

BULLETIN: ASME VICTORIA

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Promoting continuous, sequential and developmental music education experiences – a major goal of ASME

Chairperson's message

Fiona King

At the ASME (Victoria) Annual General Meeting on 11 September, I looked around at a room of dedicated music educators of the Victorian Chapter Council (and guests) and considered their motivations for being there. I thought about the geography of our council... yes, geography. I was



reminded of one of ASME's goals, that all learners should receive the finest possible music education, all learners should have equal opportunity to pursue music, and the quality and quantity of their musical education should not depend on their geographical location, social status, racial or ethnic identity, urban/suburban/rural habitat or wealth.

This statement is about the provision of music education and the acknowledgement of diversity. It is particularly poignant in the present era, as the Council strives to support music education across the lifespan, modes of transmission, culture, accessibility

and indeed, geography. The group of individuals in the room represent a myriad of music education settings: early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary and studio teachers, and fields including instrumental and classroom music, ensemble direction, research, policy, professional development, professional musicianship and the one we are united in, advocacy. The background, experience and current work of Council members spans a considerable geography also: Melbourne, regional Victoria, Australia and across the world. We truly have a strong team in which to represent ASME members across our state.

As the newly elected Chair, I first acknowledge the work of ASME Victorian leadership, Councillors and members for over 50 years now, as I strive to carry (and wave) the ASME flag as boldly as my predecessors. I acknowledge the immediate past Chair, Greg Oates, for his dedicated work over the past two years.

I am looking forward to sharing the efforts and achievements of the ASME Victorian Council with you in the coming months, including reporting back to you about our National Conference in Perth on 2-4 October 2019. I wish you all the best with your music teaching and research work, in recognition and appreciation of the diverse geography of music education practices.

Editorial

Ros McMillan

The Annual General Meeting, held on 11 September 2019, saw a change of office-bearers, Fiona King being elected unopposed as Chair of the Chapter Council.

A newly elected Deputy Chair, Jen Skate, and new Treasurer, Dimitri Iannou, were welcomed while outgoing Chair, Greg Oates, was warmly thanked for his superb contribution (see page 7). The Chapter Council is one of the largest in the recent history of ASME (Vic) with many new roles being undertaken by Council members to ensure the smooth running of the Chapter.

This issue of the *Bulletin* contains an article that will



feature in forthcoming issues. 'Letter from Armenia' is written by Council member, Pip Robinson, who was recently appointed to a music teaching position in Dilijan, Armenia, at an international school run by the United World College movement. The school offers the International Baccalaureate and all students are in either Years 11 or 12. The school is celebrating its 5th anniversary with a concert in October, an interesting initiation into the culture of the school. We wish Pip well in the next chapter of her career.

Plans are now underway for the 34th Biennial World Conference of ISME (the parent organisation of ASME) to be held in Helsinki, Finland, 2-7 August 2020. All ASME members should plan to attend one ISME World Conference in their careers as the opportunity to meet music educators from around the world is only one of the highlights of these occasions. More details are on page 7.

Cover: Participants at the Composition workshop held at Deakin University.

Collaborative partnerships with Initial Teacher Education Students: Creative music-making

Introduction

Working with professional music organisations such as ASME is an excellent way for initial teacher education (ITE) students to expand their professional learning. With less time and resources allocated for music education within tertiary education programs (generalist primary and early childhood), offering a creative music-making workshop provides ITE students with the opportunity to network with others, and become part of a community of practitioners (Wenger, 1998).

The ASME workshop was organised through Eventbrite (\$5 for students and \$20 for teachers) for ITE students and for those already teaching. It took place on Saturday 27 July at Deakin University (Burwood Campus). This successful event was well attended by 24 ITE students, six teachers and three ASME Chapter Council members. The Council members (Michael Travers, Jen Skate and Ros Mc Millan) ran the workshop from 10:00am to 12:30pm using approaches by which teachers can enable creativity in their classrooms (Burnard & Murphy, 2017).

The Workshop

Michael began the session using tennis balls as a warm-up activity that caught everyone's attention. This generated much laughter and excitement as it would with children. Participants had to focus on listening to music with either 2, 3, 4 or 5 beats, co-ordinating the action of bouncing or rolling the ball to the beats. This was followed by Ros reading the story book of *Ernie Dances to the Didgeridoo* by Alison Lester. As the book was the focus of the workshop, Ros engaged participants in a lively discussion about the various words and sounds in relation to the six seasons of the Northern Territory featured in the book (Monsoon, Harvest, Fall, Early Dry, Hot Dry and Pre-Monsoon). Jen then provided many ideas and strategies for classroom practice before dividing the participants into six groups, each taking one of the seasons to represent in sound. Each group was asked to pose a guiding question in relation to creating a soundscape for their season, e.g. "What do we want to represent? How could we represent Joseph doing backflips off a coconut tree?" Using critical thinking skills to plan, prepare and present their creative music compositions, participants were able to gain ideas through collaborating with each other using a variety of percussion instruments.

As facilitators, Michael, Ros and Jen created space for the participants to explore the various sounds and instruments (melodic and non-melodic) while notating their ideas using simple graphics. They also offered useful teacher tips that

allowed the participants to let their 'voice' be heard as they took ownership of their creative ideas.

The final performance consisted of the groups performing the six seasons in turn, all linked with the sound of traditional Indigenous clapping sticks.

The collaboration with ASME was yet another successful professional learning event (Graham, 2007). In a survey of the morning, the ITE students commented on:

- learning how to develop music in a creative and fun way
- gaining more knowledge and ideas to implement with children
- learning how to integrate music into classroom activities
- gaining new insights into Indigenous culture
- playing musical instruments they had never previously played.

Many participants noted that they 'had no music background, while others felt that 'having little experience in composing' and 'communicating ideas and deciding on a composition in such a short time' was challenging. They also noted how they could use a book such as *Ernie Dances to the Didgeridoo* to address cultural understandings and practices in relation to meeting Intercultural Capabilities in the Victorian Curriculum (VCAA, 2019).

Building collaborative partnerships with ASME as Australia's peak music education organisation is a positive way to support ongoing professional learning both for ITE students and teachers. Participants gained many musical and creative opportunities within a short space of time (Burnard & Murphy, 2017).

References

- Burnard, P. & Murphy, R. (2017). *Teaching music creatively*. London: Routledge.
- Graham, P. (2007). *Improving Teacher Effectiveness through Structured Collaboration: A Case Study of a Professional Learning Community*, RMLE Online, 31(1), 1-17.
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). (2019). *Intercultural Capability*. <https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/intercultural-capability/introduction/rationale-and-aims>
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

– Dawn Joseph, Deakin University

Music: Count Us In 2019

Teacher Professional Learning

ASME (Vic) was pleased to partner with **Music Australia** in 2019 to deliver a series of teacher professional learning workshops across Victoria for the Music: Count Us In program.

Nine workshops were offered throughout July and August, with 75 teachers involved. The workshop program aimed to support teachers in learning about the MCUI program, to learn this year's song and to examine the free online resources. However, greater benefits were experienced in each workshop that extended to establishing new networks and informal mentoring of newer teachers, sharing of other music curriculum materials and close examination of other teachers' music rooms. The workshop program also focussed on developing the capacity of local music teachers to lead professional learning in their own geographic areas through the provision of workshop plans, printed handouts and PowerPoint presentations for use in their delivery.

Participants were introduced to this year's song then discussed various ways to teach it through singing, moving, playing melodic percussion and ukulele, and developing chord charts. The extensive support material and lesson plans on the MCUI website were explored, and there was great discussion about how the song could be taught to different groups of children in various settings.

In each workshop, experienced teachers with a history of involvement with MCUI shared ideas and tips for teaching the song and staging it including:

- letting students create their own choreography
- learning the song using AUSLAN
- leading a whole-school concert where all the previous years' songs are sung prior to the countdown to performing this year's song
- pairing with a local high school band/ensemble to perform the music that primary school children sing. This could be at a school or in a central public space/venue
- performing the song at a local shopping centre
- using the arrangements from the website to involve as many students as possible playing instruments to accompany the whole school singing the song.

The underlying premise of the program as a means for **music education advocacy** was reinforced. Teachers shared ideas for highlighting the benefits of singing and music-making to school communities, and for promoting this message in school newsletters, community newspapers and with parents and community members.

A huge thanks is due to our team of presenters and hosts: Michael Travers (St Matthews PS, Fawkner North); Lucy Lennox (Millgate PS, Doncaster East); Amanda Baulch (Northern Bay College, Corio); Lana Ford (Phoenix P-12 Community College, Sebastopol); Jessica Stein (Leongatha PS); Mary Thorpe (Camphill PS, Bendigo); Claire Bradbury (Wangaratta PS); Fiona Phillips (Deakin University, Warrnambool), and Susie Davies-Splitter and Traci Cenedese (Hampton PS).

Special thanks are also due to ASME (Vic) Council members who managed all aspects of the Professional Learning program.

– Sue Arney

Participants at the composition workshop



Everyone contributes to group work.



Using tennis balls as a sound source.

Letter from Armenia

ASME Chapter Council member Pip Robinson has recently been appointed to a two-year teaching position at an international school in Dilijan in Armenia. Each issue of the *Bulletin* throughout this period will contain an article on her experiences. This is the first of her 'Letters from Armenia', written at the beginning of September.

I have now been in Armenia for just over four weeks, arriving on 5 August, and my decision to take up a music teaching position here has been very positive. Armenia is fascinating and it is easy to be enchanted by the country and the people. Across time it has been invaded by the Greeks, Romans (briefly), Persians, Ottomans and Russians. Much of this history has been dramatic and devastating for the Armenian people, with the most recent example being the Armenian Genocide by the Ottomans in 1915. At this time diasporic communities formed across the world.

Armenia has always been renowned as a centre for arts and culture and music is a central pillar of the society. As part of the former Soviet Union, Armenia was an economically strong country where many Russians came to holiday, especially in the area around beautiful Lake Sevan and the spa town of Dilijan in the Tavush Province in the north-eastern part of the country. Dilijan is situated within a large National Park and

is very beautiful with forested mountains. It was situated on one of the arms of the Silk Road and during Soviet times film makers, artists and musicians were drawn to Dilijan with its vibrant artistic community.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union all Russian money was withdrawn from the country and overnight Armenia became financially strained. All Russian investment stopped and evidence of this can be seen today in half-built houses and abandoned hotels that scatter the landscape across the whole country. Dilijan, as an arts community and spa town, suffered greatly and became very poor. I met an older lady selling beautiful embroidery in the Vernissage Market in Yerevan who had been an astro-physicist working on the Sputnik program but lost her job when the Soviets left Armenia. Since then she has survived by making and selling her own embroidery - a common story here.

In the past decade members of Armenian diaspora communities across the world have been investing money and time into the country in an effort to aid economic growth and social development. One of these initiatives has been from the RVVZ Foundation in Russia who support education, social programs and the arts and who decided to invest in an international school in Dilijan. The result was a partnership with the United World College (UWC) collective of international schools that deliver the International Baccalaureate program in 17 locations around the world.



The UWC Dilijan College campus.

The school has now been operating for five years with students from throughout the world studying the IB Diploma Program. Most are supported by scholarships that enable them to engage in an education to which they would not necessarily have had access. The school's students are the equivalent of Year 11 and 12 students in Australia, although in some ways the school is a transition between secondary education and university, similar to senior colleges in other parts of the world.

As part of their IB Diploma Program students can choose music as a subject. Currently the number of DP music students is not large but there is a broad array of rich musical activities available outside formal classes as a part of the compulsory IB Creativity, Action Service (CAS) program. Many students play or sing in traditional styles as well as those of folk, rock, jazz and classical music. CAS activities include a choir, which I am running, and student-led activities such as Middle-eastern drumming, teaching instrumental music in the local community, an Arts Festival with the local community and various bands. Interestingly, the students seem to prefer more lyrical ballad-style music to rock. They also present regular Cultural Evenings where traditional and fusion musics, dances and poetry are all presented.



The view from the staff accommodation.

I am still learning about the school and the students but only the other day a student asked me to help her tune her Saz, a traditional Turkish lute, which enabled me to learn about the Baglama Saz. As the year progresses I am eagerly looking forward to discovering more cultural gems while also engaging the whole school community in music-making,

VCE Performance Preparation Workshops

ASME (Victoria) recently held two workshops for students of the VCE Music Performance subject, aiming specifically to prepare them for the written section of the examination. The workshops were presented by Adam Yee, Head of Music at the King David School, Armadale, a highly experienced teacher and examiner, who covered the three sections of the examination in a packed two-hour period.

Adam worked through each of the three sections of the aural examination – analysis, melodic dictation and theory – with immensely practical advice. In regard to the analysis section, he urged the students to avoid 'stream of consciousness' answers and write concisely and exactly to the point of the question. Using scrap paper, students should write down initial points then clearly re-write those they consider the best, both to assist themselves and the examiners when marking the papers. Adam also urged the students to consider how the musical instruments are utilised – the range, dynamics and contour of the melody while noting exactly what gives the piece its particular characteristics.

For melodic transcription, he pointed out that many students fail this section. In order to master this, something as simple as first drawing the melodic shape as a contour could occur, followed by a systematic means of 'unpacking the music' into bars. Without a reference guide such as sol fah, Adam described transcription as akin to "writing on sand". Another

example was his suggestion that listening to CD test examples should be done with a high-quality sound source so that the bass can be heard clearly.

In regard to the third section Adam stated that students should gain 100% marks, as there is no range of answers possible nor ambiguity in regard to the limited and known selection of chords that are used. Students should be completely familiar with all the chord qualities and scale construction. An essential tip in acquiring this knowledge is for students to link their daily practice with listening tasks. Adam advised students to record their practice sessions and when playing these back, use their listening skills to analyse the pieces. He also urged the students to practise sight-reading every day as research has shown that this, plus sight-singing, greatly assists skill in developing good listening, particularly in regard to transcription.

Without a doubt the workshops were succinct, engaging and insightful. The presentation showed the skills of a 'born' teacher and no student would have left without feeling that they could tackle the aural section of the examination with confidence. These workshops will be repeated next year, possibly with some occurring in regional areas. ASME (Victoria) is most grateful to Adam for his contribution to this year's activities.

- Michael Travers and Dimitri Iannou

ISME's 34th World Conference is set for Helsinki

Planning for the 2020 Biennial World Conference of the International Society for Music Education is now well underway with one of the highest numbers of submissions received.

It is a long path ahead now to blind review them all, issue the invitations (and declines) and schedule the program in plenty of time for delegates to be able to make their travel plans.

The Conference leaders are Susan O'Neill, President of ISME and Dean of Arts for Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada and Elina Laakso, Dean of the Faculty of Music Education, Jazz and Folk Music at the Sibelius Academy, UniArts in Helsinki, Finland.

The 2020 World Conference will introduce a number of new elements. The traditional presentations, workshops and posters continue, but in addition there are now symposia and presidential sessions. These are specifically designed to encourage greater networking and connection across the membership by putting members with similar areas of interest together and providing a variety of views in one session.

The Conference will run 2-7 August 2020 in Helsinki, Finland. It's a vibrant, exciting small city with a great food, safe streets and a busy Arts scene, including a wonderful array of street entertainers throughout Summer.

For full information about the 34th ISME World Conference go to www.isme2020.fi

Thank you Greg!

The ASME Victorian Chapter Council is profoundly grateful to Greg Oates, who recently stepped down as Chair after his two years in the position.

Greg's chairing of our meetings for the past years has been exemplary. His calm control of (often excitable) discussion ensured that a great many ideas and suggestions were shaped into realistic actions. Further, his experience as an instrumental music teacher over many years showed in his understanding of matters, including problems, that underlie the provision of music education in Australia. He remains a member of the Chapter Council where his work with the Society as well as his wider experience in the field will be a major influence.

National Chamber Music Championship

Musica Viva is proud to present a national chamber music competition in 2020, open to all secondary school students throughout Australia. It will also run a chamber music-focussed conference for teachers on the weekend of the finals.

Eligibility: the competition is open to ensembles numbering from three to eight performers, using any instrumentation and/or voice.

Prizes: First prize is \$5000, second prize is \$4000 and third prize is \$2500. Other prizes will be announced in time.

Key dates: entries are open from 29 January to 21 May 2020. The finals and teachers' conference will be held in Melbourne 4-6 September 2020.

Entries and subsidies: entries will be uploaded via video and subsidies may be awarded to eligible applicants to travel to Melbourne. More information is available by signing up to the Musica Viva mailing list – musicaviva.com.au/mcmc

ASME (Vic) Chapter Council

2019-2020

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Our favourite resources

Suggested by members of the ASME Chapter Council

Indigenous Music

ASME WA Indigenous Resource webpage : https://www.asme.edu.au/wa/projects/indigenous-resource-page/?fbclid=IwAR36JkdnAG0ktl0pLw0-C-DQBo83nN9lq-qPfQmvosdPKIGSYy_0tF16Lac

Embedding Indigenous Cultures in Music Education Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/janenicholas1967/>

Music Technology

Midnight Music webpage: <https://midnightmusic.com.au/>

Midnight Music Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/midnightmusic/>

Music Education advocacy

Music Australia – *Music is Good* fact sheet and infographics: <https://musicaustralia.org.au/publications/music-is-good-music-australia-education-fact-sheet-2017/>

Christopher Small, *Music, Society, Education*, Wesleyan University Press (revised edition 1996)

Great websites

<https://www.incredibokx.com/> – composition program

<https://musiclab.chromeexperiments.com/> – composition program

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAgCcJ4b_xc – *Ingoma* – University of Pretoria Youth Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSGTijmjtuo> – A great African Song with movement

<https://sites.google.com/view/scpasme/home> – ASME (Vic) Student Composer Project

Classroom resources

Marimba books by Walt Hamptons, plus Youtube clips of actual performances.

Take Note – a series on musical literacy by Melbourne music teachers Ruth Friend and Davina McClure.