interests in special areas of music education. Each Commission hosts a biennial seminar, usually just prior to the biennial ISME World Conference, as well as hosting sessions at the World Conference.

## New forum on instrumental and vocal music teaching

For some time there has been extensive debate, led by Graham Bartle (Australia), about the need for a group that could address the needs of instrumental and vocal teachers, whether they be school-based or private, studio-based practitioners. In July 2008 the ISME Board ratified the formation of a new 'Forum on Instrumental and Vocal Music Teaching'.

The structure of the new Forum is similar to that of the Commissions, but its membership is designed to reflect equally the general areas of individualised and group instruction—keyboard, wind, string and percussion instruments, and voice. The six-member inaugural committee balances the needs of geographic location and instrument, and includes both experienced and new ISME members. Two members are Australians: the Chair, Graham Bartle, who represents music theory, and Dawn Bennett, (strings). Other members are the Deputy Chair, Helena Gaunt UK (woodwind); Viggo Pettersen, Norway (voice); Gail Berenson, USA (piano); and Gareth Dylan Smith, UK (percussion). The draft vision for the Forum is to:

- Investigate the methods and practices of teaching instrumental or vocal students, in both Western and non-Western contexts.
- Explore and discuss the most recent relevant research that could assist instrumental/vocal teachers.

This Forum has been long awaited, and represents an exciting new chapter in the Society's history. The Forum believes that everyone—young and old—should have the opportunity to learn an instrument or to sing, as an important life-enriching activity.

The Forum's draft objectives are set out as being to:

- Celebrate and promote the profession of the instrumental and vocal teacher.
- Advocate for greater governmental appreciation, recognition and support for the value of music teaching and learning to the well-being of citizens.
- Recognise the many teaching methods and processes used by teachers in various societies and cultures.
- Encourage the development of innovative approaches to beginning instruction for children and adult learners.
- Provide an international perspective on common issues within instrumental and vocal music teaching and learning.
- Embrace research into all aspects of the instrumental/vocal teaching profession.
- Serve as liaison between professional groups of instrumental/vocal teachers.
- Facilitate the exchange of information on the practice, professional development, methodology and available resources of the instrumental and vocal teacher.\*

The Forum will disseminate information through practical articles in the Practice Edition of the *International Journal of Music Education*, interactive web pages and social networking, workshops for instrumental and vocal teachers, and articles in industry journals and magazines.

## Expressions of interest

The Forum committee is already planning for a two-day seminar prior to the ISME World Conference at Beijing in August 2010. Expressions of interest are welcomed from anyone who would like to share their experiences of performance teaching with colleagues in the international community.

The Forum's Chair, Graham Bartle, would welcome readers' comments, feedback and suggestions (see email address below). If you would like to be kept informed about Forum activities, news and the Beijing conference, please contact Dr Dawn Bennett at her email address (below). **MIA**

\* These draft objectives were formulated by the ISME Executive and the Forum committee. When further refined and ratified, they will form the basic principles that will guide the Forum.

## Dawn Bennett

Dr Dawn Bennett is a Senior Research Fellow in Humanities at the Centre for Advanced Studies in Australia, Asia and the Pacific at Curtin University of Technology, Perth, where she is investigating the working lives and economic circumstances of the creative workforce. She holds postgraduate degrees in education and music performance and has worked as a classical musician, educator, researcher and manager. Dawn is a committee member of ISME's Forum on Instrumental and Vocal Music Teaching.

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**ISME:** www.isme.org



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# 09

## **Thank You!**

To all who attended and supported **mtec09** January 19-21, 2009.

218 Music Education and Arts Educators from across Australia attended **mtec09** (55% of delegates attended from outside of Victoria and from overseas)

**Keynote Speakers:** Dr. Tom Rudolph, James Morrison & Marcel Pusey

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**Session Presenters & Partners:** James Humberstone, Katie Wardrobe, Peter Wardrobe, Andy Hagerman, Soo Yu Shen, Peter Dudkowski, Daniel Spreadbury, Andy Mison, Bohdan Krowicky, Dan West, Antony Hubmayer, Susie Davies-Splitter, Joshua Cowie, Jenny Gillan, Helen Champion, Brad Merrick, Andrew Brown, David Turner, Ian MacDonald, Peter Lee, Yvonne Lang, David Evans

**Entertainers:** James Morrison & Band with Emma Pask, Mal Webb, Tim Wilson Trio, Blue Drag

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The feedback from all who attended **mtec09** has been overwhelmingly positive!

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## A POSITIVE MUSIC CULTURE FOR BOYS

The more knowledge music educators have about specific strategies that work for boys, the greater their chances for success, says ANITA COLLINS.

**S**chool culture is possibly the most intangible aspect of any school setting. And yet as soon as I walk through the doors of each new school I visit, all my senses are heightened as I absorb information on the unique school culture I have entered. School culture is multifaceted and dynamic and is developed over time by a myriad of people interacting within the school—teachers, students and parents.

The first impressions of any school's culture are only the broad brush strokes, but are influenced by all aspects of school operation. As I look to understand the music and music education cultures of the school I am visiting, I search for signs such as music group photos in reception, how music performances are reported in the school newsletter, and the general staff's knowledge about the breadth of the music program. I then delve deeper into the internal workings of the music department, looking for what type of music ensembles exist, how classrooms are organised and what teaching strategies are favoured by the staff. These are all sub-cultures with sub-groups which both contribute to and are influenced by the broader school culture. Within this complex world I became fascinated with what is still an under-researched area—the juxtaposition of the sub-cultures of boys and of music education.

School culture is the set of norms, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols and stories that make up the 'persona' of the school. These unwritten expectations build up over time as teachers, administrators, parents, and students work together, solve problems, deal with challenges and, at times, cope with failures.<sup>1</sup>

A positive music culture is important for every student and every school. However, turnkey solutions can't always be used to create and maintain a positive culture, and in a number of cases, strategies need to be gender-specific in order to successfully cater for both boys and girls. The research I did in 2004 examined the specific strategies that have been proven to work for boys.<sup>2</sup> My personal conviction was that the more knowledge music educators have about the specific strategies that work for boys, the greater their chances for success. If I wanted to know the results of research on a comparison of boys and girls in academic achievement in music, instrumental choice, creativity, composition, and just about every aspect of music education, I wouldn't need to look far.

Much of the research literature is doom-and-gloom for boys—lower academic achievement or worse, the 'missing males' from classroom music,<sup>3</sup> 'male' and 'female' instrument choices and how this affects a boy's ability to excel, as well as a demonstrated lack of discipline and application when boys attempt to master music theory.<sup>4</sup> But there are areas in which boys perform far better than girls—i.e. in creativity and composition.<sup>5</sup> However the findings from this literature did not completely support what my colleagues and I had experienced with boys in our classroom teaching. So as a result, I set out to gather and collate the wisdom and experiences of a small group of music educators working in all-boy environments around Australia. What emerged was a wealth of information, rafts of ideas, and the dos-and-don'ts in classroom practice, but the undeniable foundation for every successful strategy was a *positive music culture*.

Each school I investigated travelled a different road to reach their version of a positive culture, but they all highlighted a



number of universal truths. These truths were attained by similar actions that didn't happen sequentially, but rather occurred simultaneously. This was actually necessary for the positive culture to thrive and grow, and sometimes the changes were deliberate, while other times began as a surprising development and were then harnessed by the music teachers and the school leadership.

For the purposes of this research, the term *academic* describes classroom music programs, *instrumental* describes individual or small group music lessons, and *extra-curricular* describes larger ensembles such as bands, choirs and orchestras.

### Critical mass is important

There needs to be a critical mass of boys participating in music activities to create a positive music culture for boys. Music activities become part of the *normal* or expected culture of the school. In terms of student population, this critical mass is typically over 60% of male students. This critical mass concept has a cyclic affect; if over 60% of boys attending the school participate in music activities, then the school culture supports these boys; but if the number of participating boys either dips below or is constantly below 60% of the population, then these boys are marginalised and unsupported.

### Being a sportsman and a musician

Every boy needs the opportunity to be a sportsman and a musician, not just one of these. If these two affirmations of masculinity are separated, a school can't expect to have a positive music culture for boys.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, the school culture will inevitably contain strong cliques and stereotypes which bring their own rifts to school culture. School structures, such as the timetabling of training sessions and rehearsals, need to complement each other, not clash. Wherever possible a boy shouldn't need to choose between sporting activities and music activities—they should be able to 'do it all'. This is especially important in the early secondary school years when boys should try as many activities as possible to achieve a well-rounded education.

### Music teacher profile

In the course of my research, a music teacher from Melbourne shared a story which has resonated with me ever since. The school had been taking active steps to change and improve the school culture towards music. They were approaching this problem on multiple fronts, not quite sure which approach would be the most effective. The most significant cultural change was the awarding of choral scholarships and the deliberate development of a vocal program across the school. When I visited the school I was astounded by the quality of the choir of boys. When I spoke to the leading choral teacher he shared with me details of the most profound and significant teaching strategy which altered the school culture towards singing.

He attended the weekly rugby and basketball games of the socially influential members of his choir. Sounds simple, but this simple strategy reaped incredible rewards. The boys saw their choral teacher outside the music classroom or regular rehearsal. He was taking time to support the boys in other activities; most importantly, these were sporting activities. This strategy reinforced the fact that a man they admired could be both a musician and a sportsman, and by association, the boys could do it too.

### Music in the school fabric

As music teachers we are often called on to provide music items at school speech nights and sports award nights. Those who are asking are sometimes looking for a way to enliven an otherwise staid running program, which music certainly can do. However, there is a less widely recognised benefit to come from these musical additions. Every time a music ensemble performs for the wider school community, music becomes further embedded in the school culture. To make such events effective in supporting a positive music culture for boys, male musicians need to feature regularly. This may be a controversial assertion, but just as music activities need to be positively discriminated towards in schools, boys' involvement in the music activities needs to be just as effectively supported. In a coeducational environment, ensembles need to aim to have equal numbers of boys and girls.

### 'Boys need more'

Repertoire choice is an influential component in any school music culture. This includes both music studied in the classroom and music performed in instrumental ensembles. The 'right' repertoire energises young musicians, but inappropriate repertoire—whether it's too stylistically or technically challenging for students—can quickly change the music culture for the worst. Psychologist Mihály Csíkszentmihályi called it 'flow', where the right level of challenge is matched to the right level of skill to create the 'flow channel' where powerful learning and happiness occur.<sup>7</sup> The 'right' repertoire to encourage male musicians changes as the music culture changes. Many programs attract male musicians by performing music with heavy, driving rhythmic elements, generally loud dynamics and in either a rock or jazz style. This approach has been very successful but throughout my research, teachers highlighted that 'boys need more'.

Boys thrive on challenge and although the style of music mentioned above is appealing to begin with, boys quickly tire of it and need additional musical challenges to keep them engaged. This might mean music with a slower tempo, softer dynamics and tonal melodic lines. The key is knowing when and how to introduce such music to boys. The 'when' can only be determined by applying the expertise of the music teacher to determine when the boys are ready to be challenged by music in a different style to their regular repertoire. The 'how' can again fall back to boys' positive responses to challenge—'Now I have a new piece today for us to look at, but I don't know if you are ready for it, it is pretty different to what we've been used to'.





### Parents and their boys

Boys are surrounded by a myriad of influences, and research has shown that the opinions voiced by their parents and teachers, and more specifically by significant father-figures and male teachers, has a profound effect on boy's social and academic development as well as behavior and wellbeing. It seems painfully obvious that if a boy experiences support and validation for his achievement in music activities, he will continue to succeed and progress. Yet from the music educator's viewpoint, simply expecting or telling parents they need to support their son's musical development is not enough.

As musicians, we can't imagine a world without significant musical experiences, but for many of our parent body this has not been their experience, and consequently they can't fully appreciate the power of such experiences. It's hard to support something passionately when you haven't experienced the benefits personally. To create a positive music culture for boys, we also need to create experiences for parents and help them to support their sons. The smallest comment can signal to a boy that music activities are not 'manly' or are not a 'real career choice', and this can immediately damage the positive culture you are trying to foster.

As the old maxim goes, the more we know, the more we can achieve. Applying it to the present topic, the more aware we are of proven and effective strategies, the better prepared we are to improve music education for boys in our own schools. If one or all of these strategies have stimulated your thinking, then share them with your colleagues and school leadership, and take the first step towards a more positive music culture for your boys. **M in A**

### Anita Collins

Anita Collins is Convener of Music and Arts Education at the University of Canberra. Her interest in boys' music education stems from her long association with Canberra Grammar School. She completed her Master of Education (Arts Education) degree from Deakin University in 2005 where her research focused on music education and boys' motivation in early adolescence. Further findings from her research can be found in *Male Voices: Stories of boys learning through making music*, edited by Scott Harrison, to be published by ACER Publishing early in 2009.

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## THE DILEMMA IN BOYS' MUSIC

SCOTT HARRISON offers insights into the effect of the Australian popular masculine image on boys' music making.

**M**usic can be the means through which boys most freely express themselves, and can provide opportunities for growth like no other activity in a boy's social, intellectual and emotional development.<sup>1</sup> However, some boys might not want to participate in certain styles of music, particularly school-based music. Also, some boys might shy away from music that sounds high, soft or gentle, simply because of a perceived association with femininity.

One result is that boys tend not to choose to play instruments such as violin or flute. Even more importantly, they tend not to engage in certain singing activities such as choirs.<sup>2</sup> Low participation by men in choral activity has been an historically well-documented problem for the last century in many Western cultures, yet the involvement of men in choirs in cultures such as England or Wales doesn't seem to carry the same stigma as it does here. Much of this prejudice is related to perceptions of masculinity in Australia.

Several themes defining Australian masculinity are evident in both research literature and popular texts—contempt for authority, participation in sport, and love of beer all contribute to constructing the Australian male identity.

Mateship is promoted as one way in which Australian masculinity is homogenised. According to McLean, 'Male camaraderie or "mateship" is founded on sharing the rituals of masculine identity. The exclusion of women is an integral aspect, and many of these rituals turn out to be destructive or oppressive. Binge drinking, gambling and violent sports are obvious examples.'<sup>3</sup>

Mates are different from friends—mateship often avoids signs of weakness or emotion that can destroy relationships; mates goad or dare each other into risky or often unhealthy behaviour. 'Bagging' and ridicule are frequently used to force mates into subscribing to accepted norms. Historically, Australian heroes and warriors were contemptuous of authority—for example, characters like Ned Kelly, and the swagman from *Waltzing Matilda*. The two world wars demonstrated the fearlessness of the Australian male in battle. Men, as Australian novelist Tim Winton has commented, 'were meant to be heroes, patriarchs, warriors, powerhouses, impenetrable, immovable, unyielding and without emotion.'<sup>4</sup> Winton's description goes a long way to explain why some men don't always associate with music.



Many Australian males are fairly rigid in their rejection of feminine characteristics. Generally speaking, men are less comfortable in crossing the gender divide than are women, and the result for arts participation is a gender imbalance, with more girls than boys engaging in musical activities at school. Music teachers find this a particular problem when they need to balance singing ensembles at upper primary and secondary school levels. Avoiding femininity is a more serious issue for boys because of the erroneous connection of femininity with homosexuality. Boys who participate in activities categorised by some others as 'feminine', such as choral singing, can be subject to negative scrutiny and become vulnerable to homophobic abuse, regardless of their sexuality. This can discourage involvement in some forms of music. In extreme cases, bullying and homophobic insults directed towards boys engaged in these activities can lead them to social isolation, thence to feelings of depression and its possible consequences.

The situation is not 'etched in stone' however. Boys and men will often be more inclined to participate in music performance if the style is contemporary, popular and accepted by their peer group. Theatrical productions generally mean there is a supportive group of other male participants. A closer look at these performances provides teachers and researchers with possible solutions to engaging males in music. Similarly, the recent successes of The Birralees Blokes in nationally televised choral competitions are proof that with strong leadership, appropriate role models and sensitive choice of repertoire, men will happily engage with music making. Australia is blessed with a fantastic array of musical role models—Jimmy Barnes belting out *Working Class Man*; Richard Tognetti playing a Bach violin concerto; Peter Allen giving his rendition of *I Still Call Australia Home*; Slim Dusty singing *Pub With No Beer*; The Presets belting out their electro-punk *My People* on stage at the ARIAS; Nick Cave (who, incidentally, sang in Wangaratta Cathedral choir and the choir at Caulfield Grammar School) singing his spooky *Murder Ballads*; and the ARIA Award winner Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu playing guitar and singing *Djarrimiri* in Yolngu.

Beyond our shores, young men are seeking to involve themselves in music, too. Like The Birralees Blokes, the all-male UK group Only Men Aloud is a fine example of the achievements men can have in choral singing; they won the televised competition *Last Choir Standing* and have now recorded and toured to enormous acclaim. Boys in the UK have embraced new ways of learning through the *Musical Futures* program, in which boys became interested in music because they knew they were going to put on a show and have jolly good fun! Initial results from *Sing Up*—the £40m campaign launched in 2007 in order to make singing integral to every primary school curriculum in the UK by 2011—reveal the resurgence of singing by boys. Patrick Freer's work in the United States demonstrates similar findings, while

Robert Faulkner's effort with male singers in Iceland documents the use of singing throughout Iceland as a means of renewing traditions and rebuilding nationhood.

The main concern for music educators is to find readily available resources with feasible solutions for engaging boys. Practical tips can now be found in a number of recent publications on this subject. Martin Ashley emphasises the importance of peer role models in music and interrogates the role of repertoire and genre, through his 2008 book *Teaching Singing to Boys and Teenagers*.<sup>5</sup> *Oh Boy! Masculinities and Popular Music*<sup>6</sup> by Freya Jarman-Ivens, follows up these ideas by presenting and analysing suggested repertoire for boys and men. Daryl Barclay's doctoral dissertation<sup>7</sup> emphasises the roles that school principals play in school music—in promoting, advocating, participating and encouraging non-music staff to support it. This will be one piece of research music teachers can leave with their school principal to contemplate and act upon! Insights into the extent of gender role rigidity in schools are given in my book *Masculinities and Music*,<sup>1</sup> which also gives examples of men and boys making music, setting out boys' personal stories, and the problems and remedies associated with boys' music making.

What I hope will be a useful reference for Australian music educators is my forthcoming book, *Male voices: Stories of boys learning through making music*.<sup>8</sup> It draws on accounts of boys creating music in an array of distinctly Australian contexts, and provides ideas for music teachers and community music leaders across the country. There are practical examples for:

- involving parents, particularly fathers and grandfathers, in making music
- enabling flexible approaches that match the culture and expectations of the school
- persuading the school leadership team to support music in tangible ways
- bringing an integrated arts approach to fruition through school productions, movement classes, dance, media, drama and visual art
- managing transition periods, particularly from primary to secondary school
- advocating a non-judgmental approach by accepting participation over 'right notes'
- embracing informal, relaxed learning environments
- using technology for engagement
- creatively using limited resources
- being (and employing) positive role models.

These 'top ten' initiatives are only part of the remedy to the problem of engaging boys in music making. With moves towards a national curriculum firmly on the agenda, the time is ripe for music educators and school music programs to ensure that school music helps boys' growth and development, rather than hindering them in their socialisation. Taking account of the positive role models and initiatives suggested here will ensure that all students have the



opportunity to willingly engage in music making without fear of failure or ridicule. **M in A**

**Notes**

1. S D Harrison, *Masculinities and music: Engaging men and boys in making music*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 2008.
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3. C McLean, 'The costs of masculinity: Placing men's pain in the context of male power', *Gender equity: A framework for Australian schools* (pp. 82-88). MCEETYA, Canberra, 1995.
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**Scott Harrison**

A singer with 20 years of experience in opera and music theatre, Dr Scott Harrison is Lecturer in Music and Music Education at Griffith University, with joint teaching and research responsibilities in the Faculty of Education and Queensland Conservatorium. Scott has also taught in primary, secondary and tertiary contexts since 1985. He has published and presented extensively in the field of male engagement with music and is in demand as a presenter, adjudicator and clinician. Scott is National President of the Australian National Association of Teachers of Singing.

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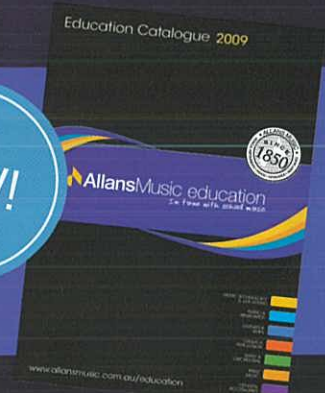
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## Musical Futures—the way ahead?

David Price is the driving force behind England's highly successful *Musical Futures* program, and is widely regarded as one of the most innovative thinkers in British music education today. MANDY STEFANAKIS reports on his address at the MCA Conference in Adelaide, and on a teacher PD workshop he later presented in Melbourne.

If you think of Jamie Oliver's push for better quality food in schools, you'll have an idea of what David Price is pushing for with *Musical Futures*—nothing less than to revolutionise the way people think about how we can best musically educate our children. The *Musical Futures* project is a four-year action research program being undertaken in England that aims to devise new and imaginative ways of engaging students aged 11 to 19 in creative music making activities ... and David Price is the project's power house!

David began his career as a musician and, like many performers, moved into music education, initially in further and higher education settings, later working with adults and community groups before going on to develop the music curriculum for Paul McCartney's Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts. He then moved into music education consultancy and is currently working with governments in many countries (including Nepal) to develop contemporary music education programs in schools.

Like Jamie Oliver, David brings drive, tenacity and optimism to his ventures in the school community. And he obviously loves the people he works with—particularly the kids. This became clearly apparent when he presented the annual address at the Music Council of Australia's Annual Assembly held in Adelaide in September last year. David didn't refer to music for quite some time in his address. Instead he encouraged participants to consider the ways in which young people—the very people most of us teach—communicate with each other. His focus here was on the power of web-based communication—particularly through such online facilities as Facebook, MySpace, games and so on.

David sees the World Wide Web as 'a voice of the masses' and is optimistic about the values and ethics maintained by the vast majority of Internet users. He points to the fact that musicians who might otherwise languish in obscurity can be exposed to an international audience very quickly through such sites as Myspace and YouTube. The Australian musician

Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu, whose album was number 24 in the list of highest selling albums in Australia this year, is a case in point. Gurrumul, who possesses an extraordinarily haunting voice, worked with legendary band Yothu Yindi until 1992 and has remained an active musician since then. However, a YouTube video clip sent out through the 'forwarded email' process has helped propel him to international prominence.

Price's point in demonstrating the power of communication through the Internet is his belief that music education must always stay in touch with students' contemporary realities. He maintains that music education must provide students with self-esteem and a sense of joy, and a video presentation he showed at his Melbourne-based workshop demonstrated the positive rub-off to other areas of the curriculum when enthusiastic students, who otherwise would have been entirely disconnected from schooling, find and communicate through their musical voice.

David makes the point that, in the same way as students are in control of their 'connectivity' within their own social groups, students need to be in control of their own musical learning. To put this into practice, he provides his students with a choice of pre-recorded songs—these may be current contemporary favourites, but they can just as easily be classical pieces. The first task for students, who may never have played an instrument before, is to emulate a performance of the song or piece they choose as closely as possible to the original recorded version. The teacher acts as a mentor, for example teaching students the required chords on guitar, or helping to listen for and reproduce a bass riff; but much of the teaching occurs through communication that happens between the students themselves. Students also know they can find guitar chords, drum riffs and lyrics on the Internet, accessing the knowledge they require very quickly and easily. They know how to contact friends in other locations for advice, and to work well together. This is one of





David's underlying principles—music is about connection and cooperation.

And so it was that, early the following month, David and I took responsibility for two separate groups working with different songs at a teacher professional development workshop in Melbourne. One of the hardest things for a teacher to do is stand back and let students learn for themselves—you can easily feel redundant. But the communication that occurred between the participants in our group—the way they organised who would play what instrument (it had to be one they hadn't played before), found lyrics, listened for chord changes, learnt riffs and refined their work—was undertaken with extraordinary gusto and the most wonderful sense of humour.

My other task at David's Melbourne workshop was to demonstrate how the *Musical Futures* program could link with the Victorian curriculum—Victorian Essential Learning Standards. With the emphasis in VELs being on student-based learning, on the development of personal learning and thinking skills, on self-assessment and on interpersonal development, this wasn't difficult. But perhaps the greatest difference between the *Musical Futures* and the Australian approaches to curriculum—not only with VELs, but with all current state and territory arts curricula—is that we follow a developmental learning sequence, whereas with *Musical Futures*, it's 'in at the deep end', no matter what a student's level of musical understanding may be. Nevertheless, students do progress through the various stages of learning in *Musical Futures*. Once they learn the skills necessary to reproduce the works of others, they gradually work towards developing their own music and their own personal 'voice'. Ultimately, this is the same outcome that we aim for in a developmental curriculum.

There are Victorian-based music educators—such as Henry Vyhna<sup>\*</sup>, currently teaching in rural Victoria—who have been using a *Musical Futures* model successfully for many years. So, any discrepancies between current Australian curriculum initiatives and *Musical Futures* don't make the two approaches incompatible. Indeed it became obvious as the Melbourne workshops progressed that the two models have much in common. A benefit of the VELs model lies in the rich resources supplied online to assist teachers in a range of areas including approaches to teaching and learning, and to assessment and reporting. The arts assessment maps provided allow teachers to know where their own students 'sit' on the developmental path, and help with reporting techniques.

But in terms of teacher assessment and self-assessment, one of the most rewarding of David's initiatives, resulting from his work with *Musical Futures*, is the 'NUMU' website. This is like a gigantic music portfolio of student work. Teachers can sign up their schools for free, and students can then upload their music for the world to hear. It's a site that invites feedback and sharing, and it allows students access to the incredible wealth of musical work that their peers are producing across a myriad of genres. And it's really exciting for students to be able to 'publish' their music through this forum.

The *Musical Futures* website is a treasure trove with an enormous range of teaching and learning resources available for *free* download. Use it! It's a fabulous resource. 'NUMU' is also available on the Web and schools can join free of charge. David is keen for as many students as possible worldwide to have access to the *Musical Futures* philosophy. **M in A**

*\* An article by Henry Vyhna outlining his program is on page 34 of this issue.*

### Mandy Stefanakis

Mandy is Director of Music at Christ Church Grammar School in Melbourne. She has taught music at all school levels and has lectured in music education at the University of Melbourne where she gained her Master of Education degree. Mandy continues to contribute to the development and implementation of music curriculum initiatives. She conducts interviews with contemporary musicians for the Oral History Program of the National Film and Sound Archive.

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**'NUMU':** [www.numu.org.uk](http://www.numu.org.uk)

**VELs:** <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au> (follow links to Assessment Maps)

**Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu:**

[www.gurrumul.com](http://www.gurrumul.com)

**Music Manifesto (similar to Australia's Music.**

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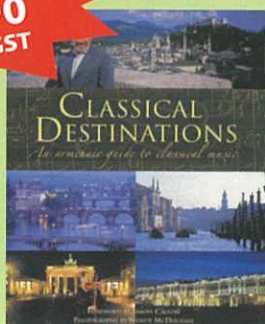
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# SINGING BOYS REACH OUT

## Community involvement through song

ACT music teacher NICOLE MENGEL outlines an innovative program designed to engage boys with singing and to develop their social skills, through interaction with elderly people in their community.

**R**oger Miller released 'King of the Road' back in 1964 and it became one of the most popular songs of its time. Who would have thought 44 years on that a group of boys from Gordon Primary School in the ACT would say that it is one of their favourite songs? Yet with so much musical choice at their fingertips, Roger Miller has resurfaced and his words echo around the school with great enthusiasm.

Four months ago, while conducting a concert preparation session with the Year 4, 5 and 6 classes at Gordon, I observed a lack of engagement in singing among the boys in the group. After discussing the problem with the school's executive it was decided to run an initial four-week pilot program designed specifically for the boys, with the goal of fully engaging them in singing and also developing social outcomes through involvement with the local community. In discussion with the boys, several reasons emerged to explain their initial non-engagement with singing. Peer pressure from the girls came out as the 'number one' reason—in their own words, 'Boys just aren't as good as girls when it comes to singing and the girls laugh at us when we sing.' The first four weeks of the new program were so successful

that we decided to continue the group each week for 45 minutes until the end of 2008. Now after four months, the boys' perceptions of their own singing have been boosted through the creation of a safe environment of their own where they are free to express themselves in song.

This trial singing program is different in several ways from other initiatives to promote boys' engagement in music. It is based on the Music Education Outreach Principle developed by Dr Susan West, who heads the Australian National University's Music Education Program. We have a voluntary, non-auditioned group of boys, whose repertoire includes a majority of songs from 1910s to 1950s! The Outreach notion is based on the simple idea of social interaction in which everyone has the opportunity to reach out to others through *shared music making* rather than simply presenting music to be listened to by an often 'socially-removed' audience. In our society, where the extended family is often separated by distance, these Outreach experiences give the boys a social environment in which to interact with the older generation—in this case, residents in an elderly care residential facility—in a positive way. After outlining the program and particularly



its emphasis on cross-generational social interaction, twenty boys attended the first session and their first words were, 'When do we get to go to the nursing home? Do we go today?'. They were obviously excited by the prospect and eager to engage.

More than twenty boys have consistently participated in the singing group, with many keen to share the reasons why they return each week. One commented that singing 'brings a smile to his face'; others commented on peer group cohesion—the fact that their friends are involved; others said 'you can sing without people laughing at you', 'the songs are fun', and 'we just really like to sing'. The boys have a developing repertoire of more than 20 songs, including *The Aeroplane Jelly Song*, *I'm a Lonely Little Petunia*, *Four Leaf Clover*, *This Little Light of Mine* and *Lazy Coconut Tree*—many have commented that the old songs are becoming new again through being used in television advertisements and remixes. For many, 'Old is cool!'

In July last year, the boys went on their first Outreach to a local nursing home. The boys moved around the room with ease, chatting with the residents and learning about their lives. They didn't sing as a choir but instead moved freely around the room singing their songs with the residents. Many of the boys held hands with the residents, which helped to build social connections between themselves and residents. As we all found, the Outreach principle can be used in a variety of social situations and venues—the place is not important, it's the singers' intent that matters. One student, Jack, commented that going to Outreach was, 'Like that feeling that you get when you've done your good deed for the day'.

A show of hands after the Outreach visit showed unanimously that the boys wanted to visit again in the near future. The boys attended their second Outreach in September. One of the accompanying parents, Liz, commented, 'At first I stood back. Once I started watching the boys I must admit to watching their interactions. At first I was quite shocked and very proud of how they got straight up and into it, and started introducing themselves and shaking [the residents'] hands. I heard so much positive feedback from the elderly [residents] about how much they loved the boys and how they thoroughly enjoyed it. I was just so proud of the boys to see how they all interacted and carried themselves.'

Since their initial Outreach visit in July, the boys have had many opportunities to reach out to their own school community through their singing. These events have included singing at school assemblies, at the local preschool centre, at a Dad's Breakfast initiative, and in a support role with younger students in the school. All of these experiences have assisted in developing the boys' self-confidence, team building and in-school leadership. Furthermore, preliminary data collected indicates improved student behaviour and a better perception of the boys within their school setting. The school and the Music Education Program at the ANU are interested to carry out more research into the effects of

singing, and particularly its influence on 'at-risk' students, at the school over the next twelve months.

The boys' energy and enthusiasm for singing not only lifts their own spirits but also fully justifies establishing a boys' singing group. The establishment of this group represents a major step forward in encouraging more boys to engage in singing in the ACT. In August last year, the first singing Outreach gathering was held with boys from Gordon Primary School, Campbell High School and North Ainslie Primary School. This was a great opportunity for boys from Years 2 to 10 to sing together, to be role models for each other, and to reinforce the social dimension of singing. Their boisterous rendition of *The Aeroplane Jelly Song* at the end of the session was inspirational and demonstrated the camaraderie of the boys and their enthusiasm for singing. After discussing the day, the boys said that it was a successful and fun way of starting to sing.

A male teacher at my school once expressed his regret at not continuing to sing into his teenage years, due, he felt, to peer pressure when transitioning to high school. Hopefully, enabling more boys to sing in our schools by providing them with safe and fun environments can overcome issues like this. If we can encourage more boys to acquire a love for music through singing, and to think more altruistically about what they can do with their singing, who knows what the future may hold for them and for those with whom they make music? As one Year 6 boy recently put it, 'Singing is just one of those things where *the best things in life are free*'. **M in A**

#### Nicole Mengel

Although having been a primary school teacher in the ACT for six years, Nicole admits to being 'not musically trained'. Nevertheless, she completed the sixteen-week Music Education Program professional development course in 2006, and now works with Dr Susan West in supporting teachers and students with classroom music programs and assisting with the implementation of school Outreach programs across the ACT.

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# SUCCESS THROUGH WORKING TOGETHER

## Establishing the Adelaide North Primary Hub Music Program

ELIZABETH HARLOCK-LEA describes how a successful instrumental music program was developed for beginning students from 28 schools.

When I arrived at Fremont High School, Elizabeth, South Australia in 1977 as a classroom music teacher, music had not been taught in the curriculum for three years and the only piano had just been sold! There were remnants of standard music textbooks and some classroom percussion instruments, but it quickly became evident that to establish a secondary music program, I would need to start from scratch. I therefore directed my energies towards writing course outlines, putting together budgets, locating resources and establishing instrumental lessons.

### The opportunity for change

In 1978 Fremont High became the last of four Special Interest Music Schools to be established by the South Australian Education Department. The Special Music Centre to be set up there was designed to cater for students in the northern suburbs of Adelaide who were gifted and talented in music. I was appointed to the positions of Deputy Principal and Head of Music with a brief to establish and run the centre, including the development of a program to cater for students wishing to either specialise in music during their secondary school years, or to take music as an elective.

To work on the Special Music program, liaison with neighbouring primary schools was essential. It became glaringly evident that there was a lack of musical opportunities in primary schools throughout the northern region. For example, where a classroom music program was operational, it was by good luck, not planning; the majority of programs that did exist were instrumental only, operating in a vacuum without any support. Given this scenario, instrumental lessons were delivered without any coordinating support from the primary school. No instrument maintenance existed, and many instruments—particularly strings—could be found in a state of disrepair in cupboards around the school. Attendance at instrumental lessons was not monitored and therefore no ownership of the programs was evident.

### New beginnings

Given these findings, I approached the then Manager of the South Australian Music Branch, Alan Farwell, with a



proposal to establish a Primary String Program based at the Fremont High School Special Interest Music Centre. Such a program would centralise the lessons allocated to surrounding primary schools at the Music Centre and would provide appropriate coordination and ownership. Primary school principals supported this proposal, and the Primary String Hub Program commenced operation in 1980. In that format the program provided weekly violin, cello and classical guitar lessons for students in Grades 3–7 given by teachers of the (then) Music Branch.

Staff from the Special Interest Music Centre provided complementing theory lessons.

This program flourished for many years. Students travelled to the Music Centre for their weekly tuition. Workshops and concerts were held. A primary specialist music teacher was appointed to the program as a regional initiative, and the positive music education outcomes for students were evident. In this stage we catered for approximately forty string students a week. Wherever possible we also provided access to secondary instrumental lessons for primary students wishing to study woodwind, brass and percussion instruments.

### How the program now works

Under new arrangements, the Adelaide North Primary Hub Music program, based at the amalgamated Fremont-Elizabeth City High School Special Interest Music Centre, now caters for over 150 students per week from 28 primary schools from a geographical area from Modbury through to Salisbury, Elizabeth and Gawler in the northern suburbs of Adelaide.

Students learn from a range of instruments including flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, percussion, violin, viola, cello and classical guitar.

The core of the teaching staff is provided by the Instrumental Music Service (IMS) of the Education Department. Where student numbers exceed the number of lessons that can be delivered by the IMS, the school funds private providers to meet demand in the program. The Music Centre provides teaching time for classroom music teachers to coordinate and teach music theory in the program to the equivalent of two teaching days per week.



Students entering the program attend an instrumental selection workshop to hear, then try, all instruments available. Given that the majority of students in our program come from backgrounds of high cultural and financial disadvantage, the opportunity to attend a workshop and try instruments before selecting is vital. As the majority of students may not have seen many of the instruments available, without such workshops they would revert to the choice of what they see and hear in the media—guitars, keyboards and drums would otherwise be the basis for their choice. These instrumental workshops widen students' knowledge, opportunity and awareness as the basis for an informed instrumental choice.

All students attending an instrumental workshop are offered a position in the Primary Hub Music Program. To date, no student has been denied a position. The program is made available to all students in government primary schools who are unable to access instrumental tuition in their local primary schools. The range of students in the program ranges from those clearly gifted in music, to those with learning difficulties and special education needs. Instruments may be hired for an annual fee of \$80.00. Special arrangements are made to support parents experiencing difficulty in meeting this fee.

However, regardless of circumstances, travel to and from lessons is the responsibility of the parent or caregiver. Where possible we do assist parents in making links to organise car pools to support travel, and while having some sort of community bus to pick up and deliver students has merit, finances do not allow. On the positive side, however, the willingness of parents to organise transport does promote valuing of the program, in that they are making a weekly commitment to its success.

Funding such a program is an obvious issue. All primary schools accessing the program pay an affiliation fee to join, then an annual fee on a sliding scale according to the number of students participating from their school. This fee income is put towards the budget to run the program. As well as providing the music staff to coordinate and teach the theory component of the program, Fremont-Elizabeth City High School provides an annual budget of \$16,000 to purchase instruments, ensemble scores, accessories, to pay for repairs, transport, and private providers, and to facilitate workshops and concerts.

The teaching program for both theory and instrumental lessons aligns with the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework encompassing the areas of Arts Practice, Arts Analysis and Response, and Arts in Context.

### Community involvement

At the end of first semester, a demonstration day is held to exhibit the progress of all students in the program. Principals, parents and friends are invited to attend, and the event generally attracts an audience of over two hundred. At the end of second semester, an end-of-year Christmas concert is held, in the form of a cabaret that usually attracts an audience of over four hundred. Certificates and awards are presented. During the year, opportunities for additional performance outlets for students are provided through auditioning to

perform at the annual Public Schools Music Festival and by participating in performances at local primary schools, and at the Royal Adelaide Show.

When students start in the program, they are asked to wear a white top and black trousers or skirt when performing. Through the generous sponsorship of HomeStart South Australia, students progressing into a second year of tuition are provided with a uniform—black shirt and trousers—for use during the year. Students attend a session each week in which they have three half-hour lessons: instrumental, theory and ensemble. Sessions are offered to beginning students, continuing students and advanced students. Beginning- and continuing-level string ensembles, classical guitar ensembles and concert bands are provided to supplement students' instrumental lessons.

Parent support is important. Parents receive a handbook providing operational information about the program, including information about expectations, a calendar of events and reporting procedures. A newsletter is mailed out at the beginning of each term to update information. Parents are welcome to attend instrumental, theory and ensemble lessons and some even play in the ensembles. Each year a parent committee is formed to provide feedback and to consider any aspects related to the program including fundraising, sponsorship and new projects.

### A worthwhile opportunity

Although only one model of how an instrumental music program for primary school students can be implemented, the Adelaide North Primary Hub Music Program based at Fremont-Elizabeth City High School has provided a highly valuable and worthwhile opportunity for young students attending government schools in the northern suburbs of Adelaide to learn an instrument of their choice and to experience ensemble playing. Based on 2008 statistics, 50% of graduating Year 7 students gained entrance to the Special Interest Music Program at Fremont-Elizabeth City High School while other graduating Year 7s wishing to continue their music studies will do so at their local high schools. Certainly the success of the program is indicated in a 90% retention rate of students from 2008 continuing into 2009.

**M**inA

### Elizabeth Harlock-Lea

Elizabeth (Liz) Harlock-Lea has been Deputy Principal of Fremont-Elizabeth City High School, and Head of Music for the Special Interest Music Centre there since its establishment in 1978. Her 2008 National Award for Excellence in School Music Education was in recognition of her work described in this article.

### E-CONTACT

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# EARLY WEDNESDAYS AT WESLEY

## A school, a teacher and a method work as one

String teacher HELEN AYRES describes her experience of a successful instrumental program that uses an established teaching method to develop a love of music.

### The school

Every Wednesday morning, string students at the Wesley College Elsternwick campus in Melbourne stream into the McArthur Music School. These talented young students are dwarfed by the cases they carry—for violins and cellos, with school bags, sports bags and occasionally, all of the above. Their string program at Wesley Elsternwick revolves around these 7.45 am orchestral rehearsals, during which young students will learn to sight-read music for the first time and experience the thrill of playing in harmony with their friends. Any rush or mayhem as students arrive soon dissipates with the reassuring and constant presence of their teachers, Alexandra Cameron, Head of Music and Wendy Tooke, Head of Strings.

Years as a violinist in the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Seraphim Piano Trio have not prepared me, as a newly-appointed violin teacher at Wesley, for such early hours of school music rehearsals. Even so I enjoy the chatter of students as they line up to have their instruments tuned, or as small groups break off to play through their latest pieces. If a teacher listens carefully, these casual performances can sometimes reveal a musical potential that ordinarily could be suppressed in more intimidating, formal settings.

The rehearsal begins with Alexandra at the piano, ready to bring out the main melody for anyone getting lost along the way. Wendy conducts, keeping an eagle eye on small hands and wayward feet, checking for straight backs and sturdy bow-holds. Wendy will not allow any lapse in discipline—for this, she has been affectionately dubbed ‘The Dragon Lady!’ A scale variation is played to focus developing ears on correct intonation, before the orchestra launches into more intensive revision of pieces. As I wander with my violin between the firsts and the seconds, helping with fingerings or dynamics, I know that what these children learn from us now will shape their attitudes towards music for the rest of their lives.

Wesley Elsternwick has a Junior String Orchestra and the more senior McArthur Strings, named in memory of a



former principal of Wesley College, the late Glen McArthur. I knew Glen when he was principal of Adelaide’s Marryatville High School where I was a student until 1991. There, I was taught violin by Wendy Tooke, and played in school music ensembles that took me to Europe at the age of 16. These international musical journeys were possible through the vision of Glen and our then head of music, Margaret Lambert. Glen and Margaret made an outstanding

teaching team, and Margaret joined Wesley in 1993 to set up the Elsternwick campus as a special interest music school.

Today, the McArthur Music School is filled with the joy of making music. Every student is offered a weekly private lesson, a weekly group lesson, a weekly orchestral rehearsal and the choice of being part of various smaller ensembles. It is wonderful to see that the students want to be here, playing their instruments together—Alexandra and Wendy have created a healthy, thriving community of young music lovers.

### The teacher

Hung on the wall of my childhood home was an exquisite Japanese silk scroll on which was written, in swirling calligraphy, Dr. Shinichi Suzuki’s axiom ‘Man is a Son of His Environment’. This is the spiritual foundation on which the Suzuki violin teaching method stands, and of my own violin education.

Using the Suzuki method, Wendy Tooke specialises in the first and most important years of a young violinist’s education. The results are evident in her students’ performances; for the past two years the McArthur Strings has won the coveted Gold Shield at the Melbourne Strings Festival. This achievement is even more impressive given that the oldest player is not more than 13 years old. Wendy’s students also regularly achieve honour awards at AMEB examinations and various eisteddfods.

Suzuki’s sometimes controversial teaching method is unquestionably successful. I believe it offers one of the best



educational models to which a young musician can be exposed; however, it can fail in the wrong hands. Contrary to popular belief, Suzuki's method does not impose a rigid framework for mass group performances by children who cannot read music. A student's inability to read music is a failure of the teacher, not the method. At Wesley Elsternwick, every student's individuality is recognised through a tailored study program. The students enjoy a wide repertoire, and attend Melbourne Youth Music and Australian Youth Orchestra activities, often going on to study music at tertiary level.

### The method

The Suzuki method recognises that a highly developed musical ear should be central to a young musician's education. Just as a child learns to speak before they learn to read or write, the young student will be encouraged to play by ear before converting to reading from notation. Beyond their practical lessons, Suzuki students at Wesley are supported by the classroom work of Amy Williams, whose specialist music classes inspire all students to gain a theoretical understanding of what they play.

Perhaps the most important concept at the centre of Suzuki's method is the triangle of support formed between the teacher, parent and student. Wendy requires parents to be present at lessons, so that they can then become 'the teacher' at home. Correct posture and intonation are more easily checked very time the student practices if an attentive parent understands what help is required, and is present to assist.

The early hour of the specialist music rehearsal enables completion before the main school-day starts. However, one young student is given a flexible starting time because she swims five kilometres every morning. (This and the one-hour orchestra rehearsal must all be completed before she starts her school day.) This delightful, multi-talented student meets the additional demands of her specialist subjects in a very nurturing environment that helps support her heavy workload. The campus comprises only 300 students—small enough that every student is known by every teacher. In this setting, teachers can cooperate with one another and with parents, all in the best interests of each child. Care is always taken when arranging private lessons and rehearsals so that students do not miss their specialist classroom subjects.

I have observed that a specialist music program such as this inspires self-confidence in individual performance and also selfless cooperation within a group. This was clearly evident in a student who transferred to Wesley a little time ago. When she arrived, she was a shy, withdrawn child who would hardly speak. Her parents accepted the offer of violin lessons and she has subsequently blossomed into a confident young violinist, recently able to perform solo, at very little notice, to a large group of prospective parents at Wesley's Open Day.

Obviously, not all these music students will pursue a musical career. But if, as a performing musician, I have ever doubted the relevance of my craft, or questioned the need for live classical music in a world increasingly filled with pre-recorded performances, I have only to come to Wesley on a Wednesday morning to mingle with the next generation of music lovers. **M<sup>in</sup>A**

### Helen Ayres

Dr Helen Ayres joined the staff of Wesley College as a violin teacher in 2008. She has completed a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from The University of Melbourne where she was Acting Head of Strings in 2007. She is also violinist with the Seraphim Trio and was formerly a member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Helen teaches students from beginner through to tertiary level, and is an experienced examiner and adjudicator.

### E-CONTACT

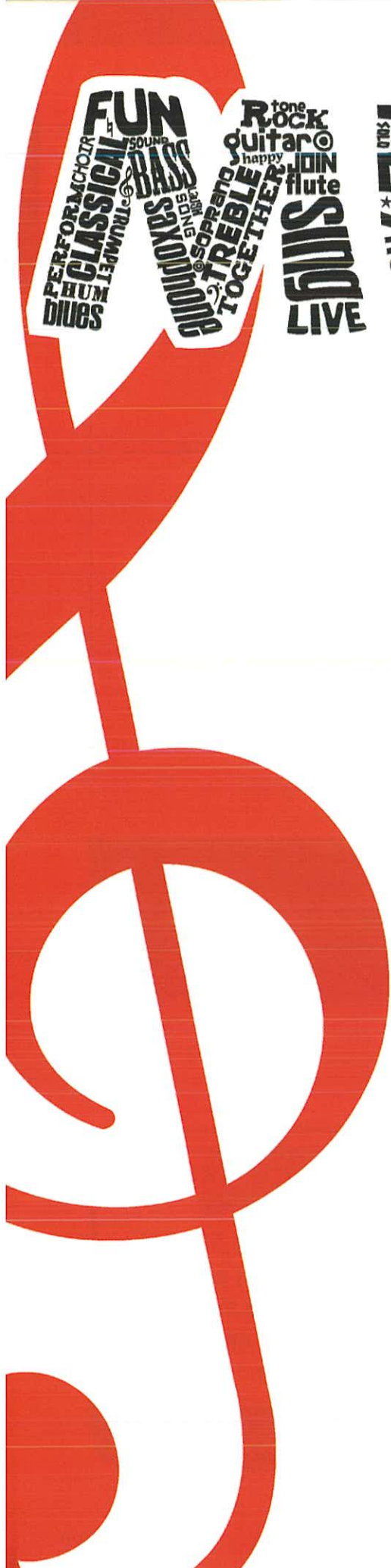
Helen Ayres: <helenayr@gmail.com>



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# THE IMPACT OF AN HONEST SOUND

For CAROLYN SOETERS, winner of a 2008 Excellence in School Music Education award, an early school experience led to a path of many turns before she found a new beginning in school music.

Although I have only fuzzy memories of my early childhood years—finger painting, climbing, singing with my family on car trips and learning to do handstands on the grass—I grew up in a very safe environment. However, one significant memory remains very clear to me from school, when I must have been five or six years old. One day, the children from two or three classes were assembled in a sunny room with a piano and told to stand in a line. One teacher played the piano while we all sang along. The other teacher walked slowly down the line, listening to each of us in turn, then telling us to stand on one side of the room or the other. When she came to me, she wasn't sure for a minute and listened again before I was sent to join a group.



I learned a lesson that day—one that stayed with me until I was thirty years old, and that took a lot of work to unlearn. You see, I had been put in the group of children who couldn't sing.

Now that I am a primary school teacher I can imagine that my teachers in that instance had possibly been told that the school needed a choir for a special event fairly urgently. The school's intention was simply to fill an immediate need. Somewhat stressed, what could they do? They made the decision to select 'those children who could sing', and to teach them some songs to perform! The lasting impact of that was for me to see myself as a non-singer, or an almost-but-not-quite singer. But what about the 'chosen ones'? Since becoming an adult I have met others who have had experiences as a 'chosen one' when young, and discussed with them their feelings of the need to practice, and the stresses of performance anxiety, and the fact that they rarely (if ever) sing or pick up their instrument.

As a child, the lesson that I learned was compounded in school assemblies when people mumbled the school song and the national anthem to the playback of a crackling cassette recording, trying to not sing too loudly—something like: 'ashtrayuns hall et us be joys'—that made no sense to me at the time. So I sang, but not too loudly. (I still wonder why Americans can sing their national anthem loudly and proudly on public occasions, while we as Australians continue to mumble and not really make ourselves heard or understood.)

After eight years teaching students in primary classrooms, I came to teach at Flynn Primary School in the ACT. At my first school assembly, a teaching colleague called Liz stood up to lead the singing.

I was prepared for the tape or CD to go on and for some soft singing, but I heard something completely different. This teacher stood proudly and sang—unaccompanied—in a loud, clear and confident voice to the whole group. And such singing came back from the students—a big honest sound with such impact that I sat up, stunned. It felt different. It felt exciting, and it felt right.

This was the first time that I heard about the Australian National University School of Music and its Music Education Program (MEP). Liz was very effectively implementing its Music Education Outreach Principle. I didn't understand this approach at first, because the paradigm that I'd learned from childhood told me that this teacher must be *talented*. Maybe she'd been put in the 'chosen ones' singing group when she was at school. Maybe she'd had special singing lessons. Whatever it was, I wished for what she had.

I'd been teaching in primary schools in NSW and at Auckland in New Zealand for several years and I was thinking about a career change. Teaching wasn't doing much for me any more, and the increased pressure and paper work was beginning to get me down.

However, I was lucky to have a principal at Flynn Primary School who supported the MEP program. I was also delighted to discover that it was funded by *Arts ACT* and that I didn't need any formal music training to participate. My principal allowed me to attend a weekly professional development course over six months at ANU, where I began to unlearn what I'd learned as a five-year-old. The subject was the Music Education Outreach Principle, which had the underpinning philosophy that everyone can sing, and that singing isn't about listening to yourself and making judgements, or being judged. Singing is a gift that can be given by one person to another. Singing is purely for the purpose of communicating, and for sharing emotions.

Dr Susan West, of ANU's School of Music, developed the Music Education Outreach Principle, and has been supporting classroom teachers by promoting its philosophy and practice through her Music Education Program for several years.

It might sound as if I am exaggerating the situation, but this course of study not only changed my teaching practice, it drastically improved the quality of my life. How did the Music Education Outreach Principle translate into my own life and classroom practice? I sing every day with my class.



I love my job again. Singing is now a natural and normal part of what we do. All children in my class are regularly given the opportunity to sing on their own or as part of a pair, small group or whole class group and praised for honest participation. This to me is essential, rather than 'musical perfection', which is not the aim of this social skilling program. The children have a shared and extensive repertoire of songs, and it's not uncommon for children to burst into *Road to Gundagai* or *Jamaica Farewell* during deskwork or an art lesson, and others just join in. There's no special secret—just getting out of their way and giving them permission to sing.

Once I completed the MEP course, I began taking my own class on Outreach singing visits to a local nursing home in Canberra. The children were catalysts for engaging the residents in community singing and in cross-generational contact, and took particular pride in supporting the wellbeing of these elderly residents through their singing.

Other teachers within our school became involved and eventually I was organising Outreach opportunities for each class in the school, and supporting other staff by expanding their class singing repertoire. We held whole-school singing assemblies each Monday morning, which got the week off to a good start.

In 2007, I was appointed to Jervis Bay School, which is on the Shoalhaven South Coast of NSW, with approximately 45 students in K-6. The school is part of HMAS Creswell navy base, which is within the Booderee National Park. Students come from both the Navy and the local Indigenous community.

The school principal keenly supported the Outreach program, which grew to respond and adapt to the needs of the local community. I began by developing a song repertoire with my own class, which led to sharing songs with the rest of the staff. Then we contacted local nursing homes and began singing with our community. This expanded to combined school/community Outreach singing events, with members of the Navy community and Wreck Bay Indigenous community singing and dancing together in Wreck Bay community hall and the naval base. Parents and grandparents have commented that singing together is one of the best

experiences of the reconciliation process that the school has provided to promote understanding between its diverse communities.

From a personal perspective: since undertaking the MEP course I have joined a community choir, sung with a small local band, and performed a solo part on stage at a packed Lewellyn Hall concert at ANU. I have also bought a piano and started taking lessons, although I still have to remind myself that 'it's OK for me to do this'. But above all, it is the children who are the keys to the success of this program. If children are encouraged to sing in a group environment, without criticism or negativity, there is no doubt that amazing things can be achieved. **M<sub>in</sub>A**

### Carolyn Soeters

Although having trained as a generalist primary teacher (without music specialisation), Caz—as she prefers to be known—later developed her skills and interest in music education through the ANU's Music Education Program of professional development, and went on to receive a 2008 National Award for Excellence in School Music Education. She received her Teacher Award for her work as Outreach Singing Coordinator at Jervis Bay Primary School and for her support, both of teachers at her school, and for members of the wider community, in implementing the Music Education Outreach Principle.

### E-CONTACT

**Carolyn Soeters:** <carolynsoeters@hotmail.com>

## BECOME A REVIEWER FOR MUSIC IN ACTION

Music in Action seeks experienced music teachers to review publications (teaching materials, textbooks, software) newly released by publishers and distributors.

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**Guitars for Schools**





# MUSIC. PLAY FOR LIFE

After a highly successful year, 'Music. Play for Life' is anticipating a busy 2009 as it continues its mission to encourage more Australians, of all ages and abilities, to make more music.

## 'Music. Count Us In' 2008

On Thursday 23 October last year, Australia stopped for a moment and listened to the sound of 400,000 children making music. Some 1,700 school communities—students, teachers, parents and other guests—joined Australia's biggest-ever 'Music. Count Us In' event to lend their voices to the call for more music education in our schools.

At 11.30 am, 2000 ACT school children assembled outside Parliament House in Canberra for their final rehearsal. Inside, Federal MPs were hearing from their front bench colleague, Arts Minister Peter Garrett, about the importance of music education in our schools.

The 2008 'Music. Count Us In' program of professional development for generalist primary teachers in the lead-up to the simultaneous performance resulted in a significant increase in participation by non-music specialist teachers-up from 17% in 2007 to over 50% in 2008.

'Music. Count Us In' 2008 galvanised the wider community and created a huge demonstration of support for more music in our schools. Now we have to keep up the pressure and make sure 'Music. Count Us In' happens again, delivers professional development to even more classroom teachers, brings even more school communities into the nation-wide advocacy effort and puts more music back into every Australian school.

## Campaign Posters

You can help spread the word and decorate your school at the same time, with the new 'Music. Play for Life' campaign posters and stickers. These colourful posters and stickers are sent out to you free of charge. All you have to do is ask! If you'd like to request a copy for your school please send an email message to Emma Unsworth with your postal details (see E-contacts below).

## Flame Awards

After a rest year to review and revamp in 2008, the Flame Awards will be held again in 2009. Presented by the 'Music. Play for Life' campaign in association with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the Awards showcase—and reward—outstanding music programs in Australian Schools. The Awards are open to both government and independent schools, with State, Territory and overall winners receiving cash prizes from a pool of more than \$10,000. Each year, the theme of the Flame Awards is different—keep an eye on our website for details about the 2009 Awards.

## Previous themes and winners of the Flame Awards

**2007** The Awards focused on primary schools. The 2007 Queensland State and overall National Winner was New Farm State School, and another seven schools were declared State Winners.



**2006** The Awards were directed towards recognising imaginative school music programs that involved the wider community in music-making in school settings. The National Winner was Tatachilla Lutheran College in South Australia.

**2005** The inaugural Award for the most inspiring and engaging school music program was won by Virginia State School, Queensland.

For information about some of the innovative school programs, see details at 'The Flame Awards' on the Music. Play for Life website.

## Guitars for Schools

*Music in Action* featured some of the 'Guitars for Schools' recipients in its last issue. This campaign will continue again this year, rewarding worthy students by presenting them with a guitar of their own. Each student selected had to have demonstrated a commitment to regular practice and to successful music learning as part of their school's music program. These students will now be able to complement their school-based practise with extra practise and recreational playing at home on their very own instrument. The 'Guitars for Schools' program aims to help those students who are not in a financial position to purchase an instrument of their own.

If you have a school-based guitar program and students who would benefit from the 'Guitars for Schools' program, look for the link on the Music. Play for Life web site. If you know of any likely supporters would like to contribute to the purchase of guitars for worthy students, please make contact with Tina Broad.

## Australia's First National Community Musicians' Network

The Music Council of Australia's campaign will this year launch Australia's first national network for community musicians, with the aim of providing a shared resource for all community music groups around Australia, of which schools can be a part. There is so much knowledge out there in the community just waiting to be tapped! So, watch for more details and get ready to join this exciting new initiative.

## What's in store for 2009?

Details of the 'Music. Play for Life' program for 2009 were not available as *Music in Action* went to press but will be reported in our Autumn issue. Meantime, please check the MPfL website. **MinA**

## E-CONTACTS

**Music. Play for Life**

**Website:** [www.musicplayforlife.org.au](http://www.musicplayforlife.org.au)

**Tina Broad:** <tina.mpfl@mca.org.au>

**Emma Unsworth:** <emma.mpfl@mca.org.au>



# GUITAR AND MORE GUITAR

## Boys just wanna have fun!

It's a Friday afternoon music class and you have 28 or so Year 7 or 8 boys heading down the corridor toward you. What can you do? Quick! Grab *Music in Action* and hop into Net News for some ideas, suggests ANDREW SWAINSTON.

At the risk of gender stereotyping, I'm going to say it—lots of boys (and even many girls) love the guitar and so it has always been! Guitar is learnt both in and out of school through such means as downloading 'tabs' from a website, peer-based tuition, 'by ear' when playing along with CDs, and through jam sessions with friends. These kinds of 'informal learning' that have been characteristic of much rock and pop music, has been researched and described by many authors including Lucy Green.\* Now some kids are going well beyond the old 'tab' sites to augment any formal lessons they may or may not be getting. Many are now using online 'guitar club' resources, free tab/MIDI-based software and various 'learn-the-guitar video lesson' podcasts. So, if you want to get into the act or just point your students in the right direction, here's a few useful sites to check out.

### Learn-the-guitar websites

#### The Fender Players Club

<http://www.tinyurl.com.au/x.php?1miv/>

In its own words, this site is about 'the art and passion of playing the guitar. Whether you're a raw beginner or seasoned professional, our goal is to inspire and entertain you with lessons, licks and tips from your favourite Fender artists.' It offers a comprehensive and sequential series of online lessons, resources, free high-quality tabs with conventional notation, scores and skill-building drills. It caters for beginners, intermediate and advanced levels, and covers a wide range of styles including rock, funk, reggae/ska, jazz and blues. A broad range of techniques, skills and musical knowledge is introduced in a clear and step-by-step manner. The repertoire includes the work of artists well-known in their genres, such as Eric Clapton, Weezer, Blink 123, Good Charlotte, Buddy Guy, Brian Setzer and so on. The best thing about it is the quality of the transcriptions, associated recordings and videos, as well as the general layout of what is an impressive guitar course.

#### My Guitar Solo

<http://www.myguitarsolo.com/>

One for the real guitar aficionados, 'dedicated to guitar players who want to improve their guitar technique, to add some new chops to their repertoire, to learn guitar scales or improvisation'. Exercises include the basic craft, skills and

techniques of the solo guitar. There's an impressive warm-up regime, hundreds of scales and modes with MIDI files and tabs, over 300 guitar riffs in many jazz and blues styles, a range of arpeggios, and numerous improvisation backing tracks covering various blues and jazz forms. The site is so comprehensive that it takes a while to navigate through ... so give yourself some time to play with this one.

#### Free Guitar Videos

<http://www.freeguitarvideos.com/>

These people claim to be the world's biggest producers of free online guitar lesson videos. Browse their collection of over 150 free videos in a variety of difficulty levels and genres, with high quality standard notation and tabs being provided.

#### Now Play It

<http://www.nowplayit.com/free/>

Claims to be a 'new and exciting way to learn and play your favorite songs. This unique video service features real music and real artists all backed by real learning techniques'. There is an accompanying podcast 'Rockstar Tutorials' section which is well worth looking at, especially the 'free content' materials.

### Guitar podcasts

One of the most impressive resources on offer for the conscientious young guitarist, whether beginner or advanced, is the newly-emerging media form of video podcasts. However, accessing these can be a tricky at times. The way I did it was through the iTunes Store at <http://www.apple.com/itunes/download/>. From here you can go surfing for guitar video podcasts through the iTunes Search menu bar on the far right of the web page. I found some amazing series here that are listed below together with links to their associated websites.

#### iPlay Music

<http://iplaymusic.blogspot.com/>

Beginner guitar lessons and songs for the whole family, including 24 lessons that cater particularly well for young children and include standard film clips with colourful cartoon-style animation, and songs like 'Wheels on the Bus'. This website has it all!



### Beginning Guitar 101

<http://www.tinyurl.com.au/x.php?1miw/>

iVideosongs claims to be 'perfect for the beginning musician who has just picked up the guitar for the first time'. This material includes over 20 'episodes', with podcasts available on topics such as acoustic guitar, lead guitar and blues concepts, as well as the 'lick of the week' podcast and a number of free video tutorials.

### The Musicology Show

<http://blog.pandora.com/podcast/>

Pandora Internet Radio has created a truly fantastic audio podcast aimed at the more cerebral of the budding young rockers. It presents over 40 high-quality programs on such broad topics as composition, song writing, rhythm, singing, instruments and styles. Program titles include dissonance, quiet and loud, singing intervals and the basics of vocal harmony. This website is 'number one'!

## Music Theory and Notation Resources for Guitarists

### Talkshoe: Guitar Music Theory Lessons

<http://www.tinyurl.com.au/x.php?1miu/>

This website includes episodes on such topics as major/minor seventh chord extensions, intervals and major scale harmony, guitar modes and the theory behind mode scales.

### Chordie lyrics and chords finder

<http://www.chordie.com/>

Chordie is a search engine for finding lyrics, guitar chords and guitar tabs with a really handy 'transpose' feature. This is possibly the best such site on the web.

### Power tab editor

<http://www.tinyurl.com.au/x.php?1mix/>

This is a tablature authoring tool for the Windows platform, intended for use in compiling guitar sheet music—more commonly known to musicians as guitar tablature ('tab') and bass tablature ('bass tab'). The program provides the most commonly used symbols in tablature, including chord names, chord diagrams, rhythm slashes, bends, slides, hammer-ons/pull-offs, harmonics and palm muting. This is a useful piece of software both for people who want to learn how to play guitar and for experienced guitarists who want to transcribe their own music and/or assemble guitar lessons. Both acoustic and electric guitar players can use the software.

† Mac users can try a similar program on the Apple website at <http://www.tinyurl.com.au/x.php?1miy>

### The teaching challenge: Suggs-on song writing

<http://www.teachers.tv/video/24278/>

From guitar playing to song writing is such an easy step. Check out this 20-minute video clip. The synopsis states: 'For this Teaching Challenge, Madness [a UK band] frontman "Suggs" (Graham McPherson) returns to his old school with the hope of passing on the song writing skills that helped make his band so successful. He makes his way to Quintin Kynaston School in north London. This time though, instead of misbehaving as he used to, Suggs takes on the challenge of teaching pupils. Will he succeed?' This is a highly entertaining and worthwhile teaching resource.

**M<sup>in</sup>A**

### Note

\* L Green, *How popular musicians learn*, Ashgate Publishers, Aldershot, 2002 and *Music, Informal learning and the school: A new classroom pedagogy*, Ashgate Publishers, Aldershot, 2008.

## MUSIC<sup>in</sup>ACTION

## SUMMER SUBSCRIBER PRIZE WINNERS

The 25 winners of the 4-BOOK SETS OF SASHA SONG FOLIOS were:

### ACT

Jolanta Gallagher, ANU School of Music, Acton

Brenda Lander, Bruce

Wendy Lyons, Covenant College, Theodore

### NSW

Linda Bianchini, Kincumber High School

Rita Crews, Croydon

Brian Drummond, Baulkham Hills High School

Deirdre Russell-Bowie, Milperra

Helen Ford, Wamberal

### NT

Kathy Strudwick, St Joseph's College, Katherine

### QLD

David Lewis, Tanah Merah

Miranda Browne, Nambour

### SA

Chris Majoros, Willunga

Frances Dennis, Athelstone

Brent Swensson, St Marks College, Port Pirie

Stuart Robison, Glengowrie

Susan Bleby, Unley Primary School, Mitchell Park

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Noela Morton, Special Developmental School, Bendigo

Rodney Pilois, Altona Meadows

Amelia Gallina, Hamilton

The Library, Ringwood Secondary College

James Davidson, Belmont High School

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Sara-Jane Raffan, Bunbury

Silvana Ferrara, East Wanneroo Primary School, Tuart Hill

Anne Trigg, Takari Primary School, Duncraig

Wendy Armstrong, School of Instrumental Music, Bridgetown

*THANKS to AMPD for their generous donation of this prize, and to our new subscribers for helping to keep Music in Action going.*



# DEVELOPING 'CENTRE STAGE'

## Creating a local version of Musical Futures

HENRY VYHNAL outlines a unit of work he developed for lower secondary music, that parallels the approach of UK music education visionary David Price, while meeting the requirements of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS).

Inspired by Musical Futures, as championed by music educator David Price, I now take an approach to classroom music teaching that closely parallels its curriculum design and implementation principles. The result I have called 'Centre Stage'. This article will:

- outline the ways I have responded to Musical Futures' open invitation to 'adapt and adopt' their principles, in our case to meet the requirements of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS)
- outline how I map my Years 7 and 8 (Level 4) music curriculum to the VELS structure
- detail how I use Musical Futures principles to deliver a unit of work that addresses the Interpersonal Domain of the Physical, Personal and Social Learning Strand, and the Communication Domain of the Interdisciplinary Strand of VELS.<sup>1</sup>

### Background

Kyneton Secondary College (KSC), where I teach, is situated in the Macedon Ranges region of Victoria, approximately 120 kilometres north of Melbourne. The school has about 730 students, and music is offered from Year 7 through to Year 12. I teach classroom music in Years 7, 8 and 9 as well as the Music Industry Skills (Music Performance) subject that is part of the Years 11 and 12 Vocational Education and Training (VET) music course, available within the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). A colleague, who also teaches VCE Music, directs the ensemble program and coordinates the instrumental tuition program.

Although I was educated as a 'classical' violinist, my music teaching has largely been informed by my experience as a working musician in the popular music field. At the core of how I teach are my long-term and continuing exposure to, and collaboration with, musicians who use aural techniques rather than notation for music communication and problem-solving.

### Implementing the music program at Kyneton Secondary College

My students experience several phases of musical development during their time with me. In years 7 and 8, I aim for my students to discover that music is an exciting and motivating activity. I want to use their pubescent adrenalin to fuel their curiosity and sense of adventure in music. Years 7 and 8 music is about risk taking—learning new skills, overcoming the nervousness of performing for their peers, and looking inwards to discover what music means in their lives.

Year 9 is about learning the practical skills required to 'be the musician each student wants to be' and is therefore more knowledge-based. Of course, this varies for every student, so the curriculum needs to be fair, and egalitarian enough to cater for each personality and musical vision. At the same time it must deliver a uniformity of knowledge and skill to ensure that students of varying musical abilities, and with differing visions, are able to communicate well enough with each other to create musically satisfying ensemble performances together.

### Summary of Music Futures principles:

Musical Futures places a high premium on informal learning—copying, playing by ear and self-expression. Students are strongly encouraged to play music that they're interested in (rather than a set of pre-determined works)

Music learning is invariably through oral/aural means—students use forms of notation when they choose to, rather than as a 'text' to follow

Technique is introduced within the context of the piece being played, not as discipline in itself

Peer learning and student-led learning are at the heart of Musical Futures

Music leaders learn alongside their students—they don't always have to be experts in the music being played by their students

Having started with music that students are motivated to learn, skilled teachers introduce less familiar musical styles, but within the teaching and learning strategies listed above.



At the Year 11 and 12 levels, music is about acquiring the ‘highest standards of individual performance’. At this stage, students are given so many performance opportunities that, by the final Year 12 assessment, they are confident both personally and musically, they understand their instrument (or voice) in performance mode, and they are so clear about their motivation that they are largely able to manage their own repertoire and individual preparation.

Lower secondary level music at KSC uses the following VELs structure (Fig. 1). Students learn music for one semester (two terms) for three sessions per week for approximately twenty weeks in either Year 7 or Year 8.

Practical music activities (keyboard, guitar, Garage Band and drums) are integrated with theory classes and assessment. Students learn keyboard at the same time that they learn treble and bass clefs; guitar at the same time that they learn guitar TAB; the software program Garage Band at the same time that they learn digital musical composition (including MIDI); and they learn rhythm at the same time that they learn drum kit.

In the second term, students complete their ‘personal projects’. The VELs unit of work I have developed for this component is called ‘Centre Stage’, and is outlined<sup>2</sup> in Fig. 2.

This unit builds on the music reading and writing notation skills established and measured in the first term. Students put themselves into 2–5 person groups of equal musical ability and select a performance project. After almost a term of exploration and rehearsal, the final performance is to the class, and is evaluated by a student and teacher judging panel using benchmarks that have been developed by the class at the commencement of the unit. Throughout the process, students keep a unit diary of project workings, lists of things

to do for the next session, things to practise and find out between sessions, and reflections on the progress of their work. Students are required to share their diary entries with the rest of the class on request. Diary sharing begins each session, as a way of focusing each group’s rehearsal agenda for the day.

The unit answers four key questions:

**1. How is music selected for performance?**

Students learn that material for performance must be within the technical and artistic ability of the performers and may need to be modified from the original recording because of the standard of musicianship required and the availability of instruments.

**2. How do performers develop music for performance?**

Students learn that performance involves problem solving, teamwork and planning and that they will need to overcome performance anxiety to give their best performance.

**3. How will students learn to perform their music?**

Students learn the refinement of interpretation to achieve aims for a specific performance through observing music media and analysing the success of their evolving music performance.

**4. How will students evaluate their performance?**

Students learn how to use language appropriate to the musical style, tradition or genre to describe their performances, and they reference the original recording as a benchmark.

Obviously, their performances will be different from the original. The success of this unit will be assessed by how accurately they describe the differences, and the effectiveness of the compromises they develop in conjunction with their fellow group members, in order to deliver a coherent performance.

The method outlined above is not for the faint-hearted. Giving students the opportunity to accomplish whatever they

**Fig. 1: Lower secondary level music at KSC: VELs structure First term activities**

Strands	Domains	Dimensions	Assessment Tasks
Discipline-based learning	The arts: music	Creating and making	Students learn and perform set music pieces on keyboard, guitar, Garage Band and drum kit
		Exploring and responding	Students demonstrate music theory knowledge through written tests
			Students maintain a music notebook over the course of the semester

**Fig. 2: Centre Stage**

Strands	Domains	Dimensions	Assessment Tasks
Interdisciplinary learning	Communication	Listening, viewing, responding and presenting	Students create a music performance that is a ‘cover version’ of a recorded performance of a musician or group
Physical, personal and social learning	Interpersonal development	Building social relationships, working in teams	Maintain a project diary about relationships and teams



can dream of means heavy demands on the teacher as 'a facilitator of learning experiences'. Teachers must be prepared to run multiple rehearsals in the same room simultaneously. They must also be as patient with advanced musicians who are comfortable using notation and conventional arrangement as with enthusiastic, differently-skilled musicians who have suddenly 'seen the light' and demand resources and knowledge that are not immediately available. Despite all these demands, I strongly believe that VELS is a structure that can cater for all types of students and the multifarious musical styles that drive them to achieve worthwhile music learning outcomes. **MMA**

**Notes**

1. For a summary of the Strands associated with these Strands and Domains of VELS, see the Level 4 (Years 7 and 8) of VELS P-10 Curriculum and Standards at <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/essential/index.html#standards>
2. The more detailed 'Standards and Progression Points' table from which the above table is derived can be downloaded from: <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/links/teachsuppmat.html#stdpp>

**Henry Vyhnal**

After an adventurous career as a rock violinist, Henry Vyhnal undertook teacher training and established a contemporary music course at Huntingdale Technical School in 1983. In 1987 he left teaching to work with the Victorian Rock Foundation and Ausmusic, where he developed contemporary music curricula and produced music education events. His work was recognised by the International Society of Music Education in 1992, when he was invited to present papers in Finland, Austria and Russia. Henry currently teaches classroom and Vocational Education and Training music courses at Kyneton Secondary College.

**E-CONTACTS**

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**Musical Futures:** [www.musicalfutures.org.uk](http://www.musicalfutures.org.uk)  
**VELS:** See Notes 1 and 2 above.



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- **13<sup>th</sup> Early Childhood Conference of Performing Arts (ECCPA)** 22-23 August 2009 in Kew



## BOYS AND MUSIC – WHERE TO GO FOR ADDITIONAL MATERIALS.

This is one of the areas that has recently attracted interest in Australian music education from both researchers and teaching practitioners. Below is a list of selected resources on the topic of 'Boys and Music', most of which are 'home-grown' and available through local sources. Some are available online.

### Articles

A Power, 'Engaging boys in music', in A Stanberg, J McIntosh & R Faulkner (eds.), *Celebrating Musical Communities: Proceedings of the 40th Anniversary National Conference* (ASME), Nedlands, WA, 2007, pp.169–173.

C Hall, 'Understanding and improving boys' participation in singing in the First Year of school', in M Chaseling (ed.), *Australian Association for Research in Music Education: Proceedings of the XXVIth Annual Conference* (AARME), Melbourne, 2004, pp.177–190.

C Hall, 'Gender and boys singing in early childhood', *British Journal of Music Education*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2005, pp. 5–20.

### Teaching Materials

R Smith, *Boys business—Tuning into boys in the Middle Years through music and the arts* (a manual, songbook and CD-ROM pack), University of Newcastle, 2005.

### Research Studies

D Barclay, 'The sound of many voices: Investigating how principals view and influence massed singing in secondary boys' schools', EdD dissertation, Australian Catholic University, 2008.

K S Bennetts, 'Boys and music: A comparative case study of Middle School boys' attitudes to music', PhD thesis, Monash University, 2008.

A Collins, 'Boys and music: What encourages boys to remain involved and motivated in music education in their secondary school years?', MEd(ArtsEd) research paper, Deakin University, 2004.

S D Harrison, 'Musical participation by boys: The role of gender in the choice of musical activities by males in Australian schools', PhD thesis, Griffith University, 2003.

C. Hall, 'Understanding and improving boys singing in the First Year of school', MEd thesis, Monash University, 2003.

A Robertson, 'The perceptions of adolescent boys regarding music participation and social behaviour', Honours thesis, University of Sydney, 2008—available online at <http://hdl.handle.net/2123/2442>

L Vaughan, 'Participation by males in NSW secondary school choirs', MMus(MusicEd) thesis, Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney, 2000.

### Conference Report

'Boys and music: Using the sound language', Professional Development Conference (aMuse—Association of Music Educators [Vic] ), 26–27 November 2004—available online at [www.amuse.vic.edu.au/boys.html](http://www.amuse.vic.edu.au/boys.html)



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## Top Tips

# MASSED SINGING FOR BOYS?

## Practical ways to make it work well

KATHLEEN BENNETTS found a boys' school that is particularly successful at implementing a massed singing program. Here are the 'Top Tips' drawn from her observations.

Recently I was privileged to observe\* music programs at several schools that focused on Middle School boys and singing. One boys' school, to which I here give the fictitious name of 'Balton', was particularly successful at implementing a massed singing program. My experience there, including interviews with staff and students, suggested some guiding principles for success.

### 1. Get the support of the school administration and the wider school community

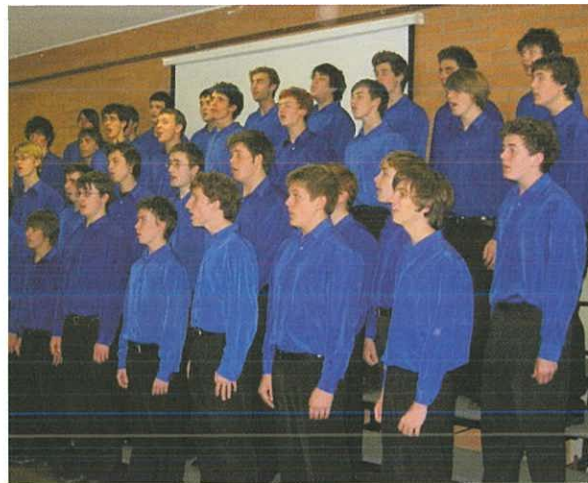
The school principal embraces music as an integral part of the boys' education. Such commitment from a principal is fundamental, and such philosophical promise must be matched with the necessary time allocation and resources. Participating at a very practical level, the principal regularly takes an active interest in the singing program by attending some rehearsals, or even helping with the selection process of songs for special occasions. The general teaching staff also supports the program by ensuring timely attendance by all students at rehearsals ... as opposed to encroaching on this time as a 'catch-up' session for students needing extra assistance. Starting times appeared to be strictly adhered to.

### 2. Schedule massed singing in the school timetable

If singing is really valued, rehearsals need to be compulsory for all students, and to be timetabled within school time. This positions singing as an important activity, and as an accepted, normal part of the school's culture. Timetabling is a major consideration, as many students who wish to be involved in music activities are often forced to choose between sport and music, and for many boys, sport holds more appeal. So, the school's scheduling of singing each Thursday morning is a highly strategic device, avoiding conflict with sport, which traditionally happens in the afternoon.

### 3. Establish singing as a school tradition

The annual House choral competitions are an extension of the weekly massed singing rehearsal and singing at assemblies,



and were regarded very favourably by all students interviewed. The boys were unanimously enthusiastic as they described the process involved, clearly recognising that singing could promote a sense of inclusion and of collective school identity. New boys entering the school appear to be quickly enculturated into this tradition.

### 4. Encourage older boys to motivate younger students

The influence of older boys appears to be an effective strategy in this enculturation

process. One younger student recounted his experience of singing with senior students: 'I was sitting in between these ... two Year 12s and they were just looking up and singing their hearts out, and I thought, oh ... okay, and I started getting into it too, and I just like the spirit of this school—teachers, the students doing stuff that I can get involved in. I've enjoyed it.' The strategy of mixing younger boys with older boys appears to be highly successful, providing younger boys with encouragement, support, motivation, and promoting a sense of involvement in school activities and traditions. Using older boys as role models can also extend to the ensemble-based instrumental and vocal performances that are enjoyed at assemblies, thereby inculcating younger boys with a clear sense of valued musical experiences. Judging by comments from interviews with boys, it would seem that such role modelling is an effective means of dispelling negative and stereotypical attitudes that many boys initially bring to Balton.

### 5. Recognise and reward singing

This is essential in developing a school-wide singing culture. Opportunities for performance at assemblies and concerts are frequent, and are both acknowledged and celebrated. Boys rather surprisingly described music at their school as having equal status with sport. As one boy noted, 'If you are good at sport, then you will get praised, and if you are good at music, then you still get praised. Whereas at some schools, it's just all sport'. So the value of music, specifically singing, is successfully reinforced at Balton, such that recognition



becomes self-perpetuating, generating further pride and valuing of musical pursuits.

### 6. Have well-qualified and talented teachers

This seems to be essential. During interviews with the boys, the teachers were acknowledged as talented, as both educators and musicians, and their achievements were discussed enthusiastically. This not only indicated respect for the staff, but pride in the school's musical achievements that, in turn, encouraged musical involvement.

### 7. Maintain high expectations through a disciplined approach

Teachers insist that the boys 'get it right' by communicating clearly that 'This [singing this song] is *worth* doing properly, you *can* do it, and you *will* do it'. The success of this school's singing program can be attributed largely to an uncompromising, yet realistic, approach to its pursuit of excellence. The boys are presented with a challenge and it is made very clear that 'close enough is not good enough'. Much attention is given to detail, with some sections being repeated several times before being deemed acceptable. Comments made during interviews indicate that boys appreciate the combined reward of enjoyment and achievement, and seem to recognise the intrinsic value of group singing.

### 8. Achieve a balance between the serious and the light-hearted

Balancing the uncompromising expectation of 'Come on boys, let's get this right—this is important' with moments of humour, appeared to be very much appreciated by the boys. Many researchers note the use of humour contributing to the effective teaching of boys. This approach appeared to contribute mutual respect between students and teachers, and the association of enjoyment with singing. Moments of humour had become almost ritualistic—for example, the almost certainly deliberate upside-down positioning of the overhead projector slides by the boys assigned to this task.

### 9. Recognise that 'the journey' takes time!

Developing positive attitudes to singing involves a journey that takes both time and persistence. The teachers at Balton reported initial negativity and resistance to massed singing, but through their promotion of singing as a valued community activity, such attitudes have been changed. Likewise, the boys reported that their growing willingness to sing, and their increasing enjoyment of singing, represented a journey over time.

### 10. Promote the joy of performing at a high standard

The boys experienced, on both individual and group levels, the rewards of creating a polished massed singing performance that was recognised and celebrated by others in the school community:

'Sometimes you sit with a good singer on one side and a terrible singer on the other ... so the whole idea of massed singing is [that] the good singers block out the bad singers, so when it all blends together it sounds alright.' Teachers consistently observed more positive attitudes towards singing

after successful performances. This outcome is in stark contrast to some schools, where I observed occasional singing rehearsals run along the lines of a sing-a-long!! There, little attention was given to detail, and quite frequently, attempts at passages/songs were rewarded with 'well done' despite obvious inaccuracies—an approach that devalues the potential of massed singing.

### 11. Select a varied repertoire

Selecting songs requires careful consideration. Certainly the wide range of styles experienced by the boys was greatly appreciated: 'You need variety though, you can't have all the same pieces.' While the boys certainly enjoyed the 'high energy' songs, they also appeared to enjoy the softer more lyrical songs as well as songs representing greater difficulty. Again, the sense of 'journey' they experienced appeared to promote a wider enjoyment of a range of genres.

### 12. Acknowledge physical considerations

Throughout rehearsals, teachers used different standing and sitting positions to ensure a degree of movement necessary for many boys. Also, students were frequently reminded that good posture results in good singing—slouching was checked and suitable posture encouraged—further evidence of high expectations. Boys were given scope to 'let off steam' at certain points during rehearsals—for example, clapping loudly and cheering when complimented on their performance. There appeared to be a tacit understanding of 'acceptable' behaviour within the context, and the boys were easily refocused to the task at hand.

For me, it was a great privilege as well as an inspiration to observe these boys experiencing the joy of singing. Although there were certainly small groups of 'dissidents', the majority participated enthusiastically in massed singing rehearsals and their comments during interview reinforced my continuing belief in the value of massed singing. **M in A**

### Note

\* These observations are drawn from research for the writer's PhD research, reported in: K S Bennetts, 'Boys and music: A comparative case study of Middle School boys' attitudes to music', PhD thesis, Monash University, 2008.

### Kathleen Bennetts

Dr Kathleen Bennetts is a Research Fellow and sessional lecturer/tutor in education and music education in the Faculty of Education at Monash University.

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# MMADD About The Arts

**An introduction to Primary Arts Education 2 (Second Edition)** by Deirdre Russell-Bowen

Published by Pearson Education Australia, 2009 Reviewed by Nancy Cincotta

'I don't sing in tune.' 'I can't draw.' 'Teach dancing and drama?' 'I'm just not confident to do this with my class.' 'What can I teach students about the media that they don't already know?' These are just some of the thoughts of many primary teachers when the arts education curriculum is mentioned.

But help is at hand! For anyone about to teach music, media, art, dance and/or drama in the primary school, *MMADD about the arts!*\* is an excellent resource. It offers knowledge of the constituent elements as well as basic skills associated with each arts discipline, together with the essential teaching methods and pedagogical approaches to effectively implement a quality arts program. This attractively-presented book is for pre-service, beginning and established practicing teachers who wish to improve their confidence and competence in teaching these arts disciplines. To this end, the book offers a wealth of very practical and well-tested advice and teaching ideas.

The author, Deirdre Russell-Bowie, is Associate Professor of Creative Arts Education at the University of Western Sydney. She is a well-respected practitioner and researcher who has produced over thirty creative arts resources and won several prestigious awards for her outstanding contribution to student learning. With such a 'hands-on' background, the author is able to offer a plethora of helpful hints (together with a number of clever acronyms). These should enable the reader to acquire the necessary personal and professional knowledge and skills to implement a continuous creative learning program, which in turn may help engender a love for the arts in their students.

The book begins by reaffirming the significance of arts in society, and gives an historical outline of primary arts education in Australia from pre-1770 to 2008. The author is fully aware of the challenges—including the specialist/generalist issue—that face most classroom teachers and school administrators as they decide on the most effective approach to programming of arts experiences for their students.

What I found most satisfying was the easy-to-follow format, which offers the reader a concise and practical introduction to each of the creative art forms of music, media, visual art, dance and drama. A chapter is dedicated to each discipline area highlighting important elements and specific language that are essential for planning of focussed learning experiences for students. Teachers are offered a range of strategies and ideas that are ready for immediate implementation in the classroom, supported by examples of effective classroom activities.

Interaction between reader and writer is regularly encouraged throughout the book with challenging questions and ideas, in particular through a segment at the end of each chapter entitled 'Springboards for Discussion and Application'. These thought-provoking 'springboard' tasks are both relevant and meaningful for teachers to consider in their own contexts. Together with suggestions for further reading they provide a dynamic extension of this excellent resource.

Some interesting features include the frequent use of inspiring advocacy quotes that continually remind us of why the arts are of such value, not only in education but for later life. Furthermore, in true 'teacher-style', each chapter begins with a set of 'learning outcomes' for the reader. This pedagogical aid sets out in a concise and useful manner an expectation of what the reader could acquire from each chapter.

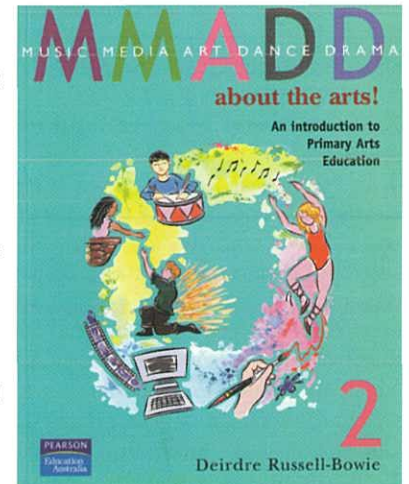
Using a solid foundation of the art elements, lesson ideas and assessment strategies outlined in previous chapters, the book gives some excellent examples of integrated arts programs that link well with the approach being taken in various state and territory syllabi. A variety of pedagogical approaches are explored including the idea of multiliteracies, and programming that allows for the development of multiple intelligences.

As with the previous edition, the book is accompanied by a CD that includes recordings of simple songs for classroom use. These songs are cross-referenced to activities throughout the book, and also to an additional feature of this edition—a website that includes downloadable resources such as flashcards, the words and scores for the songs on the CD, additional lesson plans and a thematic index of songs, activities and programs for use with K-6 arts education programs.

This second edition of the book serves its intention well in providing a highly informative overview of subject content of each arts discipline and a valuable set of pedagogical tools for primary teachers. It gives the promise of the worthwhile opportunities that will be created for students as they both enjoy and grow through their experience of a quality arts program. **MIA**

\* MMADD stands for **M**usic, **M**edia, **A**rt, **D**ance and **D**rama.

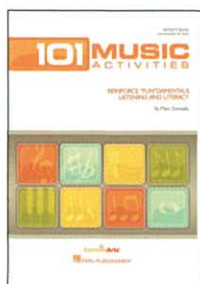
Thanks to our reviewer, Nancy Cincotta, Catholic Schools Performing Arts (CaSPA) Adviser & Lecturer in Primary Music Education, The University of Sydney.





# NEW RELEASES

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*SOUNDS FANTASTIC:*



## iImprovise, Levels 1, 2 & 3—Greg Mason

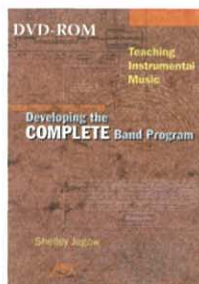
Kit includes reproducible student scores, full teacher accompaniments, lesson ideas for each piece, and CD with full performance (including sample improvisations) and backing-only tracks. A developmental series of class ensemble pieces using tuned percussion instruments featuring simple structures for student improvisation. For lower primary to lower secondary levels, it provides simple, structured playing and improvising activities for use by teachers in the classroom or instrumental studio. Designed to suit the needs of teachers with musical experience as well as those with little or no previous experience teaching music.

Level 1 - improvisation using 2-5 notes

Level 2 - improvisation using 5-8 notes (all diatonic)

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With this program, you can visit a virtual rehearsal on your PC or Mac where each video clip illustrates a different rehearsal concept, including: warm-up, style, intonation, balance and blend, rhythm, and musicianship. Bonus items include: course activity forms,

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FROM SASHA MUSIC PUBLISHING:



**Sasha Plays Piano: Beginner to Intermediate Piano 1 Arrangements—Sonny Chua**

Sonny's proficient and cheeky style shines through in these arrangements of popular songs, which provide an educational setting for repertoire that teachers and students will love. Pieces are presented in progressively graded sequence and lyrics are included at the end of each piece for reference. Popular-style rhythms are cleverly incorporated and each piece features technical challenges for the piano student to enhance general learning while performing interesting music.



*BÄRENREITER:*

**The Sassmannshaus Tradition: Early Start on the Violin—Egon & Kurt Sassmannshaus**

In contrast to other beginner violin methods, this method progresses swiftly by introducing advanced violin techniques—such as shifting and varied bow strokes—in rudimentary form. Note reading is emphasised from the first lesson—children are encouraged to become proficient sight-readers and play in chamber music ensembles as early as possible. The child-friendly and age-appropriate text underlying the music enables children to perceive melodies as a whole and to understand their singable qualities. Both songs and scales in different positions are clearly explained and are easily mastered in the first year.

*MEL BAY:*

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**Blues Jam Play Along Grades 1 and 2 Modern Method Books and CD—William Bay**

*Books and audio CDs.*

These publications present blues melodies and recorded back-up improvising tracks for some well-chosen blues tunes. Two improvising scales are shown for every tune. Play along with the companion CD which features an excellent blues band playing all of the back-up parts.

**Blues Drums Play-along Trax Book and CD—David Barrett & Kevin Coggins**

*Book and audio CD.*

This is an exciting play-along package that contains the most common grooves used in blues bands today. All of the examples are presented without the drums.

*SCHOTT:*

**Animals Piano Pictures Book 2: 30 Easy Piano Pieces for Children**

This book builds on a variety of animal sounds as the basis for these compositions: from tiny ones like the fly and the grasshopper, to large ones like the bear and the elephant, to dangerous ones like the panther and the shark and more

*OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS:*

**Songs of Africa: 22 Pieces for Mixed Voices (SATB)—ed. Fred Onovwerosuoke**

Twenty-two pieces for mixed voices representing repertoire from a wide range of countries including Nigeria, Ghana Congo South Africa and many others. This collection is suitable for use in concert programs and church services.

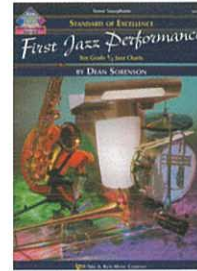
**Jazz Folk Songs for Choirs (SATB & Piano Accompaniments)—Bob Chilcott**

This exciting new collection gives a jazzy twist to nine favourite folk songs from around the world, including 'Scarborough Fair', 'À claire fontaine' and 'Waltzing Matilda'.

**FROM ENCORE MUSIC DISTRIBUTORS**

[www.encoremusic.com.au](http://www.encoremusic.com.au)

*KJOS:*



**First Jazz Performance—Dean Sorenson**

This series contains ten Grade 1/2 jazz charts that can also be played in a concert band setting. This is the perfect introduction to jazz performance. Although arranged for jazz instrumentation, they are also expandable to full concert band and each part book includes free downloads.

**Festival Ensembles 2—Bruce Pearson, Chuck Elledge and Dean Sorenson**

This second book in the Festival Ensembles series contains 15 medium to easy arrangements for any combination of band instruments. Featuring Kjos multiple option scoring that is playable for solos, ensembles and full concert band, the pieces are perfect for festivals, concerts and private study.

**Queenwood Kjos Young Band Marches—John Edmondson**

This book includes 13 march selections that are available as a full score with a CD recording of the pieces and as individual part books. The Grade 2 selections include a 'Melbourne March'—which is dedicated to ABODA (Australian Band and Orchestra Directors Association) as well as titles such as 'The Invincibles', 'The Flying Tigers' and 'Omaha Beach'.

**More Strings Extraordinaire—Deborah Baker Monday & Janice McAllister**

A collection of performance pieces that provide a quality musical experience for students of different playing levels. Each piece is scored with advanced and beginning parts for violin, viola, cello and bass. An optional piano accompaniment part is provided as well as optional percussion parts for some pieces.

**Theory Boosters—Lisa & Lori Bastien**

These two authors will launch your students to new heights of theory success. Each activity book focuses on a single theory concept and uses puzzles, mazes, games, riddles and more to promote student's natural love of learning and the enjoyment of mastering their instrument.

**Also available are:**

**Student Flashcards** is a handy-size set that includes all major and minor key signatures, all notes on the grand staff, all ledger line notes up to three lines, and fun flashcard games



and practice tips. These are perfect for students of all levels and co-ordinate with any method.

**Post-it Notes** feature funny cartoons and clever sayings so that students will be sure to pay attention to your instructions or remember your words of praise. The titles include 'Music Prescription', 'I Caught You', 'Speeding Ticket', 'Tally Sheet', and 'Remember'.

**Winning Hands** is a collection of games for beginning to advanced level students. 'Wacky Words starring Wanda' is for beginning to early intermediate level students, and 'Wacky Words starring Walter' is for early intermediate to advanced students. The object for both card games is that one player from each team races to identify the word spelled on the card. These cards are also great for listening and sight-reading activities.

**Crazy Eighths** is for early intermediate to advanced students and the object is for players to take turns creating bars in a specified time signature. Crazy Eighth cards are used to add or subtract eight beats. Players perform the rhythms in silly ways that keeps the fun going. The first to run out of cards wins.

**Note Nabber** is for elementary to late intermediate students and the object is for players to use strategy to acquire one each of the seven notes: A,B,C,D,E,F,G. 'Nabber', 'Wild' and 'Composer' cards are used to sabotage the other players hands and keep the game interesting.

**Primary Pounce** is for early intermediate to advanced students and the object is for players to win cards by pouncing on a primary triad or key signature card that belongs to the key. The first to acquire all the aces in the deck or have the most cards at the end of a game with a pre-determined time limit wins.

**Scale Scramble** is for beginning to advanced students and the object is for players to trade cards to acquire all seven degrees of a major, minor or modal scale. A player with the Piranha card at the end of the game receives no score.

#### FROM THE RESOURCE CORPORATION PTY LTD

[www.trc.com.au](http://www.trc.com.au)

##### Koenig & Meyer Model 21437 Speaker Stand

An innovative, patented expanding post on the top of the stand automatically expands to hold speakers firmly and stably. As the speaker box is lowered onto the stand, the weight of the box pushes down on a button that expands sections of the top of the stand to automatically take up the slack between the stand tube and the speaker hat. The result—a professional looking, stable, firm fit that keeps the speaker correctly upright ... no leaning! As soon as weight starts to be lifted, the expanded sleeves start to automatically retract allowing easy removal of the box. This stand is suitable for speakers with a speaker hat to accommodate tube diameters from 33 to 38mm.

#### FROM AUDIO PRODUCTS GROUP

[www.audioproducts.com.au](http://www.audioproducts.com.au)

##### Peavey Vypyr 'Digital' Guitar Amplifier Line-Up

Recreate the sound and feel of 24 different amplifiers together with classic analog and pristine-sounding digital effects. Heralded as 'the most technologically-advanced and affordable guitar modelling amplifiers available', The VYPYR line-up comprises three models; the Vypyr 15 (15 watt), Vypyr 30 (30 watt), and the Vypyr 75 (75 watt) amplifiers. Through Peavey's patented digital technology, it is now possible to recreate the signature sounds of not only many of Peavey's legendary amplifiers but also of the myriad of classic British and American designs of the past 50 years. A palette of 24 amplifier models (including both clean and distorted sounds) is available alongside eleven analog-style 'stompbox' effects placed in front of the preamp of your choice.

##### AKG's C214 Recording Microphone

AKG C414 now has a new stable mate, the new C214 offering many of the same attributes at a more affordable cost. The C214 is the culmination of feedback from recording studios, broadcast stations and live sound engineers and is designed as a more affordable alternative to the leading edge C414 family. Easily recognizable by the similar double mesh, all metal grille, together with the same one inch diaphragm as the C414, the 'characteristic sound' and essence of the C414 has also been captured in this newest model. The C214 has road tough construction quality with a scratch and dent resistant metal grille and gold plated 3-pin XLR output connection. It comes complete with spider type shock mount, windscreen and metal carry case.

##### AKG K702 Dynamic Headphones

Designed for recording and broadcast applications, the new K702 features improved sonic integrity, light weight design and sleek stage blue finish to withstand the wear and tear of professional studio life. Technological improvements include a revolutionary flat-wire voice-coil technology for improved fidelity and transient response, together with personalised fitting ear pads.

#### FROM THE ROLAND CORPORATION

[www.rolandcorp.com.au](http://www.rolandcorp.com.au)

##### V-Piano: Virtual Modeling Piano

In recent decades, no family of Roland instruments has won more respect and acclaim than the revolutionary V series: V-Accordion, V-Bass, V-Drums, V-Guitar, and V-Synth. Roland proudly announces the next chapter in the V legacy, the V-Piano. Throw away all preconceived notions of what a digital piano was and is. This instrument changes everything.

##### FR-1 / FR-1B: V-Accordions

As the digital-modeling concept has grown in popularity around the world, so too has the need for more V-Accordion models. Embodying the digital advantages of the flagship, the new ultra light FR-1 Piano type and FR-1 Button type put V-Accordion power in the hands of students, beginners and keyboard players!



# HAS AN IWB HIT YOU YET?

KEN OWEN has been struck by the potential of interactive whiteboards for music teaching and learning.



*Soundhouse teacher Steve Sakowsky works through a musical issue on one of the StarBoards used at Soundhouse, Debney Park Secondary College, Victoria.*

No, it's not the Intercontinental Wobble Board, but the interactive whiteboard (demanding the initialism IWB) that is making an impact in schools in large numbers. But typically, the music room is often the last place where school administrators think of lobbying such a resource. However, this certainly was not the case when I visited a large primary school in Melton, Victoria recently. The first IWB in the school made an instant hit in the music room! The principal had a deliberate strategy in mind.

First, he was keen to encourage the efforts of an enthusiastic and innovative teacher. Second, he was demonstrating his belief in the importance of music in the school. However the most important reason was that he had a clear understanding that IWBs are the perfect tool to encourage students to become actively engaged in music. With IWBs, students can:

- touch it
- move it
- hear it
- interact with it.

Can you do all of this with any other medium?

## Become proficient

Before IWBs can be fully utilised in the classroom, teachers need to be proficient users. There is some learning involved, and the potential for student engagement makes the journey an enjoyable one. Here is the typical learning sequence that teachers encounter when integrating IWBs into classroom practice:

**1. Understand that the IWB is a USB device**—a 'slave' to the computer. At its simplest, your finger or pen on the board acts as a computer mouse. If you can use a computer profitably in class, then an IWB will quickly be of value.

**2. Learn the software that comes with your board**—Hitachi StarBoard, SMART Board, SMART Notebook, Promethian Activstudio, TeamBoard, Easiteach etc. The software allows you to annotate, draw, import media, record, save and send images and programs.

**3. Use software programs that are written for IWBs** or that lend themselves to interaction. Most music software programs fall into the second category, and can be manipulated on an IWB to great effect. Sibelius and Finale, for example, are perfect to use with IWBs as notes can be added, removed and moved around, and students can see and hear the results instantly. Problem-solving with a group of students around the board can be fabulous.

Annotations can be made, saved and sent on. Groovy Music is fantastic on an IWB, with the graphic icons and notation able to be easily manipulated for all to see and hear. Groovy Music even allows the image to be dropped down so that very young students can reach the board!

**4. Encourage interactivity** through the use of a digital curriculum and 'Learning Objects' such as those created by The Learning Federation. Online content and curriculum resources are plentiful and can provide rich resources for lessons. Do a Google search for sites that have some great downloadable materials for IWBs. Utilise additional devices such as webcams, tablets, keyboards and microphones to allow more student input and creativity.

## What can you do with an IWB in class?

Here are a few of my favourite things:

- **Have students work in a groups of four or five**, creating music for a particular purpose. This might be a film clip or a PowerPoint presentation. Using software such as Jam Trax, Acid Music or Sonar, students can recreate music with 'drop and drag' and 'cut and paste' techniques and of course live recording. Having students 'work against the clock' can stimulate both highly active discussion and an urgency in decision making, as well as considerable fun.

- **Create short video files of your work** on the board using the IWB software. These movie clips can be used in so many ways. Email to students or teaching colleagues, save as





Steve and student get creative on an interactive whiteboard, using Groovy Music software.

records or leave as instructions or exemplars for students or relieving teachers. This can easily be done using the Record function in the IWB software. It records everything you say and touch as well as all of the computer functionality.

**• Cut, copy or drag images as well as hyperlinks from the web.**

Have students complete assigned work or solve problems on the board to maximize collaborative learning and productivity.

**• Annotate your music lessons.** Save at the lesson's end, converting your screen captures to PDFs or PowerPoint slide shows; email to absent students or set as homework; brainstorm and 'mind map', then save and send to all.

So, when the opportunity presents itself, signal for an incoming IWB for your music classroom! **MinA**

**Ken Owen**  
 Ken Owen is managing director of Soundhouse.com.au, responsible for providing short courses for teachers and students in music, media and learning technologies. Information about forthcoming Soundhouse courses appears in the 'PD Diary' section of each Music in Action.

**E-CONTACTS**  
**Ken Owen:** <ko@soundhouse.com.au>  
**Soundhouse:** <enquiries@soundhouse.com.au>  
**Soundhouse website:** www.soundhouse.com.au  
**Groovy Music:** www.sibelius.com/products/groovy/  
**The Learning Federation:**  
 http://www.tinyurl.com.au/x.php?1muj  
**Interactive Whiteboard Resources:** www.iwb.org.uk

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**Song list:**

- |                                |                  |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| I Am A Rock                    | High Hopes       |
| Steer                          | My Happiness     |
| Bananas In Pyjamas             | Oom Pah Pah      |
| I Got You                      | Riding In My Car |
| Going To The Zoo               | Shape I'm In     |
| Music! Music! Music!           |                  |
| Red Rubber Ball                |                  |
| Wimoweh                        |                  |
| Ducks Don't Need Satellites    |                  |
| He Ain't Heavy He's My Brother |                  |

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Organisations are invited to list PD events with Music in Action. Events are listed first in alpha order by organisation, then by date. Listings are compiled from information provided and may be incomplete or have changed. Please check with the organisations direct. Our disclaimer on page 4 applies.

**9th Australasian Piano Pedagogy Conference**

• 13–17 July 2009

The King's School, North Parramatta, NSW

Details: [www.appca.com.au](http://www.appca.com.au)  
T: 02 9785 2547

**Australian Instrumental Convention**

• 10–13 April 10-13

Venue: Grafton, NSW

Details: [www.melissaphilp.com/gpage.html](http://www.melissaphilp.com/gpage.html)  
T: 02 6643 1888

**ASME**

• 10–14 July 2009

17th National Conference—Musical Understanding

Venue: Hotel Grand Chancellor, Launceston, Tasmania

Details: [www.cdesign.com.au/asme2009](http://www.cdesign.com.au/asme2009)

**ANZARME**

(Australian and New Zealand Association for Research in Music Education)

• 4–6 July 2009

13th Annual Conference

Venue: Akaroa, Banks Peninsula, New Zealand

Details: [www.merc.canterbury.ac.nz](http://www.merc.canterbury.ac.nz) and [www.deakin.edu.au/arts-ed/education/music-ed/anzarme](http://www.deakin.edu.au/arts-ed/education/music-ed/anzarme)

**AUSTA**

• 9–14 July 2009

AUSTA National Conference 2009

Venue: Esplanade Hotel, Fremantle (Perth), WA

Details: [www.austaconf2009.net.au](http://www.austaconf2009.net.au)

**MARYBOROUGH MUSIC CONFERENCE**

• 11–15 July 2009

Brolga Theatre & Convention Centre, Maryborough, Queensland

Details: [www.maryboroughmusicconference.com.au](http://www.maryboroughmusicconference.com.au)

**ORFF**

VIC (VOSA)

• 28 February 2009

Back To School Day

Melbourne Grammar School, Caulfield

Details: [www.vosa.org](http://www.vosa.org)  
T: 03 9535 7020

• 14–18 April 2009

Levels 1 & 2 courses

Glen Waverley Anglican Church Hall

800 Waverley Road, Glen Waverley, VIC

Details: [www.vosa.org](http://www.vosa.org)  
T: 03 9535 7020

• 29–30 May 2009

VOSA Living Music and Dance Conference

Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre

Details: [www.vosa.org](http://www.vosa.org)  
T: 03 9535 7020

• 22–23 August 2009

Early Childhood Conference of Performing Arts

Genazzano FCJ College, Kew

Details: [www.vosa.org](http://www.vosa.org)  
T: 03 9535 7020

WA (WAOSA)

• 21–25 April 2009 (every day)

The Joy of Jammin' with Susie Davies-Splitter

Christ Church Grammar School, Claremont

Details: [www.ancos.org.au](http://www.ancos.org.au)

• 15 May 2009

As-May Choral Day

Details: [www.ancos.org.au](http://www.ancos.org.au)

• 29–30 May 2009

WAOSA Creative Music and Movement Conference

All Saints' College Junior School, Bull Creek

Details: [www.ancos.org.au](http://www.ancos.org.au)

**SOUNDS GREAT 2009 Conference (Victoria)**

• 17–19 July 2009

Co-presented by a consortium of Victorian music education associations.

Details: [www.soundsgreat.org.au](http://www.soundsgreat.org.au)

**SOUNDHOUSE**

VIC

Alfred Brash SoundHouse Melbourne

• 16 March 2009

Finale Level 1

• 20 March 2009

Sonar Home Studio—Level 1

• 23 March 2009

Sibelius Level 1

• 30 March 2009

Applications for ACID in the Classroom—Level 1

• 7–8 May 2009

SoundHouse Certificate in MIDI and Audio Production with Sonar Home Studio

• 18 May 2009

Sibelius Level 2a—Worksheets & Exams

Details: [www.theartscentre.com.au/soundhouse](http://www.theartscentre.com.au/soundhouse)

T: 03 9281 8194

SoundHouse @ Debney Park Secondary College

Flemington, Victoria

• 26 February 2009

Finale Notepad

• 20 February 2009

Digital Movie Making for Home and Classroom

• 23 February 2009

Digital Storytelling

• 26 February 2009

Finale Notepad

• 3 March 2009

Second Life

• 5 March 2009

Podcasting and Vodcasting

• 26 March 2009

Adobe In-Design

• 7 April 2009

Digital Movie Making for Home and Classroom

• 30 April 2009

Groovy Music

Details: [www.soundhouse.com.au](http://www.soundhouse.com.au)  
T: 03 9376 6833

**ADVANCE NOTICES 2010**

**ANCOS National Conference**

• 3–8 January 2010

Creative Music & Movement—Creating New Blends

Immanuel College, Adelaide  
Paper & presentation proposals due 12 January 2009

Details: [www.osasa.net/welcome.htm](http://www.osasa.net/welcome.htm)  
T: 03 9593 7020



# THE MUSIC MAKERS PROGRAM



Music Makers activities are designed to provide 'cradle to grave' opportunities for all Australians to participate in active music making, as well as supporting existing music activities in our schools and communities. The following music companies are proud supporters of *Music in Action* and the other Music Makers Program activities.

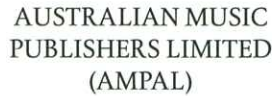
For more information regarding Music Makers visit [www.musicmakers.org.au](http://www.musicmakers.org.au)



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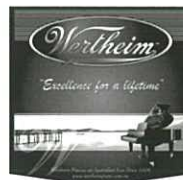
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