

ENSEMBLE

MUSIC EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA'S SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

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NATIONAL NEWS & DEVELOPMENTS

Power of song personified in new Australian documentary

The Hon Peter Garrett MP, Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth, 5 May, 2011

The Minister for School Education, Peter Garrett, today launched the documentary film Seriously Singing - a Cinderella Story at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music.

Seriously Singing documents the achievements of the choir of Lake Boga Primary School and its conductor, Jessie Carmichael (nee Arnold), in the Jubilee year of Federation, 1951.

Representing Victoria in the Commonwealth Jubilee School Choirs' festival, Lake Boga Primary was crowned Victoria's best small primary school choir, singing before Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies in the Royal Exhibition Buildings in Melbourne.

"The unique historical insights this documentary contains are an inspirational story for all Australian schools," said Mr Garrett.

"It shows the powerful transformation that making music and singing can have on students' lives."

Read more: http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Garrett/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_110506_083844.aspx

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Music failings spark chorus of complaint

Elisabeth Tarica, The Age, May 9, 2011

The Victorian Opera is known for its innovative attempts to engage younger audiences, through workshops and classes for students and teachers, but this is the first time it has pitched itself to a primary audience.

Turning the plush Playhouse into a giant classroom is part of a more fundamental message: that learning music is fun and something all children should experience.

The reality is quite different.

Many young people are missing out on the joys and benefits of music, despite extensive evidence here and overseas that it not only promotes brain function and social skills but helps improve literacy and numeracy.

Leading musicians, including Mr [Richard] Gill, and peak musical bodies say the state of music education in schools has been an issue for years and isn't getting any better. Little has changed since a national review in 2005 found that as few as two out of 10 state schools offer their students an effective music program.

While it pointed to some excellent programs, it also highlighted neglect and inequity - particularly in geographically and socially disadvantaged areas.

The figures are bleak.

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/music-failings-spark-chorus-of-complaint-20110506-1ebuf.html#ixzz1Q4uPqzw8>

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Value of Music Education

Richard Gill, TEDxSydney, 28 May 2011

One of the most eagerly awaited TEDxSydney 2011 speaker videos is this one by music educator Richard Gill, in which he argues the case for igniting the imagination through music and for making our own music.

In this talk, he leads the TEDxSydney audience through some surprising illustrations of the relationship between music and our imagination.

Watch video: <http://tedxsydney.com/site/item.cfm?item=17373783BE511B3C5870DE26F37EE989>

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Hitting the right note

Robin Usher, Sydney Morning Herald, June 15, 2011

PAUL Rissmann has been compared to Jamie Oliver because of the vitality of his presentation, but while there are dozens of celebrity chefs, he works in the far more specialised field of music education.

The Scotsman travels the world introducing children of all ages to classical music and is here to take part in the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's first education week, held at the Melbourne Town Hall.

His work has taken him to London, Europe, the US and China, where he took part in programs with the London Symphony. "Kids are kids the world over," he says. "Music has this incredibly powerful ability to touch and change lives."

Advertisement: Story continues below

The MSO's managing director, Matthew VanBesien, has made education a priority since he arrived from Houston 16 months ago.

"People say that education and our community programs are about ensuring there will be an audience for classical music in the future," he says. "But the thousands of children who will take part in Education Week are part of our audience now - it is valuable in itself."

Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/music/hitting-the-right-note-20110614-1g1qj.html#ixzz1Q5x4PvYR>

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RESOURCES

Classroom Activity Kit

Music Count Us In!

The kit provides lots of ideas for teaching the song to students in both mainstream and special education settings and ways of using the song as a springboard to activities in many other curriculum areas.

Available for download in PDF - registration required.

Read more: <http://www.musiccountusin.org.au/repository?func=select&id=45>

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NEWS FROM HERE & THERE

USA: VH1 Save The Music Foundation

The VH1 Save The Music Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to restoring instrumental music education in America's public schools, and raising awareness about the importance of music as part of each child's complete education.

To date, the Foundation has provided more than \$47 million in new musical instruments to 1,750 public schools in more than 100 cities around the country, impacting the lives of over 1.6 million children.

The inspiration for The Foundation grew out of John Sykes's volunteer experience as Principal for a Day at the Brooklyn, New York public school, PS 58 - The Carroll School. John saw first-hand how the students in the music program at PS 58 were struggling due to the great need for musical instruments and he was inspired to dig deeper into the problem and learn more about the benefits a student receives from studying a musical instrument.

As we examined the music education system throughout the nation, we found that music education is not only important for its intrinsic value, but research consistently demonstrated that students who study an instrument enhance their critical thinking skills and their ability to work together as a team. They are more engaged in school and less likely to drop out; and they do significantly better in all of their academic endeavors. Upon seeing the facts about the benefits of music education in a young person's life, VH1 started The Foundation.

Read more: <http://www.vh1savethemusic.com/>

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UK: Young Norwich musicians face funding axe

Ben Woods, Norwich Evening Star, June 1, 2011

Youngsters spend up to four days a week in the music programme, which teaches violin, viola, cello, double bass, percussion and Sol-fa; a centuries old method of teaching musical notation founded in Norwich.

The headteacher of Larkman Primary School, Alison Clarke, said In Harmony provided a fantastic opportunity and was a brilliant addition to the curriculum.

"At the school, people have been amazed by what is on offer thanks to the In Harmony project," she added.

"When Marcus [Patterson] first contacted me about their work I jumped at the chance to bring it to our school.

"It is not just about learning how to play and read music; it is their whole ethos of encouraging children with low aspirations to have the want to achieve.

"Through the project, the children have played in Norwich at the Open youth venue and with world-renowned cellist, Julian Lloyd Webber. They even went down to London to perform at the Royal Festival Hall.

"Most of our children have never left Norwich, let alone go to the capital, so the fact that they were able to play with national players through In Harmony is fantastic."

In Harmony was launched in Norwich in March 2009 alongside projects in Liverpool and London.

Each city was given a share of £3m from the Department of Education in order to set up projects, which use music to help impoverished children and communities.

The inspiration for the scheme came from the educational music programme, El Sistema, founded in Venezuela 35 years ago.

Read more: http://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/young_norwich_musicians_face_funding_axe_1_908223

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New Zealand: Passing on her passion for music

Helen Harvey, Taranaki Daily News, 5 June 2011

The Taranaki Music Education Centre doesn't have any problem getting students in the door.

Its problem is getting them to go home again. On Friday nights the centre runs two theory classes, one finishing at 4.30pm the other at 5pm, but many of the children ask their parents to pick them up at 6pm. That way they have time to hang out with their friends, play the drums, help the music teachers.

The centre has 80 pupils of all ages and its nine staff offer lessons on the piano, guitar, drums, saxophone, recorder, violin, flute, theory and vocal coaching. Kindermusik, a music and movement class for tiny tots, has just been set up.

Director Jasmin Hales doesn't mind the kids hanging around.

"The whole idea is for them to take ownership of the place. My kids have left home, so these kids have to do the work for them," she laughs.

"In the old days, growing up in theatre, you helped and you did everything. You didn't go to courses to learn how to use sound boxes and everything, you did it by watching the others and you had a go."

That's the philosophy she has with the centre. Even the little ones need to know how heavy their gear is to lug around. Their parents carry it, but the kids need to learn to do it themselves.

Read more: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/taranaki-daily-news/life-style/5100593/Passing-on-her-passion-for-music>

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Lebanon: Busking arrives in Hamra, for a day

Marie Dumières, The Daily Star, June 16, 2011

Street musicians have become a standard part of urban life in Europe and the Americas. One source dates the word "busker," in the sense of "itinerant entertainer," to the mid-19th century.

But busking is relatively rare in this part of the world. The only time you're likely to encounter it in Beirut is during the city's street festival. The streets of Hamra will become a bit more entertaining Saturday when, between 3 and 6 p.m., 50 kids (most of them 8-12-years-old) will serenade the neighborhood with classical music.

The kids all hail from Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps and their music education is being presided over by the Lebanon branch of Al-Kamandjati association.

"Every time we bring our students to listen to a concert in Beirut," says Alice Howick, local director of the Al-Kamandjati, "we're trying to show them that they have as much of a right to benefit from the amazing culture of the city as anyone else does."

Saturday's events will mark the young musicians' first participation in the "World Busk." This week-long event is organized by Musequality, a British charity that encourages musicians around the world to perform in the streets in support of musical projects in disadvantaged areas.

Read more: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Culture/Music/2011/Jun-16/Busking-arrives-in-Hamra-for-a-day.ashx#ixzz1Q51cZKoC>

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South Korea: Half a century with Korean music

Kim Yoon-mi, The Korea Herald, 17 June 2011

It was an early morning at around 2-3 a.m. in 1953 during the Korean War. An American medic at a hospital in Gangwon Province heard loud drums, gongs and unknown musical instruments coming from the communist North Korean and Chinese guerillas who wanted to keep the American army awake.

While other soldiers hated the sounds, 22-year-old Alan C. Heyman was fascinated by the sound of a wind instrument that he had never heard.

"The sound was very refreshing and interesting. That sound intrigued me," Heyman told The Korea Herald from his apartment in Hwagok-dong in western Seoul.

He later found out the name of the instrument after he returned to the U.S. when he met a Korean student during his masters' course in music education at Columbia University in New York. The sound that hooked him was that of the taepyeongso, or Korean conical oboe, and it led him to fall in love with Korean traditional music and live here for more than 50 years.

"He (the Korean friend) said, 'Western music will always be here but we don't know if our music can continue. Especially if North Korea invades, it may disappear,'" Heyman vividly recalled.

Read more: <http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20110617000531>

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Wales: Inside the revamped Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama

Karen Price, Western Mail, Jun 18 2011

While it is first and foremost the training ground for emerging talent - from actors and musicians to stage managers and set designers - principal Hilary Boulding is keen to stress that the college is for everyone.

With a new 450-seat concert hall for recitals and masterclasses and a 160-seat courtyard theatre, named after Richard Burton, there will be a year-round programme of public events featuring some of the biggest names from the industry as well as student performances.

And people are encouraged to just 'pop-in' and enjoy a snack and a drink in the new cafe bar and also view the student designs on show in the new exhibition arcade.

"The message we want to get across is that this is a public building," says Boulding. "People can come in and have a coffee and find out what's going on and come to the performances too."

She believes the new facilities will attract some of the biggest names from the industry who will be keen to perform in the new spaces as well as work with the students.

"We have invited the whole arts sector from across the UK to come and view the facilities. We want them to bring their work here. We want to attract the kind of people we would like our students to have access to - from actors and singers to directors and instrumentalists."

Read More <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/showbiz-and-lifestyle/showbiz/2011/06/18/inside-the-revamped-royal-welsh-college-of-music-and-drama-91466-28891984/#ixzz1Q4yb8BJN>

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India: Why children must learn music

Anil Srinivasan, The Hindu, 20 June 2011

On World Music Day, Anil Srinivasan argues music is more than an extra-curricular activity. It is the route to holistic child development.

When someone mentioned the "World Music Day" celebration on June 21, I was surprised. Surely, everyday is a celebration of the world of music. On further reflection, I realised we need to delve a little deeper into what music does for us; perhaps an occasion such as this could serve to direct our attention to the topic.

Einstein famously said that while calculus would have survived without either Newton or Leibniz, the world would not have been the same had Beethoven never lived. He remarked that Beethoven's contribution to human intelligence is irreplaceable. He used the term "intelligence". This by itself is significant.

Various studies have been conducted on children and adults to understand the development of the musical instinct, and the development of the brain in relation to structural (or pattern) recognition using music.

Read more: <http://www.thehindu.com/life-and-style/metroplus/article2120427.ece?homepage=true>

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USA: Gustavo Dudamel, CNN En Espanol Docs Focus on Music Education

Leila Cobo, Billboard.biz, June 21, 2011

The importance of music education at an early age and for children of all socio economic levels will be highlighted in two closely linked documentaries.

"Crescendo-Why Music Is Life," produced by CNN en Español, is a 20 minute production that interviews a host of Latin artists and personalities-including Daisy Fuentes, Emilio Estefan, Gloria Trevi, Arthur Hanlon, Fanny Lu, and Ricardo Montaner, among many others-on the importance of music in education and the impact of music on children's lives.

The documentary will air June 23 prior to the debut of "Dudamel: Let the Children Play," a documentary about the importance of music and youth orchestras as a universal right for children. The piece is inspired and hosted by acclaimed LA Philharmonic conductor Gustavo Dudamel, who got his musical training as part of "El Sistema," the Venezuelan music and education program. Similar music programs for children from all economic levels are being created in countries around the world.

Both documentaries will be shown in more than 400 movie theatres nationwide through the NCM Fathom Digital Broadcast Network. "Crescendo-Why Music is Life" will later air as a special edition of "Showbiz" on CNN en Español July 13.

More information on "Let the Children Play" can be found here:
<http://www.fathomevents.com/performingarts/event/dudamel.aspx>.

Source: <http://www.billboard.biz/bbbiz/industry/tv-film/gustavo-dudamel-cnn-en-espanol-docs-focus-1005243382.story>

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Ireland: Tuning in

Declan Rooney, Galway Independent, 22 June 2011

Declan Rooney talks to Joe McDonagh, Galway Music Education Partnership about a new initiative to help finance music education. When the purse strings are tightened the arts are often left at the back of the queue and those involved are forced to scrap over the leftovers. However, with the inception of the Galway Music Education Partnership (MEP), music education and therefore the arts may have the chance to flourish in the future.

Galway MEP is in the process of applying for funding from the Music Generation, which aims to bankroll the vocal and instrumental musical education of children up to 18 years of age.

The Music Generation is funded by Irish rock band U2 and the Ireland Funds, and has already rolled out its first round of funding to three counties.

Galway is hoping to gain one of the remaining nine spaces on the programme and, according to Joe McDonagh, CEO of the County Galway VEC, who are co-leaders of Galway MEP, it is a great opportunity to give young musicians in the county a real helping hand.

"The first batch of grants were given out in January this year and Mayo, Sligo and Louth availed of the grant. It is up to us to make the most of it this time around as there is only 12 groups that will be awarded the funding," says Mr McDonagh.

Read more: <http://www.galwayindependent.com/business/business/tuning-in-20110622/>

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CONFERENCES & EVENTS

ECCPA - Early Childhood Conference of Performing Arts

20-21 August, Genazzano FCJ College, Cotham Road, Kew, Melbourne, VIC

This is an International standard conference right here in Melbourne! It is geared to everyone who works with young children 0- 8 years. The conference will:

- Reinforce the benefits of music and the arts for a musical journey
- Explore holistic education for young children
- Over 42 'hands on' workshops to choose from in one weekend
- Be Ideal for anyone working with young children (0-8 years)
- Provide outstanding professional development for participants
- Boost your confidence and renew your enthusiasm in areas of creative expression such as singing, dancing, percussion instruments, language and play
- Provide ways of integrating creative arts concepts into many aspects of daily activities
- Provide outstanding opportunities to network with others in this special field
- Provide the opportunity to view and buy a wonderful range of resources

Read more: <http://www.vosa.org/events/?action=detailed&ID=173>

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REMINDERS

2-5 July - ASME National Conference, Convention Centre, Gold Coast, QLD - <http://www.asmeconference.org.au/>

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

1 September - Music: Count Us In 2011 - <http://www.musiccountusin.org.au/content/view/13/6>

3-6 October 2011 - 5th World Summit on Arts and Culture - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.ifacca.org/announcements/2010/07/08/5th-world-summit-arts-and-culture-melbourne-austra/>

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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)

- 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/public-education-voice> (quarterly)

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