

# ENSEMBLE

## MUSIC EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA'S SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Volume 2 Number 1, 24 January 2008

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*ENSEMBLE* concluded our first year's operation in festive mood (<http://www.ensemble.org.au/news1071224.pdf>) and we now have great pleasure in welcoming our readers back with this first edition for 2008.

*This year we want to make ENSEMBLE more participative in its role as a newsletter for and by everyone with an interest in school music education and the ways in which music participation contributes to young people's learning, growth, well-being and positive personal development, engaging with families and communities.*

*We invite your suggestions, articles, information about events and opportunities, resources and activities... In particular, we want to hear about music initiatives in your school and its community – with photos. We will publish these in the Newsletter and the Website to show the myriad ways in which inspirational teachers, students, families and communities are working together to achieve amazing results that benefit all those students, families and their wider community.*

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### NEW MUSIC AWARDS PROGRAM

#### Music in Communities Awards Program 2008

##### Australia's new scheme to reward community music making

The search is on for the program - and people - that have been most successful in building music-making activities in their community.

##### Entries Close: 29 February 2008

A new Award scheme has been launched to find the Australian organisations and people doing their bit to get Australians making more music in our towns and cities.

The inaugural Music in Communities Awards, which offer a prize pool of \$20,000, were launched by 'Music. Play for Life', the Music Council of Australia's national music advocacy campaign.

"Community choirs, drum circles, youth groups, town bands, orchestras, ukelele ensembles, 'weekend warrior' rock programs – these new Awards look at who is spreading the music bug throughout Australia," said Dr Richard Letts, Executive Director of the Music Council of Australia and Chairman of the national judging panel for the inaugural Awards.

"Whatever the activity, we are looking especially for projects that have had a strong impact on the community's musical life."

"We want to reward them and promote their success to the rest of Australia so that more communities can be inspired to get more musically active."

The Choir of Hard Knocks is one prominent example of the positive impact of community music initiatives on individuals and groups. 'Music. Play for Life' has heard of many other music initiatives helping to change lives, for example:

- a city-based community choir which regularly travels to its rural 'sister town' to get local boys and men singing, to help address high rates of depression
- a small regional organisation set up by volunteers to incubate music projects which, over time, has become the cultural backbone of the entire region;
- a group of urban musicians working with remote indigenous schools to write and perform songs with kids, preserving language and providing employment for local elders as an additional consequence;
- a tiny rural community which, against the odds, creates a world-class music festival and brings many of its citizens back to active music-making through 'adult beginner' instrument ensembles;
- a group of young musicians working in juvenile detention centres to help divert first-offenders from a life of crime.

"While there are many great things happening in music at a community level, the fact remains that many Australians miss out on active music making. When you compare us to other Western nations such as the US and the UK, Australia actually has fewer active music makers per capita.

In fact we know there are an estimated 5 million 'lapsed' musicians – people who used to play an instrument but, for whatever reason, no longer play. Community music groups and choirs can provide a 'safe' way for people to re-engage with music."

The Music in Communities Awards are being run with the generous support of NAMM - the International Music Products Industry Association. The sponsorship marks the first time the US-based Association has given funding to a music advocacy program outside North America.

### **Entries close February 29th 2008.**

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

Info: Tina Broad, 'Music. Play for Life' on 0439 022 257

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## **YOUR SCHOOL STORY – The Flame Awards 2007**

### **New Farm State School: Queensland State and Overall National Winner**

Music infuses just about every aspect of life at 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 (set up at the boys' own request) and almost half the years 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.

The cross-curriculum use of music is significant. For example, 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 the classroom number work.

"For a small school, we generate a big sound," says music teacher, Carolyn Carey. And student academic achievement is 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."

"It is a culturally inclusive program, it involves the staff in performance and 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 that students from disadvantaged backgrounds can participate," says FLAME Award judge Dr Richard Letts.

"This is a school that understands that studying music helps literacy and numeracy and other academic achievement. We hope many other schools follow its lead and make the link."

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### **Glenallen School, Victorian State Winner**

This Glen Waverley area school was purpose-built to meet the needs of students whose physical disabilities include Cerebral Palsy, Rett Syndrome and Muscular Dystrophy. There is a wide range of intellectual ability across the school.

With a philosophy to provide a dynamic environment to maximise each student's learning, music is centre-stage at this special school. There are music and dance therapy sessions for each child and adapted music equipment and technology such as sound beams, banana keyboards (for children with limited movement), karaoke machines and percussion equipment allow for every child to experience the joy of making music while at the same time extending his or her learning.

Principal, Elizabeth Green, says the children's involvement in music has far-reaching impacts. For example, the commitment to music is such that the school choir regularly performs publicly in combined events with neighbouring schools: "It is often difficult for them to sing with such big smiles on their faces, as they are accepted into mainstream events."

School Website: <http://www.glenallen-sch.vic.edu.au/>

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### **Neutral Junction School, Northern Territory Winner**

In this tiny school, music is being used as a vehicle to preserve the local Kaytetye language as well as to improve the students' English literacy.

This one-teacher school is situated 170kms north of Alice Springs on the Neutral Junction Pastoral Station where non-indigenous people, including the school teacher, live. The school has 20 students aged between 4 and 12, all of whom are indigenous.

Having secured a language maintenance grant from the Institute for Aboriginal Development in 2001, a group of community women began making resources and teaching a one hour lesson in Kaytetye each week.

Singing quickly became a crucial part of the program. In 2004, the school ran a music workshop with philanthropic organisation, Music Outback, to write Kaytetye songs and teach music skills.

The music activities have had a major impact on children's literacy skills in English (through English song writing) and in Kaytetye for both community teachers and students. There has been increased student attendance levels, pride and confidence and the creation of meaningful employment in the community.

"We feel our school language and music program is having a positive impact on detrimental social issues in the community and building of individuals' confidence," says then Teaching Principal, Rosemary Kerrison, in her submission.

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### **Turner Primary School, ACT Winner**

There is a strong commitment to providing music education to every student at this integrated Mainstream/Special School, where 110 of the 430 students have a disability, or multiple disabilities.

In years 1-2 music is core curriculum and has been the focus of the Integrated Learning unit, where students study note representation, musicians, instrument making and the links music has with maths, science and technology.

There is a marimba band in years 3 and 4 – open to everyone – and school bands in years 5 and 6. There is a school percussion band, choirs and three bell choirs, involving students and staff members. There is a Special Education Music program which involves units such as music and movement, making music, music at play and music as therapy.

25% of students in the school also take advantage of the parent-paid tutor music program, in piano, violin or guitar.

“Through music, we have developed another language for sharing,” says Principal, Jan Day.

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### **Deepwater Public School, NSW State Winner**

Deepwater Public is the home base for the Small Schools Marimba Ensemble. The program, which involves 12 schools from four regions around the New England area of NSW, is an innovative solution which allows students from tiny isolated schools to participate in musical performance and access a quality music program that their school alone would simply not be able to provide.

Each school rallies its parent community to make percussion instruments such as Marimbas and new stringed/bowed inventions called ‘echocellos’. The construction of the instruments is an ideal way to engage parents in the program and the regular performances help retain the parents’ involvement through the years. The percussion aspect of the program appeals to boys who are equally involved as the girls.

While each school runs its own individual music program, it is the coming together which has such profound and positive impacts on the schools and students themselves, says Deepwater Principal, Danny Spillane:

“Important social networks have been set up between schools as a result of this program. These are incredibly important as some of the schools have as few as four students and the development of larger peer groups is a key issue. In over 25 years’ teaching, I have yet to see a more effective school program that develops school spirit, harmony and an abundance of self-esteem. This is particularly applicable to small schools.”

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### **Bicheno Primary, Tasmania State Winner**

“Our students went from a ‘music sucks’ attitude to each and every child performing at our Final Year Assembly in 2006 and recording a Christmas CD that raised more than \$1500,” says music teacher, Eliza Brown.

When she joined the school in 2006, Eliza saw the need to meet the challenge of minimal musical resources and a musically ‘unfriendly’ culture, with some drastic action. ‘I needed to engage the students in a way which didn’t use instruments, so we lived by the musical motto: the best instrument we have is our body and voice.’

Today, the lower primary students perform African chants, Latin style pieces and square dance. Children make instruments out of recycled household items – the Rubber Glove Hooters are favourites.

Bicheno has gone from a school without a choir to one where one third of the student population is involved and where there are equal number of girls and boys.

The local community has donated a marimba and other materials to make one at school. This year, the school has been donated a piano. Students have learnt and performed pieces in Auslan and Makaton sign language. Students are also beginning to write their own songs.

The program has had a major impact on the school culture: “Our students have become engaged and interested as they needed no prior musical background to excel in music,” says Eliza Brown.

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### **Dalyellup Primary School, Western Australian State Winner**

This WA regional school fosters a lifelong love of music among its students by integrating it across the whole school, via curriculum, resources and timetabling decisions.

In years 1 and 2, music spans the curriculum, including in an innovative literature-based program where students are guided in song-writing and recording activities based on characters they are reading about in a featured class book.

Things get more structured in Year 3 and 4 where all students learn keyboard and guitar, when the school makes good use of its volunteer network to ensure each child gets the best access to instruction and equipment.

In years 5-7 students participate in an innovative Circus program which combines traditional circus activities with musical activities involving mandolin, drums, keyboards, guitar and ukulele.

"Our school philosophy of access to quality instruments and tuition, opportunities to learn and play, whole school community support, music across the curriculum and promoting the joy of music sees a very musical and talented primary school," says Performing Arts Specialist, Brad Snelling.

Dalyellup Primary is a newly established school in the rapidly growing area of Dalyellup, located in the Capel Shire just south of Bunbury. The school was established as a partnership between the Department of Education and the project developer, Satterley Property Group. The school commenced operation in 2001, in the local Village Shopping Centre, and moved into it's current premises in April of 2004. The school currently has a student population of approximately 525, which continues to grow rapidly in line with the rapid expansion of the estate.

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## **Dominican School, South Australia State Winner**

This R-7, coeducational Catholic school says parents send their children here because of its commitment to music education – and it becomes a strong driver for parents closely scrutinising their subsequent high school choices for their children.

All students undertake classroom music and, of the 320 children in the school, 72% are currently involved in the additional optional programs in choir, drum corps, rock bands and instrumental tuition. This is a massive increase on the 30 students accessing such programs in 2004.

The school provides opportunities for children to choose musical forms of expression within a 'negotiated curriculum'. This acknowledges that children learn in different ways and those with 'academic' learning difficulties – i.e. those that are not 'maths or linguistic' learners - nevertheless can shine musically as their self-esteem and confidence develop.

There is innovative and far-reaching use of technology as children compose music and record soundtracks to their own movies and documentaries, for example. There is even 'Dominican Radio' which broadcasts to a footprint of 2km around the school.

'Enrolments are increasing, students walk with pride and the school has a celebratory culture," says Deputy Principal, Noel Browne.

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## **RESOURCES**

### **Sydney Symphony Orchestra 2008 Education Program**

The Sydney Symphony, through its Education Program led by acclaimed educator and musician Richard Gill, works with Australia's leading musicians and music teachers to create one of the nation's most innovative education initiatives.

Welcome to the 2008 Season of the Sydney Symphony Education Program.

Our goal is to educate, inspire and encourage people of all ages in the enjoyment and playing of music. Our range of programs encourages people of all ages to respond to music in a number of ways.

For Schools throughout New South Wales we have a range of day time concerts at the ABC, Sydney Olympic Park, and in regional NSW. At the Heart of this program is the Sydney Sinfonia mentoring orchestra, which provides an

opportunity for aspiring, young musicians to gain valuable performance experience working alongside professional musicians.

In the evening, our flagship series, Meet the Music, continues to provide an unrivalled main stage experience with the full Sydney Symphony, international conductors, world premiers and exciting soloists.

Composition is one of the most rewarding aspects of the study of music, yet access to live musicians is always a challenge for composers. The Sydney Sinfonietta Project was devised especially for music students who would like to compose, and for teachers who would like more ideas for teaching composition. This project will be conducted by the acclaimed educator, Richard Gill, for teachers and their students.

Our commitment to Artist Development begins with our regional program for secondary students, Playerlink, which will again gather together young orchestral players for a two-day workshop. In 2008 this will be held in Coffs Harbour.

For those of all ages who are new to the concert experience, and now also available on DVD, Richard Gill's Discovery Program at City Recital Hall Angel Place is an entertaining, informative and unique concert experience

Further information visit their website: <http://www.sso.com.au/page.asp?p=11>

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## **WA Symphony Orchestra Youth Education Program 2008**

The West Australian Symphony Orchestra is excited to present our 2008 Youth Education and Development Program.

In 2008 WASO presents an engaging education program featuring all the popular concert series' of 2007 including EChO Kids Concerts, Morning Symphony Excursions, Fabulous Fridays and Open Rehearsals. In addition to this WASO will perform three full orchestral concerts specifically designed for school students:

- The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra (Years 2 – 4)
- The Silence (Years 5 – 8)
- The Time Traveller (Years 10 – 12)

Through our Education ensembles WASO 5 and EChO, WASO will also tour to the Pilbara, Kimberley and Kalgoorlie regions presenting education concerts and workshops in Albany, Mt Barker, Katanning, Karratha, Port Hedland, Broome and Kalgoorlie.

And if that's not enough to fill your program, why not bring your students along to a WASO Masters or Classics concert and enjoy our student group rate of \$15 per student; 1 teacher free per 10 students.

We look forward to seeing you and your students at a concert soon.

Should you have questions about any aspect of our WASO Youth Education & Development Program, please contact Alicia Walter, Education Coordinator, on 08 9326 0022 or email [waltera@waso.com.au](mailto:waltera@waso.com.au)

Website: <http://www.waso.com.au/default.aspx?MenuID=36>

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## **Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Education Program 2008**

Excitement, curiosity and enjoyment are some of the key aims of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's Education and Community Outreach Program, as we introduce children to the wonderful world of orchestral music.

Full details at: [http://www.mso.com.au/cpa/htm/htm\\_article.asp?page\\_id=43](http://www.mso.com.au/cpa/htm/htm_article.asp?page_id=43)

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## **Adelaide Symphony Orchestra Education Program 2008**

Details not yet posted: watch their website: <http://www.aso.com.au/index.htm>

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## **The Queensland Orchestra Education & Community Program 2008**

The Queensland Orchestra is proud of its commitment to an array of Queensland communities through its diverse activities for young people and the broader community. The Orchestra presents an annual program of educational concerts and activities, ranging from special concerts for toddlers through to pre-concert talks for adult patrons.

The Orchestra plays a significant role in the professional development of rising future musical stars through the provision of master-class opportunities, performer development workshops and conductor training.

We present concerts showcasing up and coming young stars through our annual Young Instrumentalist Competition, ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Award, and the Lev Vlassenko Piano Competition Grand Final.

To make enquiries or to participate in any education programs by The Queensland Orchestra, please contact Samantha Cockerill by email [cockerills@thequeenslandorchestra.com.au](mailto:cockerills@thequeenslandorchestra.com.au) or phone 3833 5050.

Further information on website at: <http://www.thequeenslandorchestra.com.au/asp/index.asp?pgid=10626>

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## **Canberra Symphony Orchestra Education Program 2008**

Details not yet posted for 2008 "Noteworthy" and "Symphony for Kids" initiatives – watch their website at: <http://www.cso.org.au/pages/music-for-young-people/noteworthy--the-in-schools-education-program.php>

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## **Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra Education Program 2008**

The TSO is known for its innovative and versatile approach to all of its activities. We offer school concerts, family concerts, open rehearsals, master classes and community talks. We recognise that children are the musicians and audience members of the future and that nothing can replace the experience of a live orchestral performance.

The TSO's school concerts are tailored to meet the specific educational needs of primary and secondary aged students. These concerts are enjoyable, engaging and rewarding. Students learn about the four instrument families of the orchestra and encounter the elements of music in an integrated approach.

Watch website for 2008 program: <http://www.tso.com.au/aboutthetso/education.html>

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## **Darwin Symphony Orchestra Education Program 2008**

Details not posted; watch their website [http://www.dso.org.au/welcome\\_art\\_dir.php](http://www.dso.org.au/welcome_art_dir.php)

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## **CONFERENCES AND EVENTS**

### **28th ISME World Conference: Bologna, Italy July 20-25, 2008**

It is a great pleasure for the members of the Conference Organizing Group, to bring to Italy, and to Bologna, the 28th International Society for Music Education World Conference.

SIEM is very proud to host an event of this relevance. The richness of ISME Conferences, that gather so many professionals in the field of music education, is very well known all over the world.

Italian music educators, and in particular SIEM members, are very pleased to welcome their colleagues and share with them the variety of musical cultures, studies and experiences offered by this Conference.

Italy is very well known for its musical traditions as well as its artistic heritage and naturalistic places. Bologna will offer to the Conference, in its medieval frame, a special flavour rich in music and arts. Welcome to Bologna. The 28th ISME Conference will be an unforgettable event.

For details, see website at: <http://www.isme.org/2008/>

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