

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF STATE SCHOOL ORGANISATIONS (ACSSO)

The national voice of parents of children in Australia's public schools and their school communities

ENSEMBLE

MUSIC EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA'S SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Volume 1 Number 1, 16 August 2007

Having trouble reading this email? Read it on the web at <http://www.ensemble.org.au/newsI070816.pdf>

Do you know of an event or resource that schools should know about? Email us at info@ensemble.org.au

=====

EDITORIAL

Music and the Moral Character of the Soul...

"Music has the power of producing a certain effect on the moral character of the soul, and if it has the power to do this, it is clear that the young must be directed to music and must be educated in it." - Aristotle, Politics

"We are morally and emotionally enfeebled if we live our lives without artistic nourishment. Our sense of life is diminished. In music we sense most directly the inner flow which sustains the psyche, or the soul" - Sir Michael Tippett CBE

Welcome to this first edition of **Ensemble** - a newsletter about and in support of music education in Australia's school communities.

This initiative of the **Australian Council of State School Organisations** (ACSSO) reflects our long-standing commitment to the importance of music as an integral part of young people's development, and of all students having access to an appropriate range of musical experiences from their early years.

We are in full agreement with the **Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry** whose February 2007 publication *"Skills for a Nation: A Blueprint for Improving Education and Training 2002-2017"* recognised that "the opportunity for all students to learn a musical instrument in primary school" is a key issue in education, along with the importance of learning a second language.

A national survey of parents and families conducted by the **Australian Music Association** in 2001 reported that:

- 87% of respondents agreed that "music education should be mandated by the States to ensure every child has an opportunity to study music in school", and 91% considered it should be a specific element of the formal curriculum
- 86% agreed that music education helps a child's overall intellectual development. The majority of these respondents felt music education often corresponds with better grades and that it helps students to better in other subjects.
- 86% agreed that music education assists in the development of self-discipline and personal resilience:
- 95% noted its contribution to a sense of achievement, confidence and creativity.
- 95% felt it contributes (e.g. via ensembles, school bands) to building effective teamwork and interactive skills.
- 85% felt strongly that "music provides an important part of life and 91% saw it as an essential part of a well-rounded education

We firmly believe that participation in music-making is a uniquely important formative experience for all young people, building skills and abilities that provide resources for life.

Music is universal to all societies and cultures - and provides living bridges linking them across the world. As Josef Haydn noted, music is in a sense a universal language, bringing people together even in situations when others fail.

We aim to develop this newsletter to inform school communities and others interested in music education, about events, activities and opportunities around the country. It will also be a means of building two-way communication, inviting input, contributions and suggestions - including spotlight stories of effective music programs in action in schools around the country.

The development of this newsletter over coming months will also be backed by our website at <http://www.ensemble.org.au> - as a linkage-point for music in Australian schools. We look forward to your input.

=====

RESEARCH

National Review of School Music Education

"All art aspires towards the condition of music."
- **Walter Pater**

"The anthropologist Levi-Strauss is scarcely alone among scientists in claiming that if we can explain music, we may find the key for all human thought - or in implying that failure to take music seriously weakens any account of the human condition."
- **Howard Gardner 'Frames of Mind'**

"Isn't it ironic, that music is all around us; pop music, classical, students with earphones walking in the street, yet we touch music only sporadically in our schools? What does it say in a microcosm about the capacity of our school systems to incorporate the defining cultural activities of our society?"
- **ACSSO representative comment to National Review of School Music.**

In February 2004, then Federal Education Minister Dr Brendan Nelson invited submissions from interested parties to assist in a **National Review of School Music Education**.

The purpose of the Review was described as "to investigate the current quality and status of music education in Australian primary and secondary schools, and to determine how both can be increased for the benefit of all students".

A team led by **Murdoch University** undertook the Review on behalf of the Australian Government to identify:

- The current quality of teaching and learning of music in Australian schools;
- Factors that affect the quality and status of teaching of music in Australian schools;
- Examples of best practice of teaching and learning of music both in Australian schools and schools overseas; and
- Key recommendations, principles and priorities for enhancing school music education.

This study included a literature review, call for submissions, site visits, national survey and curriculum mapping to determine the current quality and status of music education in Australian schools. It provides an examination of the challenges facing schools in providing music education and highlights opportunities for strengthening music education in schools.

By the closing date of 30 April, the Review Team from Murdoch University had received some 6,000 responses, with a significant number from parents, grandparents and others from school communities, indicating a lively personal interest in the issues from a family and community perspective.

For more information and to download the document visit:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school_education/publications_resources/profiles/school_music_education.htm.

To read ACSSO's Submission to the Review, "Improving the Condition of School Music Education Across Australia", go to http://www.acsso.org.au/sub_nrsme.doc

Report of the National Music Workshop 2006

Upping the tempo on music education

Media Release Hon Julie Bishop MP 6 March 2007

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, today released the report from the **National Music Workshop**, which promotes the benefits of music education in Australian schools.

"Music can provide powerful learning experiences for all children. It can help develop young people's creativity and self-expression and encourage them to engage more productively with school and develop a love of learning," Minister Bishop said.

"Over 170 key stakeholders, including music teachers, school principals, teacher educators, representatives of State and non-government education authorities, music organisations, and parent bodies from across Australia, met in Melbourne, last August to consider the findings of the **National Review of School Music Education** (NRSME).

"The outcomes of this important workshop link directly to the Review's recommendations. These include lifting the status of music education, the development of a national music education resource, teacher training and professional development.

"In response to the report findings I am establishing a music advisory group, allocating funding to investigate the development of a music education portal and holding a national school music event," Minister Bishop said.

The report has been provided to State and Territory Ministers for action, as improving music education must be a collaborative national effort.

In addition to sponsoring the workshop, the Australian Government's initial response to the NRSME has included the 2007 **National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education** and \$500,000 for curriculum resource development.

Funding has also been approved under the **Investing in Our Schools Programme** for over 400 projects, which will provide music facilities and equipment in government and non-government schools.

The National Music Workshop report is available at:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school_education/publications_resources/profiles/national_music_workshop.htm

=====

PRACTICAL RESOURCES

Music. Count Us In

Hon Julie Bishop MP 7 June 2007

I am delighted to be here today with Senator Mitch Fifield and Senator Judith Troeth to launch this national initiative, **Music. Count Us In**.

It has been said that, "Music is what feelings sound like." How true that is. Music has the ability to transcend all differences all barriers; cultural, social, language.

We all have the capacity, believe it or not, to make, but more importantly enjoy, music. Whether we're young or old; whether we're a celebrated soprano or we like to sing in the shower; whether we love Puccini or Powderfinger, music has the capacity to speak to all of us.

The active engagement in music through singing, moving, playing instruments and listening contributes to a healthy life, with enduring benefits.

For children, music can be a means of self-expression. Music can help students to discover and improve their capacity for creativity. Music can build and strengthen young people's identity and self-esteem and reach those at risk of thinking that mainstream education has nothing to offer them.

Music education uniquely contributes to cognitive growth, as music making involves and integrates an enormous range of abilities. We all agree that a well-rounded education should include access to music education.

School music programmes can encourage a love of music in our students, and music teachers are in a unique position to give students this wonderful gift. A gift that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

Music education supports the development of the student - their imagination, self-expression and their ability to share in the creativity of others.

Music. Count Us In is a national initiative to promote the value of music education in Australian schools.

I am pleased that the Australian Government is providing \$300,000 towards this initiative.

The centrepiece of this initiative is a beautiful song, written by John Foreman, to be promoted, learned and simultaneously performed by children in primary and high schools all over Australia. The song is very aptly called "**Life is a Song**".

At 11 am on Thursday 30 August this year, we are going to hear thousands of students in every state and territory singing **Life is a Song**, all singing at the same time. You will hear young people performing the song in schools, and out in the community, all celebrating music.

The initiative will serve to lift the status of music education in Australian schools.

Between now and 30 August, schools will be able to access the song and arrangements on the website and have the materials sent to them so that they can start practising.

Visit the **Music. Count us in** website: <http://www.musiccountusin.org.au>.

=====

AWARDS & PRIZES

2007 National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education

Media Release Hon Julie Bishop MP 7 July 2007

Some of Australia's outstanding teachers and school leaders were recognised today for their passion and commitment to school music education at the **Australian Society for Music Education** (ASME) National Conference in Perth.

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, congratulated the 13 winners of the **2007 National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education** and presented Highly Commended Awards to the top teacher and school leader. Each award recipient will receive a \$5,000 grant to use for their professional learning.

"I congratulate these outstanding teachers and school leaders who have made a positive difference to the lives of their students and school communities through their devotion to quality music education," Minister Bishop said.

Ms Julie Mayhew of Ainslie Primary, Canberra received the Highly Commended Teacher Award for her ability to recognise and inspire students who excel in music and her work with special needs students.

Dr Geoffrey Shaw of All Saints' College, Perth received the Highly Commended School Leader Award for his proactive approach to strengthening music education at the school.

"The Australian Government is committed to music education in our schools and I congratulate the teachers and school leaders nominated for these awards," Minister Bishop said.

Information on the 2007 National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education and recipients can be found at <http://www.musicawards.asme.edu.au>.

ABC Flame Awards

The **ABC Flame Awards** are our nationwide competition to showcase the most outstanding music programs in Australian Schools.

For 2007 the Awards were open to all Australian Primary schools - government and independent, as the judges look for the most inspiring primary school music program. Awards are provided to primary schools in each State and Territory and to an overall National Winner.

The Awards are run by **ABC Classic FM** in association with **Music. Play for Life**, the Music Council of Australia's national campaign to encourage more music making in schools and communities. The National Winner of the Flame Awards wins prizes worth \$6000 and plays host to a Classic FM concert.

All State / Territory winners receive a \$1000 music voucher, CDs and a package of magazine subscriptions, including 'Limelight' magazine.

Visit <http://www.abc.net.au/classic/flame/> for details of 2006 award winners and information on the 2007 Awards (entries are now closed).

=====

FUNDING

Key Funding for Australian Children's Music Foundation

Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Education, Science & Training - 26 July 2007

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, has announced funding of \$600,000 to expand the important work of the **Australian Children's Music Foundation** (ACMF) and increase young people's engagement with music.

"The Australian Government is supporting this innovative foundation to run more programmes over the next two years, that improve the equity of access, and participation in music education, particularly by students from disadvantaged backgrounds," Minister Bishop said.

"The educational success of our children depends on creating a society that is literate, imaginative and creative. Music education is an integral part of developing these key skills."

The new funding will support the **ACMF National Songwriting Competition**, and an upgrade of their website.

It will also support the delivery of their Disadvantaged Youth Programme in Juvenile Justice Centres, Indigenous and Disadvantaged Schools Programmes, and Indigenous and Isolated Regions Programmes.

"I congratulate ACMF for their outstanding work in providing disadvantaged young people with the opportunity to experience the joys and benefits associated with music and in developing their talents," Minister Bishop said.

The new funding is part of the Australian Government's response to the **National Review of School Music Education** in 2005.

Other initiatives have included funding of \$500,000 for the development of music curriculum resources and a national music event for schools **Music. Count Us In**.

For more information about ACMF go to: <http://www.acmf.com.au>

Million dollar expansion of music in schools

Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Education, Science & Training - 25 July 2007

Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, today announced a \$1 million grant to **Musica Viva Australia** to enhance music education in regional, rural and remote schools across the country.

"Musica Viva Australia is the world's largest entrepreneur of fine ensemble music.

Through their award winning schools programme, they annually present more than 2,400 performances and educational events to 400,000 students and their teachers," Minister Bishop said.

"Now, with the support of the Australian Government, this outstanding organisation will extend its internationally-acclaimed music education packages in regional schools, and develop and expand its delivery of professional development courses for teachers."

Over 2008-2010 the \$1 million in funding will support:

- the delivery of 350 music education packages to at least 260 regional schools nationally;
- the delivery of professional development courses centred around voice, percussion and improvisation to generalist and specialist music teachers in regional schools; and
- the development of two new courses.

"These exciting programmes will offer a variety of musical experiences to support, nurture and stimulate learning and creativity in students and their teachers," Minister Bishop said.

"This new funding is part of the Government's response to the National Review of School Music Education in 2005, and is a further demonstration of our commitment to boost participation in music education."

Other initiatives in response to the Review include funding of \$500,000 for the development of music curriculum resources and a National music event for schools, **Music. Count Us In.**

For more information about Musica Viva Australia go to: <http://www.musicaviva.com.au>

More South Australian School Children to Gain Music Skills

Hon Jane Lomax-Smith News Release 29 June

New measures to enable thousands more South Australian school children to access improved music and aquatics programs will be introduced over the next five years and within the existing annual funding of \$10.7 million.

The measures, which broaden access by school students to both programs, will be implemented in partnership with key education interest groups and local school communities.

The Education Department initiatives to improve the programs for students across South Australia follow wide-ranging community reviews of the State's aquatics and instrumental music programs.

South Australia's Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith said today: "I have ruled out any reduction in total education dollars currently directed to both the SA school instrumental music program and Australia's only government-funded school aquatics program."

"The department will now harness existing education dollars to deliver more effective aquatics and music programs to benefit more children.

"The reviews were designed to create better opportunities for children and ensure these long-standing programs are effective, fair and are efficiently delivered.

"Our intention is to work with schools, teachers and instructors to enable many thousands more young people to develop their creativity, skills and abilities by learning aquatics, water safety skills and music.'

EVENTS

Fete De La Musique Finally Came to Australia

MusicFest, the first Australian edition of **Fête de la Musique** happened in Sydney and spread to other Australian cities and towns over time to eventually include the whole nation.

On 21 & 23 June 2007, several parts of Sydney came alive as never before when institutions and people came together for the first time to present two days and nights filled with special music performances.

In the spirit of Fête de la Musique all performances were live and free.

Performances happened in a variety of indoor and outdoor locations, not traditionally dedicated to music including museums, prisons, hospitals, corporate foyers, churches, streets, public transport (trains, ferries, buses), schools, cafes, bars, restaurants.

There was a huge range of sounds and styles in a celebration of live music aimed at enhancing the scope and diversity of musical practice in all genres: classical to electronic, jazz and folk, traditional, rock, rap and pop music.

MusicFest is an appeal to spontaneous and free participation open to individuals or ensembles (instrumental or singing) and musical institutions to give both amateurs and professionals the opportunity to express their musical talent.

On top of this wealth of live music, MusicFest offers the chance for children and adults alike to get involved in all kinds of music workshops ranging from instrument- making sessions to exposure to beautiful instruments like the African kora or Brazilian berimbau.

MusicFest relies on the involvement of all sections of the community and invites everyone to participate.

MusicFest Inc, the coordination team and its partners undertake to promote musical practice and live music within the Fête de la Musique framework without a profit-making goal. Read about the Fête de la Musique Charter.

MusicFest's motto speaks for itself: Make your own music, have your own stage!

Visit <http://www.musicfest.org.au/> for details, pictures and audio of MusicFest 2007.

MusicFest 2007 Celebrations: walk on by - a little slower

Sydney Morning Herald 19 June 2007

There's nothing like a white baby grand piano in the middle of Oxford Street to stop 'em in their tracks.

As 120 nations celebrated **Musicfest** yesterday with random acts of musicality, Slide bar pushed its live venue onto the pavement.

Raising the busking stakes by adding a sound technician and a pair of speakers loud enough to attract listeners from both ends of Oxford Street, the mini-concert was one of many all over Sydney and throughout the world.

Begun in France 26 years ago, **Fete de la Musique** marks the solstice, and this one is the second annual Aussie incarnation.

The idea is to coax amateur and professional musicians into public spaces. Yesterday everywhere from French patisseries to Centennial Park had live performances.

As the singer-songwriter Renny Field played outside Slide, the onlookers gathered.

Even when rain drops threatened a downpour, Field played on. "It's been fabulous," said Faye, a sound techie. "If you want a crowd, a baby grand will do it for you every time."

=====

To unsubscribe from Ensemble click here: [mailto:webmaster@acssso.org.au?subject=unsubscribe Ensemble](mailto:webmaster@acssso.org.au?subject=unsubscribe%20Ensemble)