

# ENSEMBLE

## MUSIC EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA'S SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

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### BUILDING THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION

#### Make Music Matter: School Music Resources

Make certain that your school's new buildings are "music ready".

Shortly the Australian Government will begin investing \$14.7 billion in new school infrastructure through its Building the Education Revolution program.

As part of this initiative your school's music program, either current or planned, could be eligible for a significant government-funded boost. Here's how:

Between now and the end of July 2009, all Australian schools will be asked to submit proposals for new school infrastructure. Schools will each have up to \$3 million to spend through this program.

Eligible projects include buildings such as science centres, libraries, performing arts centres and in the case of many primary schools, new multi-purpose halls. Schools may also be able to propose plans for the renovation or re-use of existing buildings.

As part of these plans schools are able to specify the equipment they need to make their new buildings or renovations operational for the purposes intended in an education sense. If your new buildings will be used for music, then you should include the musical equipment and resources needed.

Read more at [http://www.mca.org.au/fileadmin/user\\_upload/mpfl\\_pdfs/Make\\_Music\\_Matter\\_PDF.pdf](http://www.mca.org.au/fileadmin/user_upload/mpfl_pdfs/Make_Music_Matter_PDF.pdf)

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### AWARDS & PRIZES

#### The Environmental Song for Australia Contest 2009

Entry Forms to be lodged for registration by Friday 9 April 2009

Competition Entries to be submitted by Friday 24 July 2009

We invite all Primary and Secondary schools to take part in The Environmental Song for Australia Contest 2009 - which is being conducted in conjunction with the International Music Exhibition '09 In Melbourne later this year (see information on the Exhibition event below).

The song needs to be an entirely original composition - and to have a positive environmental message that is inspirational and uplifting.

Participating schools will have from now through to 24 July to write, prepare and rehearse their entry. Then the finished copy will need to be submitted on a CD by 24 July for the judging panel.

Read more at <http://www.imex.net.au/envsoncont.html>

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### **2009 National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education:**

Nominations are now invited for the 2009 National Awards

Nominations close 17 April 2009

Up to thirteen awards for excellence and leadership in school music education with a value of \$5,000 will be awarded to teachers and school leaders. The awards will recognise exceptional contribution to enhancing the status and quality of music education in their schools.

The 2009 National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education Project is funded by the Australian Government under the Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme.

Read more at <http://musicawards.asme.edu.au/>

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### **Australian Children's Music Foundation National Song-writing Competition 2009**

Entries for the 2009 National Song-writing Competition open on April 22.

The ACMF conducts a National Song-writing Competition for every Primary, Secondary and Specific Purpose School across Australia. The competition has been running for seven consecutive years.

Entry to the competition is free and entry forms are mailed to 8,500 Primary & Specific Purpose Schools and 3,000 Secondary Schools, both public and private each year.

This program is endorsed by the Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training and a letter is sent from the Minister with the entry forms encouraging teachers to engage children in this activity.

Entries for the 2009 competition will open on April 22 so come back to our site to download an entry form:  
<http://www.acmf.com.au/national-songwriting-competition.html>

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### **ABC Flame Awards 2009**

After being in recess during 2008 to make way for the "grab a goanna" grand piano competition for schools, the Flame Awards will shortly return for 2009 bigger and better than ever.

We will keep you posted via subsequent editions of this Newsletter.

Also, you can keep an eye on the Website - and find out about what happened and which schools won in 2007 - at: <http://www.abc.net.au/classic/flame/>

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## **RESOURCES**

**MusicEdMagic**

Chad Criswell is a US twelve year veteran music educator, residing in central Iowa. He has taught all levels of music instruction, including nine years teaching high school band before recently venturing into the land of elementary instrumental music.

He is a well respected resource person for many American teachers, with his articles being published in a range of periodicals. He is also a contributing author to other professional publications such as the MENC's Teaching Music Magazine, and Technology and Learning Magazine.

While his passions focus on instrumental music he is also a very vocal advocate of educational technology issues.

MusicEdMagic enables Chad Criswell to provide a set of highly focused, practical and sincerely oriented online resources, in topic areas including News & Blogs, Educational Articles, Free Downloads and Sheet Music, Music Ed Resources and Product Reviews.

Definitely worth looking at, not only for the resources offered but also for consideration as a model for an Australian equivalent.

Read more at <http://www.musicedmagic.com/>

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## **NEWS FROM HERE & THERE**

### **USA: Music Education Can Help Children Improve Reading Skills**

*Science Daily, Mar. 16, 2009*

Children exposed to a multi-year programme of music tuition involving training in increasingly complex rhythmic, tonal, and practical skills display superior cognitive performance in reading skills compared with their non-musically trained peers, according to a study published in the journal *Psychology of Music*.

According to authors Joseph M Piro and Camilo Ortiz from Long Island University, USA, data from this study will help to clarify the role of music study on cognition and shed light on the question of the potential of music to enhance school performance in language and literacy.

Studying children the two US elementary schools, one of which routinely trained children in music and one that did not, Piro and Ortiz aimed to investigate the hypothesis that children who have received keyboard instruction as part of a music curriculum increasing in difficulty over successive years would demonstrate significantly better performance on measures of vocabulary and verbal sequencing than students who did not receive keyboard instruction.

Read entire article: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/03/090316075843.htm>

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### **USA: Adolescents Involved With Music Do Better In School**

*Science Daily Feb. 11, 2009*

A new study in the journal *Social Science Quarterly* reveals that music participation, defined as music lessons taken in or out of school and parents attending concerts with their children, has a positive effect on reading and mathematics achievement in early childhood and adolescence. Additionally, socioeconomic status and ethnicity affect music participation.

Darby E. Southgate, MA, and Vincent Roscigno, Ph.D., of The Ohio State University reviewed two nationally representative data sources to analyze patterns of music involvement and possible effects on math and reading performance for both elementary and high school students.

Music is positively associated with academic achievement, especially during the high school years.

However, not all adolescents participate in music equally, and certain groups are disadvantaged in access to music education. Families with high socioeconomic status participate more in music than do families with lower socioeconomic status. In addition to social class as a predictor of music participation, ethnicity is also a factor.

Read more at <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/02/090210110043.htm>

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## **USA: Musicians press Congress for more funding for arts**

*Boston Globe, April 1, 2009 (Associated Press)*

Musicians Josh Groban, Wynton Marsalis, and Linda Ronstadt pressed Congress yesterday for more public funding for the arts to help sustain programs during the nation's economic slump.

Marsalis said it's critical for the nation to re-evaluate its priorities during the financial crisis to ensure the best aspects of US culture aren't lost to younger generations because of scarce funding. The acclaimed trumpet player said he learned key lessons about jazz when he was young by playing with some of the original members of Duke Ellington's band.

"Around the world, music links generations old and young," Marsalis told lawmakers. "For some reason in our country, we decided we were going to allow the younger generation to be separated.

"We have left our kids exposed to business interests," he said of divergent tastes in music and culture, "and after 30 or 40 years of that, we're shocked."

Marsalis testified before a House subcommittee, along with Groban and Ronstadt.

Read more at

[http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2009/04/01/musicians\\_press\\_congress\\_for\\_more\\_funding\\_for\\_arts?mode=PF](http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2009/04/01/musicians_press_congress_for_more_funding_for_arts?mode=PF)

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## **UK: Why we are shutting children out of classical music**

Tom Service, The Guardian, 2 April 2009

An entire generation has grown up alienated from classical music. How has Britain allowed this to happen? And can the damage be undone?

I am a 33-year-old classical music critic. In my 25 years of going to concerts (and since my 20s, writing about them), I am almost always the youngest person in the audience.

Everywhere I go, from Bournemouth to Inverness, concert halls and opera houses resemble conventions for the blue-rinse brigade.

Another thing: I've noticed that bus and train stations now pipe canned classical music, day-in, day-out, through their speakers as a way of stopping young people hanging around.

So toxic have the associations become, that this experiment actually works ...

Read more at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2009/apr/02/classical-music-children>

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## **UK: Composer hits out at plan to cut music education budget**

*Andrew Denholm, The Herald, March 31 2009*

SCOTLAND'S greatest living classical composer has attacked plans by a local authority to cut extra music tuition.

James MacMillan has written to The Herald to express his concern over moves by Renfrewshire Council to reduce its music education budget.

The proposals, which will be discussed at a meeting on Thursday, are part of wider efficiency savings which will see 81 school jobs cut, including 28 teaching posts, as part of a £5.4m savings drive across the council.

Under the Renfrewshire plan, the posts of dozens of teachers, classroom assistants, administrative staff, foreign language assistants and music tutors will be cut.

In a letter to The Herald, Mr MacMillan said: "The present administration seems hell-bent on pushing through a disastrous reduction to the service which has made music the pride of the area's schools, and the envy of councils across Scotland."

Read more at

[http://www.theherald.co.uk/news/education/display.var.2498802.0.Composer\\_hits\\_out\\_at\\_plan\\_to\\_cut\\_music\\_education\\_budget.php](http://www.theherald.co.uk/news/education/display.var.2498802.0.Composer_hits_out_at_plan_to_cut_music_education_budget.php)

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### **UK: Lessons to learn about music in schools -**

A performance by a primary school choir was proof that music can improve self-confidence, social cohesion and students' understanding of other subjects

*Tom Service, The Guardian, 6 March 2009*

A story of pure music-educational inspiration today - and not an El Sistema in sight.

At MusicLearningLive!, the national festival of musical education at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, Abbott Community Primary School kicked off the whole event with half an hour of singing.

Nothing unusual about that: except this wasn't a crack children's choir from a music specialist school, but the entire school, from year 3 to year 6. The teachers were only there as bystanders, as the kids led each other in classroom and playground songs about everything from where to put decimal points in fractions, how to parse words into syllables and how to do your times tables, to an ironic ditty about SATs ("SATs'll drive us nuts in May/5-4-3-2-1 we jest/Who's afraid of a little ol' test?").

Abbott Community is a "Singing School", part of a program that puts singing at the heart of every class, and in which music isn't just something that's done for an hour a week, but is a route to learning in every subject area.

Read entire article: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/tomserviceblog/2009/mar/06/lessons-learn-music-schools>

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### **UK: Take some musical notes - interview with Mark Jaffrey of "Music Manifesto"**

*Dan Poole, The Independent, 26 June 2008*

Marc Jaffrey is a very important person at Music Manifesto, a government-backed initiative to improve opportunities for students to study music right through from school to university. So we thought now would be an excellent time to ask him some questions about careers in the music industry.

What is the Music Manifesto?

It's a campaign for improving the delivery of music education in the country from year nought to further and higher education. My involvement in the London International Music Show has been inspired by something they're doing which we've been calling for over some time, which is to bring the education sector happily together with the music industry. What's happening on the Education Day of the event (13 June) is something that both the education sector really needs to happen and students have been demanding, which is a much more vocationally orientated offer around music education.

Why is music education important?

The issue is that children are innately musical and want to explore their worlds through the literacy of music and their passion for it. As they become young people it becomes their overriding cultural interest, and many want to create it as well as passionately listen to it and go out and hear it. The issue is the role of the formal education world in supporting that learning. I think one of the reasons the manifesto came into existence was through a concern that the offer wasn't tailored enough to the passions and interests of young people or the industry in the broader sense.

Read more at <http://www.independent.co.uk/student/student-life/music-film/take-some-musical-notes-834774.html>

Visit <http://www.musicmanifesto.co.uk> and <http://www.londoninternationalmusicshow.com> for lots more information

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## **UK: Orchestral manoeuvre to give poorest children hope**

*Sarah Cassidy, Independent, 21 June 2008*

Children as young as four from England's toughest estates will perform orchestral concerts under plans inspired by a Venezuelan program which has transformed the lives of youngsters in that country's most violent slums.

The El Sistema initiative has used a network of orchestras to help 500,000 impoverished children avoid crime and drug abuse over the past 33 years. Now ministers hope a similar scheme can use music to stop youngsters from England's most deprived homes going off the rails.

Pupils as young as four will be in the £3m, three-year "In Harmony" program, led by the cellist Julian Lloyd Webber. It will begin in three or four pilot areas within months. The project is based on the El Sistema initiative in Venezuela, which resulted in the formation of the Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra, and has been credited not just with transforming the lives of street children but the social cohesion of the country.

The Government has taken advice from Jose Antonio Abreu, the economist and amateur musician who founded the El Sistema program in the 1970s. Children from the poorest backgrounds are given free music tuition by charismatic teachers. They are then brought together into orchestras and encouraged to play live in front of audiences from as early as four.

Read more at <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/news/orchestral-manoevre-to-give-poorest-children-hope-851588.html>

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## **CONFERENCES & EVENTS**

### **Music Education Week in Washington**

*17-23 June, Washington DC, USA*

Music Education Week in Washington is a week of music education advocacy, professional development, and stirring performances against the backdrop of the nation's capital's historic monuments.

Music educators, students and their family members are encouraged to attend this new annual event sponsored by the National Association for Music Education to serve the music education profession.

Music Education Week provides an interesting example of how to work various "slices" of the community in to an effort to focus on music.

Read more at <http://menc.org/events/view/menc-s-music-education-week-in-washington>

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### **EAS Conference, ISME European Regional Conference**

*1-5 July 2009, Tallinn, Estonia*

European Association for Music in Schools

The conference theme of Music Inside and Outside the School will be addressed through the following thematic sections::

- Music in the school culture
- Didactic principals implemented in music lessons at comprehensive school
- Study materials in music, music instruction as a symbol of culture
- The role of music in young people's life style and extra-curricular activities
- Music and the educational culture at home
- Music and the development of personality

Read more at <http://eas.punkt.at/index.php?id=6&content=1374>

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## REMINDERS

14-18 April - Research in Music Education Conference - University of Exeter, UK - <http://education.exeter.ac.uk/pages.php?id=218>

15-17 April - Second International Symposium on Assessment in Music Education - Gainesville, USA - Read more at <http://conferences.dce.ufl.edu/ISAME/>

3-6 July - Il est bel et bon! - Banks Peninsula, NZ - <http://www.merc.canterbury.ac.nz/>

6-10 July - Music Education New Zealand Aotearoa Conference - Christchurch, NZ - <http://www.music09.org.nz/>

10-14 July - Australian Society for Music Education National Conference - Launceston, TAS - <http://www.cdesign.com.au/asme2009/>

9-11 October - IMEX International Music Exhibition - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.imex.net.au/>

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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)
- Family School Partners : [http://www.familyschool.org.au/?page\\_id=6](http://www.familyschool.org.au/?page_id=6) (monthly)
- Public Education Voice : <http://www.acsso.org.au/pev.htm> (quarterly)

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

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