

ENSEMBLE

MUSIC EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA'S SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Volume 4 Number 5, 15 July 2010

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IN SCHOOL PROGRAMS

ACMF Orchestral and Choral Music Programs

Christopher Nicholls

The Australian Children's Music Foundation, announced that it's newest music program is currently under development with programs in a number of schools and communities in Australia planned for 2010 – commencing with a pilot program. These programs are primarily for disadvantaged Australian schools and communities, where they are needed most.

Some programs will be established following on from the successful ACMF School Music Programs in those schools and communities where there is interest to extend the schools music programs further. We will work in conjunction with the entire school community – the school, the children, the parents and the whole community to bring the optimum musical experience for them.

Our Orchestral and Choral Music Programs are based around the hugely successful Venezuelan music education program - "El Sistema", the brainchild of Jose Antonio Abreu, a Venezuelan musician and economist who created the program to provide joy and hope through music to the poor children of Venezuela – to relieve their situation and take them away and off the streets of violence and gangs, by teaching them intensively in the skills and passion of orchestral classical music.

The ACMF philosophy is to provide a long term commitment, not a band-aid solution. Again, we do not begin a program unless we have the funds and staff for a minimum of 12 months. Funding permitting, we hope that all of our programs become permanent.

Read more: <http://www.acmf.com.au/other-activities.html>

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OPINION

We should have El Sistema-type Programs for Australia's Children

Chris Nicholls, Classical Music Summit, 12 July 2010

Education policy makers should all read and reflect on this quote very carefully:

“Arts programs keep kids in schools.

‘When kids drop out of schools, schools lose apportionment from the state, so they lose money and the community gets the additional burden of uneducated kids loose in the community with nothing to do, who fall prey to drug dealers, gang members and sexual predators. It’s really a false economy that the esteemed managers of our state government have painted themselves into this corner and are seeking to solve their problems at the expense of our kids.

“And it’s never at the expense of kids from affluent homes, is it? Instead of investing in our most vulnerable kids to make them the leaders we need to improve our community, we ignore them, we push them away - and then when they get in trouble, we lock them up. It doesn’t make sense - and fundamentally, it’s not cost-effective. It’s a waste of money and it’s a waste of talent and lives.

“When we don’t invest in our communities, well you see what we have . . . It’s actually cheaper and more effective to address and head off problems while they are developing than try to deal with them after they’d developed. We just don’t tend to think or work that way in this country. But if we play our cards right and are able to deliver our programs, perhaps we will be able to deliver a sea change in that regard.” (Margaret Martin, Harmony Project, Los Angeles)

This was written about the American processes, but it could so easily have been written right here in Australia, about ours. This is fundamentally what arts programs should be about. Not for the affluent alone, but for all. And it starts with kids.

...And with programs such as 'El Sistema' – the amazing Venezuelan music education system.

So when I am asked why do we need a comprehensive instrumental and choral music education program here in Australia, I think like Margaret Martin – because it is important on so many levels to give children music – to inspire in them a future, and not necessarily in music.

Read more:

<http://www.mca.org.au/pdf/summit2010/ContributedPapers/El%20Sistema%20Type%20Programs%20for%20Australia%27s%20Children.pdf>

Dr Christopher Nicholls contributed this paper to MCA's recent "Australian Musical Futures 2010: the " held in Sydney on 12 July 2010.

Read more about the Classical Music Summit at: <http://www.mca.org.au/web/content/view/460/>

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OPINION

Music education can hit all the right notes

Credence McFadzean, Leader-Post, July 5, 2010

The general importance of musical education is highly touted to the public. We are often told that learning to play an instrument makes one smarter and that this is especially beneficial in the development of young people.

However, I feel that most people will hear and accept this information and will not think about it to much further of an extent. Even those who do play music and experience this "enlightenment" first-hand probably do not consciously dwell on the encompassing effects this sort of education has on them; either they chose to learn an instrument on an interested whim, or they are extremely passionate about music and its position in their lives is obvious and natural.

In any case the unparalleled significance and emotional connotations that music holds in the world is clear, and so its appeal in elementary and secondary educations is certainly no mystery.

If I were to analyze the specific ways in which a band program strengthens a student or "makes them smarter", I would say that it does so physically and mentally, morally, and socially. And if this is true, then there is no excuse imaginable for a school to fail in integrating a music program in some shape or form.

Read entire article:

<http://www.leaderpost.com/health/Music+education+right+notes/3235972/story.html#ixzz0tjvEoMgF>

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AWARDS & PRIZES

National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education 2010

Congratulations to the recipients of the 2010 National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education!

These prestigious national awards, funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations, were announced at a presentation event held at the Langford Theatre, St Hilda's School, Southport, Queensland on Saturday 3rd July 2010 by Mr Brett Raguse MP, Member for Forde (Qld), representing The Hon Simon Crean MP, Minister for Education.

For further details about each recipient, and their school, <http://musicawards.asme.edu.au/scripts/index.php>.

School Leader Awards

Mrs Karen Spiller, St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School Corinda, QLD

Teacher Awards

Ms Simone Bailey-Hough, Nagle Catholic College Geraldton, WA

Mr Craig McGown, Erskine Park High School Erskine Park, NSW

Mrs Susan Curbishley, St Matthew's Primary School Page, ACT

Mrs Amanda Herriman, Beaumaris Primary School Ocean Reef, WA

Mrs Jane Holmes a'Court, Cranbrook Junior School Bellevue Hill, NSW

Mr Antony Hubmayer, Scotch College Adelaide Torrens Park, SA

Mrs Margaret Overs, Mansfield State High School Mansfield, QLD

Ms Jayne Plumridge, Yeronga State School Yeronga, QLD

Mr Peter Quigley, Launceston College Launceston, TAS

Ms Sue Rodger, Immanuel College Novar Gardens, SA

Mrs Merylyn Watson, The Essington School Darwin Nightcliff, NT

Miss Georgina Wills, Wangaratta West Primary School Wangaratta, VIC

This annual awards program is administered by the Australian Society for Music Education (ASME).

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

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FLAME Awards 2010 – Instrumental music in primary schools

The 2010 Flame Awards will be formally launched on 18 July, with entries accepted till 6 September.

Music Play for Life will host the online entry process this year, with all the details soon available on

<http://www.musicplayforlife.org>.

This year's prize pool is \$15,000.00; and for the 2010 awards, supporting partners are ABC Classic FM and ABC Local Radio.

Once the 2010 Awards are launched, details will also appear on the ABC Website at <http://www.abc.net.au/classic/flame/>, where you can also read about previous awards.

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National Song-writing Competition 2010

Australian Children's Music Foundation (ACMF)

The ACMF conducts a National Song-writing Competition for every Primary, Secondary and Specific Purpose School, right across Australia. This includes schools from both the public and non-government sectors.

A letter is sent to schools from the Federal Education Minister with the entry forms, encouraging teachers to engage children in this activity. Entries can also be sent via the ACMF website.

All prizes awarded are in the form of musical equipment/tuition for both the winning student and their school.

Closing date for entries is 24 September 2010.

Further details about the competition: <http://www.acmf.com.au/nsc-details.html>

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MUSIC COUNT US IN

Australia's Schools Sing!

More than 1,200 schools & communities working towards the big day: Thursday 2 September 2010

Registrations for participating schools are still open and schools right around the country are signing up in droves. If your school hasn't yet signed up – now is the time to do so!

This is the big national event that links schools and communities together in all parts of the country, to create a nation-wide celebration of the value of music education for ALL students.

This year's program song is called Come Play Your Part. Lead vocalist on the John Foreman-produced radio version of the song is 15 year old Williamstown High student, Bobby Andanov – whom you may have seen on Channel 7's 'Australia's Got Talent'.

As well as the program song, Come Play Your Part, there are two extra songs this year. We will upload them to the site over the coming days for the schools that want to extend their Music: Count Us In participation beyond one song. We know many of you already do that, so we've given you two extra songs to add to your celebration of music!

Find out more about the songs and the students who wrote and recorded them:

http://www.musiccountusin.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=265&Itemid=167.

Music: Count Us In 2010 is entirely Free. Everything you need to take part is easily downloadable and absolutely free, including the song, lyrics, backing tracks and even musical arrangements.

Explore the online resources - and register to take part in this unique event in 2010:

<http://www.musiccountusin.org.au/>

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DISCUSSION & ACTIVISM

School Music Action Group

The School Music Action Group (sMAG) was formed immediately following the Victorian Music Workshop in April 2007. sMAG brings together representatives of the key music education community including teachers and principals as well as representatives from the tertiary music and education sectors music/arts bodies and the music industry.

The purpose of sMAG is to unify the music education sector and its stakeholders.

sMAG maintains a blog as a community discussion space aimed to inform the current debate in the National Curriculum development for Music, and provides links to documents and resources that inform that debate.

sMAG's vision is that every child in Victorian schools has access to a quality music education that is taught by professionally trained teachers, and it works cooperatively with the State and Federal governments, Universities and

the music sector to ensure that the recommendations of the NRSME are adopted and implemented throughout the State of Victoria.

Read more: <http://smag-schoolmusicactiongroup.blogspot.com/>

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Welcome to the Future of Music Education: The Music Professional Learning Network

Thomas J West, 5 July 2010

It's finally here - the website that is the collaborative creation of some of the most innovative and forward-thinking people in the Music Education profession. This is the final two weeks of beta testing for the Music Professional Learning Network - a social network for music teachers, music education undergrads, music composers, music publishers, and any stakeholder in the teaching and learning of music.

The PLN is fully integrated between Twitter, Facebook, MusicEdNews.com, and has features that make it by far the most flexible and versatile social networking platform I've ever seen. Just a few of the possibilities made available by this new site:

- Online professional development seminars
- Collaborative projects on a global scale
- Guest lecturers
- Sharing videos of music performances, both recorded and live
- Sharing tips and tricks with fellow teachers
- Discussion of a myriad of topics affecting music education
- Fun banter with fellow musicians and teachers

Here is a quick sneak peek of what is available on the new site. I kept it to 5 minutes because I could easily spend 10-15 just to get around to all the great features:

Watch video and read more at: <http://www.thomasjwestmusic.com/apps/blog/show/4188732-welcome-to-the-future-of-music-education-the-music-professional-learning-network>

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FUND-RAISING

Play Air

The Song Room team has just launched its first national fundraising campaign Play Air, to help us provide music-based programs for disadvantaged young people to improve their education and development.

This unique, fun campaign was developed with the help of award-winning agency, BADJAR Ogilvy. We've taken the worldwide phenomenon of 'air guitar' and turned it into an interwoven campaign that includes counter top sales, interactive online activities and a national competition.

In a nutshell we're selling AIR INSTRUMENTS in JB HiFi stores nationally (a number of stores sold out on day one already!) and there's an online competition at <http://www.playair.com.au> where you can download music tracks, upload clips of your best air moves or just vote for your fave clips to win prizes...

.....and all the proceeds from the \$2 Air instruments and online votes will raise funds to help us provide our programs to disadvantaged kids.

National promotion on TV (Network Ten, Channel 9, Channel V) and Nova / Vega Radio has begun, Avant Cards have hit the stands, and ads will appear in all publications of Street Press Australia over the next 6 weeks.

Find out more: <http://www.playair.com.au/>

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NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

David Douglas' music education earns high honor

Andrew Maddocks, The Oregonian, July 01, 2010

In the David Douglas School District, students dive into regular music education classes beginning in kindergarten, then can sing and play through senior year. Parents pack auditoriums for concerts. And teachers aim to plant a lifelong love for music and cultivate a close relationship to academic success.

Those efforts have again brought national recognition to the district for the size, funding and quality of its music education program. Douglas joined 174 "Best Communities for Music Education" nationwide chosen by the National Association of Music Manufacturers in May. NAMM --a nonprofit that funds education, research and programming -- also recognized David Douglas two years ago.

Twenty-six staffers teach music in the district. All elementary students --more than 4,700 --take classes two to three times a week.

In fifth grade, students can pick band, orchestra and/or chorus. Slightly more than 1,000 fifth- to 12th-graders chose choir this year, and about 1,800 chose instrumental. Douglas alumni include a Juilliard graduate, a handful of professional musicians and many students on university scholarships.

The recognition speaks to a supportive community, from top administrators to parents sitting in the back row of an orchestra concert, said Val Ellett, music teacher at Gilbert Park Elementary School.

"Holy mackerel, this district is so supportive I actually can worry about teaching the kids, doing my job and getting those kids musically proficient," Ellett said. "I don't worry about little things like, what do I do if an instrument breaks?"

Read more: http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2010/07/david_douglas_music_education.html

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Muslim pupils taken out of music lessons 'because Islam forbids playing an instrument'

Laura Clark, Daily Mail, 2 July 2010

Muslim pupils are being withdrawn from music lessons because some families believe learning an instrument is anti-Islamic.

The move comes despite the subject being a compulsory part of the national curriculum.

While parents have legal rights to withdraw children from religious and sex education classes, no automatic right exists to pull them out of lessons such as music.

One education expert said up to half of Muslim pupils were withdrawn from music lessons during Ramadan.

And The Muslim Council of Britain said music lessons were likely to be unacceptable to around ten per cent of the Muslim population in Britain.

However, in certain branches of Islam - such as Sufism, which is dominant in Pakistan and India - devotional music and singing is actually central to the religion.

A BBC investigation found that in one London primary school, 20 pupils were removed from rehearsals for a Christmas musical and one five-year-old girl remains permanently withdrawn from mainstream music classes.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1291218/Muslim-pupils-taken-music-lessons-Islam-forbids-playing-instrument.html?ito=feeds-newsxml#ixzz0tIFUJeCd>

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There is magic in the music

Jeremy Eichler, Boston Globe, 11 July 2010

CARACAS — In the southern reaches of this city, La Rinconada music center is buzzing with a happy sonic chaos as music spills from rehearsal rooms into the hallways. A circle of 3-year-olds ponders the mysteries of the hand bell, older children pick through Venezuelan folk tunes on guitars, and a cluster of brass players sounds out the theme song from “The Simpsons.” In a large, packed rehearsal room, a seasoned Venezuelan choral teacher is warming up young voices.

Suddenly, she hands the floor over to three Boston visitors.

Rebecca Levi, 24, and Lorrie Heagy, 45, swing into action, teaching two songs in Spanish along with some complex hand movements. David Malek, 41, grabs a drum and lays down a beat. In minutes, all 80 children are on their feet, and the room churns with song and dance.

The Venezuelan phenomenon known widely by its nickname — El Sistema, or “The System” — attracts many visitors, but none quite like this. Levi, Heagy, and Malek are members of the inaugural class of fellows from El Sistema USA: a handpicked group of young, monastically dedicated American musicians, based at New England Conservatory, and determined to bring this revolution in music education to Boston and other American communities.

They have come to learn the secrets of El Sistema ...

Read more and watch video at: http://www.boston.com/ae/music/articles/2010/07/11/there_is_magic_in_the_music/

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How to Learn Music Properly

Michael D Griffin, iSchoolBand, 11 July 2010

I love talking to students about how they learn and how they practice music.

Recently I've talked to students from different education systems from countries in Asia, Australasia, Europe and the Middle East, and found that students are fascinated with how learning occurs, and excited by the prospect of becoming better learners.

Everyone likes learning (not necessarily school); the boost in self-esteem and self-growth are indeed one of life's great joys. We are born to learn.

But I rarely observe a systematic approach within school music departments that address the 'how and why' of practice.

Given that the majority of instrumental tuition is delivered by private providers, learning how to learn music it is often left to chance and the initiative of that individual.

Students usually know that slow practice is prudent for example, but they don't always understand why. This article reviews some fundamentals of musical practice.

Read more: <http://blog.ischoolband.com/blog/how-to-learn-music-properly-by-michael-d-griffin.html>

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Hometown Hero: Teen fills the void when youth music programs are killed

Hilary Costa, Contra Costa Times, 12 July 2010

Music has been important in Larry Wang's life since preschool, when he started tapping away at the piano.

So when the 14-year-old Pleasant Hill teen heard the Mt. Diablo school district had cut the fourth-grade band program, he knew he had to try to save the music. Fourth grade is the level at which East Bay public school students traditionally get the first chance to learn instruments.

"Fourth grade and beyond really inspired me, and if you took that away that would be really tough," Larry said.

In January, the teen approached his leadership teacher at Sequoia Middle School, Chris Cook, to see if he could start an after-school music program for fourth-graders at nearby Sequoia Elementary. Cook got the backing from both schools' principals, and before long the teen was recruiting mini-Mozarts, as well as a handful of other Sequoia eighth-graders to help teach them.

Some other schools have restored the program by charging a fee for after-school lessons or welcoming volunteers — though none as young as Larry.

About 20 children attended the first afternoon lesson in March; eventually, the new ensemble shook out to about 15 new musicians.

In subsequent weeks, Larry and his team of youth instructors taught the younger kids the basics of clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, percussion and violin in sessions every Wednesday afternoon. The students learned how to read music and to play simple compositions, some written by Larry himself.

"It's a good thing for everyone to be able to be taught and then to teach other people when you get older," said Edward Evans, 13, who taught trumpet. "It's a fun experience."

By May the new musicians were ready to showcase their skills, which they did at the district's year-end middle school concert. Larry took his inaugural turn at the conductor's podium.

"Of course, they have more to learn — we all have more to learn — but it gives them a foundation," he said.

Read more: http://www.contracostatimes.com/ci_15452905?IADID=Search-www.contracostatimes.com-www.contracostatimes.com&nclick_check=1

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Playlist 'threat' to brass and folk

Press Association, 15 July 2010

Brass bands and folk music could become a thing of the past if pop, rock and rap continue to dominate the airwaves, academics have warned.

Over the past 20 years, British teenagers were increasingly exposed to restricted playlists on radio stations, TV channels and websites, according to Professor Sue Hallam and Andrea Creech of the Institute of Education at the University of London.

In a new book the experts highlight the fact that media targeting young people is less varied at a time when technology such as the iPod makes it possible to listen to a wider range of music.

They said: "In practice, this doesn't always happen because young people, unless they are introduced to a range of different musical traditions early when they are still open-eared, can refuse to engage with any music other than their preferred genre."

"Classical music that is used in sporting contexts, to introduce TV or radio programmes, or accompany adverts, becomes familiar and loses its stigma," they said. "This approach could be adopted more widely."

"The impact of technology on music education has been profound, with some instruments becoming 'endangered' in schools while requests to play others, such as the electric guitar, electronic keyboards and kit drums, have increased dramatically."

Despite this, music education in the UK is still arguably the best in the world and contributes to the the success of the creative industries, according to Prof Hallam and Dr Creech.

Read more: <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ukpress/article/ALeqM5izeezKBJ1KrFjjB1g1Bbj2tezzKg>

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Berklee president sets out rationale for popular music education at ICMP conference

Music Teacher Magazine, 15 July 2010

London's Institute of Contemporary Music (ICMP) held a two-day conference entitled The Place and Purpose of Popular Music in Higher Education on 8-9 July.

The keynote speaker was Roger Brown, president of Berklee College of Music in Boston, USA, one of the world's oldest popular music education institutions.

Taking a devil's advocate stance, Brown asked, 'Is there a rationale for teaching contemporary [popular] music?' He responded with five arguments for a strong rationale, the first of which was simply that 'contemporary music is interesting.'

His second argument was that 'music is the single best window for understanding who we are and how we think', citing popular music in particular for its role in movements of social change.

Brown's third argument was that a popular music education produces employable graduates. He stated that 55% of Berklee graduates derive their full income from music, which he asserted was a higher figure than for most conservatoires.

Read more: http://www.rhinegold.co.uk/magazines/music_teacher/news/music_teacher_news_story.asp?id=640

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CONFERENCES & EVENTS

5th World Summit on Arts and Culture,

3-6 October 2011: Melbourne, Australia

Call for Speakers

The International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) and the Australia Council for the Arts are seeking your suggestions of keynote speakers, panellists or presenters of case studies who can successfully address the Summit's theme: Creative Intersections.

The World Summit will investigate how the arts can give voice to different communities and concerns through collaborations with other sectors such as business and the economy, new technologies, health and well-being, the environment, education and identity through Indigenous, local and global cultures (an overview of the theme is available here).

The Summit's Programme Director, to be announced this month, will work with us to develop the conference programme and secure speakers who will share their experience and knowledge with colleagues from around the world.

Proposals need to be submitted to us via the online form (<http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/326103/5th-World-Summit-on-Arts-and-Culture-Melbourne-Australia-3-6-October-2011-Call-for-Speakers>) by Friday, 10 September 2010. Please note that the online form in Spanish and French will be available next week.

Find out more about the Summit: <http://www.ifacca.org/announcements/2010/07/08/5th-world-summit-arts-and-culture-melbourne-austra/>

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REMINDERS

24-29 June - Music Education Week - Washington DC, USA - <http://www.menc.org/events/view/2010-music-education-week>

1-6 August - ISME World Conference - Beijing, China - <http://www.isme.org/2010/>

9 August - Duetting it for the kids - Sydney, NSW - <http://www.acmf.com.au/events.html>

24 September - Music in Communities Network Conference - Brisbane, QLD - <http://www.musicplayforlife.org/newsletter/may10/may10.htm#7>

26-29 September - Kodaly Music Education Institute of Australia National Conference - East St Kilda, VIC - http://www.kodaly.org.au/index.php?option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=61

9-16 July 2011 - Tutti World Youth Music - Beijing, China - <http://www.tutti.beijing.com/>

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ACSSO EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

- Australian Education Digest : <http://www.acsso.org.au/australian-education-digest/> (weekly)
- International News Roundup : <http://www.acsso.org.au/roundup/> (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/news/> (monthly)
- Public Education Voice : <http://www.acsso.org.au/public-education-voice> (quarterly)

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