

ENSEMBLE

MUSIC EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA'S SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

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HOT TOPIC: AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC

Federal Government axes music academy funds

Robin Usher, The Age, October 24, 2008

AN ACADEMY teaching Australia's most talented music students appears doomed after an abrupt decision by the Federal Government to end its funding at the end of the year.

The Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) in South Melbourne was told on Wednesday there would be no funding for 2009. "That is heart-breaking for music education in this country," academy director Brett Dean, an internationally acclaimed composer, said last night. "I'm in a considerable state of shock."

The academy, established by prime ministerial order in Paul Keating's Creative Nation statement in 1994, receives \$2.64 million a year to run advanced performance courses for 55 students. Another 30 students take part in it. "The faculty is second to none in this country," Dean said, referring to the 170 public concerts given this year.

But federal Arts Minister Peter Garrett said the Government was investigating alternative models of training.

"ANAM no longer represents the most efficient way of delivering support for elite classical music training," a ministerial spokesman said. "ANAM were given the opportunity to meet the requirements of the funding agreement but it was unable to do so."

No further explanation was available. But Dean said no other institution in Australia can match the academy and he was determined to continue talking to the minister to try to reverse his decision. "A brief communication like this cannot be the end of the story — music in this country will be the loser."

Read more <http://www.theage.com.au/national/canberra-axes-music-academy-funds-20081023-57gq.html>

Tognetti calls for national approach, national curriculum – and rethink on ANAM

Bridie Smith, The Age, October 30, 2008

THE head of the Australian Chamber Orchestra has condemned the Federal Government's cutting of funding to a music academy and wants a national music curriculum established.

Speaking at a Global Foundation conference, yesterday the orchestra's artistic director, Richard Tognetti, called on the Government to reverse last week's decision to cut funding to the Australian National Academy of Music.

The South Melbourne academy was established by prime ministerial order in Paul Keating's 1994 Creative Nation statement. It receives \$2.64 million of federal funding each year.

Last Wednesday the academy was told funding would end this year, with federal Arts Minister Peter Garrett saying the academy was no longer the most effective way of training elite musicians.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/orchestra-chief-calls-for-music-academy-rethink-20081029-5bgx.html>

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Richard Tognetti orchestrates chorus against arts cuts

Ewin Hannan and Corrie Perkin, The Australian, October 30, 2008

AUSTRALIA'S international arts reputation will suffer and more musicians will be forced overseas by the Rudd Government's effective closure of an "iconic" institution.

Australian Chamber Orchestra artistic director and violinist Richard Tognetti yesterday performed at the Australia Unlimited Roundtable before making an impassioned plea to save the Australian National Academy of Music. Federal Arts Minister Peter Garrett last week decided to stop annual funding of \$2.6million to the Melbourne-based academy for elite musicians.

After an outcry from key music, arts and academic figures concerned that the funding cut would harm classical music in Australia, Mr. Garrett will meet Melbourne University heads tomorrow to discuss a possible university takeover of the academy.

Tognetti said he constantly heard that arts bodies were under threat. "We live in a continuous state of fear in this country, so closing an iconic national institution like that doesn't send a good message and it doesn't look too good on the Arts Minister's portfolio or CV," he said.

He said Australia suffered from "cultural diaspora" and he feared the students would be forced overseas. "I don't think it looks good from an international perspective to see that Australia has closed its Australian National Academy of Music," he said.

With Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard in the audience, Tognetti suggested the federal funding cut would not have been tolerated if the Australian Institute of Sport had been the victim.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,24573942-5013575,00.html>

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Elite musicians need a training centre

Brett Dean, The Age, October 30, 2008

LAST week the Australian National Academy of Music marked the 100th birthday year of the still living and still thriving American composer Elliott Carter. Carter, whose music is rigorous and tough and wonderful, was celebrated in four major public events, the most extensive festival of his work anywhere in the country in 2008. The week culminated in a stunning performance by academy musicians of his immensely difficult Clarinet Concerto.

In the middle of the extraordinary creative energy that swirled through the academy's home in the South Melbourne Town Hall during the week, a fax arrived advising us that the Federal Government had determined that the academy's funding would cease and the institution would close on December 31.

The Academy was established in 1994 by the Keating government to train 55 of the country's finest young classical musicians each year. It was modelled in part on the Australian Institute of Sport — but receiving a 15th of that institution's funding.

It is a place from which musicians of exceptional accomplishment emerge with the experience, vision and passion to lead Australia's musical culture into the middle of this century.

In its short existence, the academy has fulfilled this goal. Australian and international orchestras and ensembles are packed with musicians who have taken part in academy programs. Five of the most recent major woodwind appointments in Australian orchestras have been awarded to academy students or recent alumni. The Australian Chamber Orchestra has selected mainly academy students to form the backbone of its Emerging Artists Program. This year the final of the ABC's Young Performer of the Year competition — the country's most prestigious music performance competition — was comprised exclusively of academy students.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/opinion/elite-musicians-need-a-training-centre/2008/10/29/1224956134863.html?page=fullpage#contentSwap1>

Richard Dean is the Director of the Australian National Academy of Music

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MUSIC - COUNT US IN!

'Largest ever' student sing-along conducted

ABC News, Oct 23, 2008

Australian Idol's John Foreman has conducted what has been dubbed the country's biggest-ever simultaneous sing-along of primary school students. More than 350,000 children from 1,700 schools across Australia participated in the second annual "Music ... Count Us In" event.

It is aimed at highlighting the need to boost music education in schools.

More than 2,000 children from Canberra-based schools assembled at the front of Parliament House to lead the sing-along, which was coordinated through a weblink between all schools involved.

The song, called Sing, was written by four Victorian high school students.

Last year's inaugural event involved 200,000 students from half of the number of schools taking part this year.

"This is just a tremendous indication of the level of willingness for students to participate in music in their schools," Foreman, who is Australian Idol's music director, told AAP. "Around the country, teachers have said, 'Who'd like to participate in a music event?' And 350,000 kids have said, 'Yes, I would'.

"It's really raised the status of music in schools across the country and it's just a great celebration of music."

There are many benefits to learning music at school, he says.

"From my own experience, playing in a band or singing in a choir gives the student a great sense of belonging," he said. "The social benefits from that can be quite profound.

"There are also some studies that indicate that music study helps in areas of numeracy and literacy."

Read more at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/10/23/2399418.htm>

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Sing? Yes, we did!

Music. Count us in!

On the 23rd of October, 2008, more than 350,000 school students from over 1,600 schools around Australia, joined by Federal Arts Minister Peter Garrett, Australian Idol's John Foreman and 2,000 ACT kids at Parliament House, sang the same song at the same time to highlight the importance of music education in our schools.

Thanks to everyone who played their part in Australia's biggest ever simultaneous school music performance - singers and instrumentalists all!

See who joined in at

http://www.musiccountusin.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=41&Itemid=29

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MUSICA VIVA

Get with the Program ... tune in to us in 2009

From the first moment the band captured the interest of the students and continued to interact with them throughout the concert. Their seamless presentation had us all enthralled as they communicated their obvious passion for the music and the cultures reflected in this experience. The kids and teachers are still buzzing. We were impressed with the way Sirocco engaged students from all year levels (p-7). I had teachers come up to me afterwards and say, "In all my years of teaching that is the best concert I have ever seen."
Holy Spirit School, QLD

This account is one of many positive experiences relating to a Musica Viva In Schools program, Sirocco being one of the exciting musical groups available to perform in your school.

Musica Viva passionately believes music education matters – and we hope you do too. So if you and your students have never been a part of Musica Viva In Schools' diverse, hands-on, music educational program, now is the time to tune in for 2009. If you have joined us previously, we hope you will consider us as part of your musical activity once again.

So what's on offer? Musica Viva In Schools, a brand synonymous with music education and inspirational live performances, has recently launched its nationwide 2009 program. Every year, for the past 20 years, Musica Viva has been bringing music to life for students and teachers, by offering professional development and learning resources for teachers and live performances in schools.

Through Musica Viva's music education packages, teachers can easily integrate hands-on music experiences into classroom learning, giving many more Australian children the opportunity to experience live music in their schools.

The newly released 2009 program continues a tradition of live music, professional development and teaching resources, through the popular and comprehensive Music Education Package.

Read more at <http://www.musicaviva.com.au>

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AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S MUSIC FOUNDATION

ACMF National Songwriting Competition 2008

Results to be announced shortly

The ACMF conducts a National Songwriting Competition for every Primary, Secondary and Specific Purpose School across Australia (8,500 Primary & Specific Purpose Schools and 3,000 Secondary Schools, both public and private).

In 2008, the competition is in its sixth consecutive year. Entry to the competition is free and interest in the 2007 competition was unprecedented. This program is endorsed by the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. A letter is sent from the Minister with the entry forms encouraging teachers to engage children in this activity.

All prizes awarded are in the form of musical equipment for both the winning student and their school. Since the inception, The ACMF has awarded almost \$200k worth of musical equipment to schools and students Australia wide.

The competition is divided into age categories to provide opportunities for children of all ages, from kindergarten through to Year 12. Students are entering the competition not only one year but consecutive years, with some students improving their results each year.

The 2008 competition has closed – and the results will be announced shortly. Get ready to celebrate the achievements of the students recognised by the judges.

And also a good time to start thinking ahead to your participation in 2009!

Further information: <http://www.acmf.com.au/national-songwriting-more.html>

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AUSTRALIAN RECORD INDUSTRY AWARDS

Aboriginal prodigy steals the night at Australia music awards

Rob Taylor, Reuters, Oct 20, 2008

Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu, a blind Aboriginal man hailed as the greatest voice Australia has ever recorded, carried the night at the country's top music awards, despite most awards going to a 17-year-old schoolgirl.

Blind since birth, Gurrumul, 37, speaks almost no English, but has become a sensation in his homeland, with a haunting, lilting voice and lyrics sung in three indigenous languages which few Australians understand.

"He captures a very particular feeling that is part of Yolngu culture, about pining but at the same time feeling happy, about longing for your land but not worrying about it," spokesman Michael Hohnen told Australian media.

The acutely shy Gurrumul, a self-taught outback guitarist who plays his instrument upside down, stunned crowds at the annual Australian Record Industry Awards night on Sunday, winning best independent release. Critics have described his voice as having "transcendental beauty." Others compare it to "slow rain."

Read more at <http://www.reuters.com/article/musicNews/idUSTRE49J05P20081020?sp=true>

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VIEWS FROM ABROAD

Credo: Michael Barenboim

The Independent, Sunday, 7 September 2008

Music plays an important role in a child's education because it teaches aspects of existence for any human being. Playing the piano also develops sensitivity and precision in the hands. It's a precursor to any other instrument that you learn.

The fact that an Arab and an Israeli can talk to each other can change everything. The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra brings together young people from countries in conflict and allows them to communicate. Mostly these people would never meet. It's important that the work of Wagner should be played in Israel. His music has nothing to do with his anti-Semitic views, so there's no real reason for the taboo. There has to be a solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. I don't think it will be in the near future, but I think it will be in my lifetime. The end will have to involve both parties not losing and this is the problem.

It may be an advantage and a privilege to have a famous father [the conductor, Daniel Barenboim] but I've never known it any other way so I can't tell.

You don't choose an instrument, it chooses you. I started with the piano but took up the violin when I was about seven. It's a good thing too because there are already three pianists in my family.

Language determines the way you think, so if you know five, like my father, you have access to five ways of thought.

You can be Jewish and live in Berlin but you don't have to think about what that means very much. There are monuments so you don't totally forget what happened there, either.

It's important to have other things in life as well as what you do for your profession. I like to sit around and smoke a pipe and drink whisky and watch football. If you only do one thing you limit your way of thinking.

Source: <http://www.independent.co.uk/extras/sunday-review/regulars/credo-michael-barenboim-917867.html>

Michael Barenboim is Violinist with the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra.

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Scaling the heights: Venezuela's transforming music program for children

Alice O'Keeffe, New Statesman, 09 August 2007

In the 30 years since its foundation, El Sistema has evolved into one of the most successful community arts programmes in the world.

There are 250,000 children studying music under its auspices across Venezuela, from the most remote rural villages to the poorest barrios of Caracas.

Its founder, the composer/statesman José Antonio Abreu (according to legend, he started with 11 children rehearsing in a garage), has said that it heralds a "new era in which great art is created by the majority, for the majority".

In a politically turbulent country, it has provided a rare point of consensus, attracting support from a succession of governments including, most recently, that of the socialist president Hugo Chávez, who has financed a state-of-the-art concert hall and rehearsal space in Caracas.

Abreu's innovation was to argue that a musical training can overcome the "spiritual poverty" that perpetuates social and economic inequality, giving young people the internal resources to overcome a disadvantaged background.

He has skilfully negotiated the hazards of Venezuelan politics by maintaining El Sistema at arm's length from all governments. "This is a social and artistic project," he told me firmly. "It has nothing whatsoever to do with politics."

Nevertheless, many of those involved in El Sistema claim that it has quietly transformed Venezuela's social fabric.

Read more at <http://www.newstatesman.com/music/2007/08/venezuela-world-children>

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Songs of freedom

Paul Evans, New Statesman, 4 September 2008

When Valery Gergiev conducted Shostakovich amidst Tskhinvali's blasted concrete, he sought to present a humanitarian Russia, one that had brought safety and civilisation to South Ossetia.

Those with long memories will recall that Shostakovich was not always so favoured by his homeland.

In the wake of the Zhdanov Doctrine, works such as his Eighth Symphony were officially shunned for failing to convey the blinding optimism of the Soviet Union sufficiently.

The state valued music for its utility in shaping and maintaining the national character.

Jazz was despised by Nazi Germany, which regarded its devotees as dangerous race traitors. An absurd set of regulations issued in 1940 shows that it was not only the culture of jazz, but its very rhythms that were regarded as dangerous.

One decree read: "So-called jazz compositions may contain at the most 10 per cent syncopation; the remainder must form a natural legato movement devoid of hysterical rhythmic references characteristic of the music of the barbarian races and conducive to dark instincts alien to the German people."

In authoritarian societies, music can certainly become a destabilising force. Like sex, it has the capacity to override the supposed rationality of any ideology.

Tyrants know that they cannot eliminate music and instead seek to harness it - though it is doubtful whether their vulgar, bombastic marches ever do much good. Democracies are not immune from such concerns, either. For young nations striving to forge a coherent identity, music can take on considerable potency.

Read more at <http://www.newstatesman.com/ideas/2008/09/music-israel-tyrants>

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CSO to give Chicago students gift of music from kindergarten

Sunday Times, October 16, 2008

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra has announced an ambitious music-education initiative that aims to involve the orchestra in the musical life of Chicagoans from the kindergarten level through young adulthood.

Under its new Institute for Learning, Access and Training, the CSO has bundled 19 separate programs -- three of them newly established -- to reach more than 200,000 young people, regardless of whether they have a special interest in music.

A major goal is to work with established music programs and schools, with a focus on access, training and learning about live symphonic music.

"Chicago is blessed with an incredibly rich network of organizations devoted to offering young people many remarkable opportunities to make music," said Deborah F. Rutter, president of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association.

In its new Orchestra Explorers program, the CSO will provide classroom materials for Chicago Public School students and teachers in kindergarten through third grade.

The new Dream Out Loud program will focus on 9- to 17-year-olds with lively posters, video and Web sites designed to reinforce their love of music.

The institute's third new program, Chicago Young Musician Initiative, will spotlight talented music students ages 10 to 25.

Source: <http://www.suntimes.com/entertainment/music/classical/1224487,CST-FTR-cso16.article>

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Primary pupils 'need specialist teachers' in areas such as Music

Richard Garner, The Independent, 23 October 2008

Primary school pupils should have specialist teachers for subjects such as sport and music instead of having just one class teacher, a major review of primary schooling will recommend next month.

Sir Jim Rose, the former head of inspections at Ofsted, the education standards watchdog, believes the idea could be key to raising standards, particularly among older primary school pupils. Sir Jim was appointed by the Schools Secretary, Ed Balls, to lead a review of the curriculum. His report will be published in November.

He told MPs on the Commons Select Committee for Children, Schools and Families that he had reached the conclusion after seeing the impact primary school music teachers and PE teachers had on their subjects. "That's something confirmed time and time again by Ofsted – more specialist teachers," he added.

His idea echoes comments made by the former general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, David Hart, in an earlier speech on how the primary school curriculum should be reformed.

Read entire article: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/primary-pupils-need-specialist-teachers-969780.html>

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Primary teachers out of tune with music lessons

Alexandra Blair, The Times, 12 April 2007

Primary school teachers lack the confidence to teach music and singing, according to a study.

Music is compulsory until the age of 14 but less than an hour a week is devoted to it in most primary schools and only 13 per cent of primary pupils learn an instrument.

The Government started a scheme in January to devote more school time to music in the hope that it would encourage pupils to become more self-assured. But research by the Institute of Education suggests that student primary teachers are not trained to teach music and as a result only half feel confident teaching it.

Susan Hallam, the lead researcher, said: "We've known since the early 1990s that many primary teachers feel ill-equipped and insecure at the prospect of having to teach music. Although the situation has improved slightly, many teachers still have the same reservations."

The primary schools strategy Excellence and Enjoyment states that all children in England and Wales should have access to instrumental and vocal tuition. But the latest Ofsted report on music education found that although the quality of teaching was good in most schools, fewer than half gave any opportunity to practise it.

The researchers, who analysed questionnaires completed by almost 350 trainee primary teachers, recommend a number of options, including increasing the amount of music training, more professional development opportunities, developing skills through working with specialist teachers, and using specialist teachers to teach music in primary schools.

"Music is vital to a child's education," Professor Hallam said. "It helps concentration, aids relaxation and can influence moods and emotions. Singing helps young children with language development and, where coupled with movement, enhances physical co-ordination.

Source: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/education/article1642625.ece>

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GCSEs in jamming: new rock-style lessons make music more popular

Sarah Cassidy, The Independent, 10 October 2008

A radical new approach to teaching music that gets pupils to "jam" like rock stars has led to a sharp rise in the number of children wanting to take GCSE music. Rock-style music lessons boosted the popularity of GCSE music by 40 per cent, as well as improving pupils' behaviour and concentration in lessons, an evaluation by academics from London University's Institute of Education concluded.

Music GCSE has enjoyed a surge in popularity with 60,000 students sitting the exam in recent years compared to fewer than 46,000 in 2001 and under 40,000 in the early 1990s.

The initiative, called Musical Futures, also boosted motivation, both in pupils who already played an instrument and in those who had no previous interest in music. The scheme gets pupils to "jam" by copying recordings by ear the way pop musicians do, and lets them play music that they are interested in rather than teaching them a set of pre-determined works. It also encourages students to create their own music on the internet. Nearly 700 teachers from around the UK are known to be using the approach, established by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, in an attempt to attract more secondary pupils to music. It targets pupils aged 12 to 14 because this has traditionally been the age at which students seem to lose interest in music learning in school.

After using Musical Futures with their classes, teachers reported a more than 40 per cent increase in pupils wanting to study GCSE music. In addition, 13 per cent of the 1,079 pupils aged 11 to 14 questioned said they were definitely going to take GCSE music, compared with a national average of between 7 and 8 per cent. There was also a considerable increase in pupils' levels of attainment in tests at age 14.

Read more at <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/gcses-in-jamming-new-rockstyle-lessons-make-music-more-popular-956699.html>

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CONFERENCES & EVENTS

mtec 09 Music Technology in Education Conference

19-21 January 2009, Caulfield Grammar School, Wheelers Hill, Victoria

mtec09 is an engaging 3-day national conference in Melbourne, Australia, showcasing current technology and its applications in music education. This hands-on event will provide a unique opportunity for educators who are either new to music technology or experienced technology users.

mtec09 is for primary school music teachers, secondary school music teachers, instrumental teachers, teachers-in-training, conductors, composers and arrangers.

Keynote speakers include Thomas Rudolph (President, Technology Institute for Music Educators, USA), James Morrison (who happens to be an avid user of the latest music technology and uses computers extensively in his writing, recording and performance) and Marcel Pusey (from the UK, co-designed O-Generator educational music software).

Read more at <http://www.sibelius.com/shows/mtec09/index.html>

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MusicLearningLive!2009

5-6 March 2009, Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, UK

The National Festival of Music Education is programming a dynamic and inspirational mix of professional development sessions, presentations, case studies and performances.

MusicLearningLive!2009 includes a major trade exhibition and a dedicated Music Technology area, providing demonstrations and training in the latest software and equipment.

MusicLearningLive!2009 features a rich and diverse array of sessions over two days, including seminars, workshops, discussions, performances and keynote presentations.

UK National Music Participation Director Richard Hallam reports on his first year in post; there will be updates from Sing Up and the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Programme; find out about the impact of the new KS3 curriculum, the Find Your Talent pilots and the new North West Music Partnership project; and get the latest news from the Music Manifesto.

Take part in Dalcroze and Kodaly workshops, be inspired by Michael Harper's Gospel sessions (just wait for his festival finale!), get practical advice from the Musicians' Union, and try the Gamelan.

Enjoy the evening performance from percussionists O Duo and relax and network at the delegates' reception.

Read more at <http://www.musiclearninglive2009.net/>

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RIME (Research in Music Education) Conference

14-18 April 2009, University of Exeter, Devon, UK

The aim of the conference is to gather together researchers, teachers and practitioners to share and discuss their research which is concerned with all aspects of music education: musical development, musical perception and understanding, creativity, pedagogy, curriculum design, informal and nonformal contexts, music for special needs, technologies, instrumental and vocal teaching, teacher education, higher education, and methodological issues in research.

Keynote speakers will include Dr Gordon Cox (Reading University, UK), Dr Ian Cross (Cambridge University, UK), Assoc. Professor Magde Espeland (Stord/Haugesund University, Norway), Professor Liane Hentschke (Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil) and Professor Marie McCarthy (University of Michigan, USA).

Read more at <http://education.exeter.ac.uk/pages.php?id=218>

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Second International Symposium on Assessment in Music Education

15-17 April 2009, Paramount Plaza Hotel, Gainesville, USA

The music education faculty of the University of Florida School of Music will host this symposium, focusing on identifying and exploring effective assessment frameworks, models, and designs for the assessment of pre K-12 and post-secondary music students and music programs.

This symposium will focus upon the following key questions:

- What are the effective frameworks, models, and designs for assessing student music learning in music classrooms?
- What are the effective frameworks, models, and designs for the large-scale assessment of student music learning?
- What are the effective frameworks, models, and designs for assessing music programs?
- In what ways are music educators using assessment data effectively to improve music teaching and learning?

Read more at <http://conferences.dce.ufl.edu/ISAME/>

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ACSSO EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

- **Australian Education Digest** : <http://www.acsso.org.au/aed.htm> (weekly)
- **International News Roundup** : <http://www.acsso.org.au/roundup.htm> (monthly)
- **Values Education** : <http://www.valuesineducation.org.au/news.htm> (monthly)
- **Languages Education** : <http://www.languageseducation.com/news.htm> (monthly)
- **Ensemble - Music Education** : <http://www.ensemble.org.au/news.htm> (monthly)
- **Public Education Voice** : <http://www.acsso.org.au/pev.htm> (quarterly)

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