

# ENSEMBLE

## MUSIC EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA'S SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

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Do you know of an event or resource that schools should know about? Email us at [info@ensemble.org.au](mailto:info@ensemble.org.au)

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### QUOTE - UNQUOTE

#### The Importance of Music in Education

*"An education in the arts can help all of us reach our individual dreams. Research shows that music education not only lifts our children's hearts, but also dramatically increases their abstract reasoning, spatial skills, and their scores on math and verbal exams.*

*At a time when too many arts education programs are the first to be cut and the last to be added, all of us must send a clear message. When it comes to igniting our children's ability to learn and imagine, the arts must be just as central to our children's education as the three Rs"*

- Hillary Rodham Clinton: US Senator and Presidential Candidate

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### MUSIC. COUNT US IN

#### A Major Annual Community Festival Event Takes Shape

On Thursday 30 August more than 200,000 students from nearly 900 schools - enthusiastically supported by staff, parents and community - joined in the largest single musical event in our history.

From coast to coast and places in between, the hills and valleys of Australia were alive with the sound of "Music. Count Us In 2007", the biggest musical ensemble event ever, all singing together the one signature tune, "Life is a Song".

Media coverage from every participating centre and school community was overwhelmingly positive.

This date and this event have clearly been embraced by school communities across the country as the focus to express their commitment to the importance of music education and of participative music making as an important activity in the development and lives of every young person and every school community.

Like Harmony Day and others, this is a focal event that brings everyone together in positive ways that reinforce and develop our shared sense of community and the importance of music in the lives of all young people - of everyone - in each community.

Music. Count Us In - a major annual community festival in the making. Roll on an even bigger national ensemble in 2008 - and each year beyond...

For more information, go to <http://www.musiccountusin.org.au/content/view/13/6>

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## FLAME AWARDS 2007

### Recognising Primary School Music Programs that are Inclusive, Innovative & Impactful

#### National Winner

The 2007 national winner of the Flame Awards is **New Farm State School**, Fortitude Valley, Queensland.

"This is a school that understands that studying music helps literacy and numeracy and other academic achievement," said judge Richard Letts.

"It is a culturally inclusive program, it involves staff in performance, has a commitment to professional development in music. And it has developed creative ways of financially supporting the program - such as through inexpensive instrument hire schemes - so students from disadvantaged backgrounds can participate.

Music infuses just about every aspect of life in this 285-student school. 100% of students take part in classroom music: 100% of students in years 2-7 take part in choirs, including a boys' vocal ensemble that was set up at the boys' own request!

Almost half the year 5-7 students participate in the instrumental program. There is a repertoire of songs in languages other than English and links with Chinese community events to help engage students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Cross-curriculum use of music is significant. Songs about the environment are used to enhance learning about science and nature. An initiative to teach each Year 1 student to play glockenspiel using a number system has reinforced classroom number work.

Student academic achievement is also improving because of music. In the nine years since the music program was developed, our numeracy results for Year 2 students sit well above the State average since 2000.

New Farm School receives \$3,000 for music equipment and an additional \$3,000 from philanthropist Dr Gordon Noah. The school will also host a major concert staged by ABC Classic FM and broadcast live around the country.

Visit the school Website at: <http://www.newfarmss.eq.edu.au/>

Ensemble congratulates everyone at New Farm State School and their community - and each of the State winners below. We invite each of these schools to email and tell us more about their program - with photos - so we can feature your story in future issues of this Newsletter and on our Website.

South Australia: Dominican School, Semaphore

Western Australia: Dalyellup Primary School, Dalyellup

NSW: Deepwater Public School, Deepwater

Northern Territory: Neutral Junction School, via Alice Springs

Tasmania: Bicheno Primary School, Bicheno

Victoria: Glenallen School, Glen Waverley

ACT: Turner School, Turner

Queensland: New Farm State School, Fortitude Valley

For more information check <http://www.abc.net.au/classic/flame/>

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## THE SONG ROOM

### Working in Harmony for a Better Tomorrow...

The Song Room is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to providing music and arts programs in Australian schools and communities. So far, The Song Room has provided the gift of music and performing arts to over 70,000 students, and continues to develop innovative new programs to suit a wide range of communities.

Recent Australian research showed that as few as 23% of government school students have access to music at school. Our vision is that all Australian children and communities will have access to music and performing arts programs; a vision that is supported by a recent national survey that found 87% of respondents believe that every Australian child should have the opportunity to study music in school.

Worldwide research has indicated that children benefit greatly from having music and arts as part of their learning experience. Wide-ranging positive educational and personal outcomes can be achieved with long-lasting outcomes including improved self-esteem, teamwork, academic results and communication skills, thereby greatly improving their future opportunities and contributions.

Participation in music and arts has been shown to prevent some young people from going down the precipice of drugs, crime, depression and unemployment.

Inspired by the identification of this significant gap in opportunities for many young Australians, The Song Room was founded by opera singer Tania de Jong in 1999, to provide access to creative learning experiences for less advantaged children and their communities.

Our team of talented professionals focus on children and communities disadvantaged through economic and geographic circumstances, disability and recent immigration.

The Song Room provides a range of free programs to schools and communities that otherwise would not have access to such opportunities. Programs include high quality performances in major venues, long-term workshop programs in schools and communities, holiday workshop programs, professional development, instrument donation, research and development as well as collaborative projects with like-minded organisations.

Find out more at <http://www.songroom.org.au/home.htm>

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## WEB RESOURCES

### History of Music Education in Australia

*compiled and managed by Prof Robin Stevens of Deakin University*

"(From the early Colonial period) music was perceived as a desirable artistic pursuit and social accomplishment for the children of upper and middle class families. Visiting professional musicians and private conservatoria provided tuition in instrumental or vocal music for this clientele as well as for young people who exhibited particular musical talent and wished to undertake vocational training as performers.

"Private teaching studios and conservatoria set the scene for the establishment of university conservatoria: the Elder Conservatorium at the University of Adelaide under the first professor of music, Joshua Ives in 1885 (the first university conservatorium to be established in the Southern Hemisphere) and the Melbourne University Conservatorium under G.W.L. Marshall-Hall in 1895.

"The New South Wales State Conservatorium of Music was established in 1915 with Henri Verbrugghen as Director. In 1900, Marshall-Hall vacated the Ormond Chair of Music at the University of Melbourne and established the Albert Street Conservatorium as private institution (now the Melba Memorial Conservatorium of, Richmond)."

This site also has a direct link to the site History of Music Education in the US, etc. and can be accessed at: [http://education.deakin.edu.au/music\\_ed/history/](http://education.deakin.edu.au/music_ed/history/)

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## RESEARCH

### Facts and Insights of Benefits of Music Study

*"Every student in the nation should have an education in the arts."*

This is the opening statement of "*The Value and Quality of Arts Education: A Statement of Principles*," a document from the United States of America's ten most important educational organizations, including the American Association of School Administrators, the National Education Association, the National Parent Teacher Association, and the National School Boards Association.

The basic statement is unlikely to be challenged by anyone involved in education.

In the sometimes harsh reality of limited time and funding for instruction, however, the inclusion of the arts in every student's education can sometimes be relegated to a distant wish rather than an exciting reality.

It doesn't have to be that way! All that's needed is a clear message sent to all those who must make the hard choices involved in running a school or school system.

The basic message is that music programs in the schools help our kids and communities in real and substantial ways. You can use the following facts about the benefits of music education, based on a growing body of convincing research, to move decision-makers to make the right choices.

The benefits conveyed by music education can be grouped in four categories:

- Success in society
- Success in school and learning
- Success in developing intelligence
- Success in life

When presented with the many and manifest benefits of music education, officials at all levels should universally support a full, balanced, sequential course of music instruction taught by qualified teachers. And every student will have an education in the arts!

Read the complete paper at <http://www.menc.org/information/advocate/facts.html>

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### The Benefits Of Music Education To Children

*Edward Droscher*

Music is a very powerful subject - it has been used since the Greek times for healing, communication, relaxation and for enjoyment.

Skills such as working in teams, communication, self-esteem, creative thinking, calmer attitudes, imagination, discipline, study skills and invention are learnt and improved through the study of music and by focusing on the fact that young children are mostly highly receptive to pitch and rhythm - one of the main ways a child learns its language - that we can drive education in music to children to help them with benefits ranging success in society and in life.

*"We believe the skills the arts teach - creative thinking, problem-solving, risk-taking, teamwork and communications - are precisely the tools the workforce of tomorrow will need. If we don't encourage students to master these skills through quality arts instruction today, how can we ever expect them to succeed in their highly competitive business careers tomorrow?" - Richard Gurin, Chief Executive Officer, Binney and Smith*

Read this in full, and more, at <http://www.creativekidonline.com/>

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**QUOTE - UNQUOTE**

**Music and Life**

*"During the Gulf War, the few opportunities I had for relaxation I always listened to music and it always brought me great peace of mind. I have shared my love of music with people throughout this world, while listening to the drums and instruments of the Far East, Middle East, Africa, the Caribbean and Far North - and all of this started with the music appreciation course that I was taught in the third-grade elementary class in Princeton, New Jersey. What a tragedy it would be if we lived in a world where music was not taught to children."*

**- General H. Norman Schwarzkopf - US Army**

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