ASME (SA) Chapter Newsletter
Term 4, 2026

Welcome to the Term 4, 2026 edition of the SA Chapter Newsletter!
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ASME SA Chairperson's Report

By Samara Churchett

Dear ASME SA and NT Members,

As another school year draws to a close, Term 4 offers us a rare opportunity to look back. For music educators, the year can sometimes pass in a blur of lessons, rehearsals, performances, assessment, concerts and the thousand other things that happen between them. The same can be true of the work of a professional association. Looking back across 2026, however, I am struck not simply by how much ASME SA has been able to do, but by the connections that have made that work possible.

Earlier this year, I wrote about the importance of belonging and community in music education, and last term reflected on the idea that we are better together: that the strength of our profession lies in educators learning from one another, across schools, sectors, year levels and geographical boundaries. Looking back now, those ideas seem to have become something of an unplanned theme for our year.

We began 2026 with **SACE Space**, bringing music educators from across South Australia and the Northern Territory together to share practice around Music Explorations, Music Studies, Solo and Ensemble Performance and the emerging directions of SACE renewal. What stood out to me then, and still does, was that some of the most valuable learning happened in the conversations around the sessions. Experienced teachers shared what works, newer teachers asked questions, regional and NT colleagues joined us online, and we were reminded that none of us needs to navigate the complexities of senior secondary music alone.

That professional sharing continued through our **SACE Creative Arts webinar**, led by council member Alistair Ward, and later took a very different form through our partnership with **Musical Futures International**. Led by Chris Koelma, the Musical Futures workshop gave educators the opportunity to become learners again by playing, experimenting, collaborating, creating and exploring contemporary approaches to music technology and songwriting. Sometimes the best professional learning is not simply about being told about good practice, but experiencing it ourselves.

One of the achievements of which our Chapter can be particularly proud is **ASME's *Music – Can Do!*** This is the seventh year that this 6-day PD package has been run, enabling each cohort of early years and primary educators to facilitate music learning in their own settings. My sincere thanks go to Alice Combe, Chris Narroway and Sally Oxenberry for sharing their expertise, and to Jenny Rosevear for her continued work administering the program.

This work matters. If we believe that every child should have access to quality, sequential and ongoing music education, then building the confidence of the educators who begin that journey with our youngest learners is one of the most practical ways we can contribute towards making that aspiration a reality. This opportunity continues to be made possible through the **SA Department for Education's Music Education Strategy**, and I note that the strength of this initiative as an example, combined with the ongoing work of **Music: Right from the Start**, we're seeing more education departments around Australia, such as NSW, taking next steps to follow suit and provide further training for primary teachers in Music Education.

Last term, we collaborated with **SA HALT Network** to deliver 'Know Your Standards, Improve Your Practice' - a workshop specifically aimed at supporting Arts Educators to understand the AITSL standards for teachers and what evidence collection can look like within an Arts Context. One of the most valuable aspects of this event, for attendees, was learning about the individual experiences of others on their leadership journeys, and I thank presenters Belinda Parr and Amanda Rugari for their contributions in this space.

Our community has also grown geographically this year. Following the dissolution of the former NT Chapter, we were delighted to welcome **Elspeth Carnegie** to our Council as our NT representative.

Elspeth has brought an important voice to our discussions and a commitment to rebuilding opportunities for Northern Territory music educators to connect professionally and socially. We have already seen NT colleagues participate in SACE Space and other online professional learning this year, and I hope that the relationship between our SA and NT members continues to grow.

Of course, ASME's work is ultimately about what happens for young people. For more than 50 years, our **Young Composers Awards** have given emerging composers an opportunity to have their music heard, receive feedback and see themselves as composers. It's wonderful to continue to see students grow creatively and shine on a national level, as we heard in the experience of student, Marco Rugari, in our Term 3 Newsletter. We look forward to showcasing and celebrating more young composers at the 2026 YCA Awards concert in November.

While much has happened here in SA and the NT, ASME has also been working on behalf of music educators nationally. In 2026, ASME made a submission to the Australian Government's **National Cultural Policy Review**, arguing that music education should be recognised as an explicit pillar of cultural policy. Importantly, the submission called for universal access to music education regardless of location or circumstance, alongside investment in a sustainable music education workforce.

ASME has also continued its partnership with **Music Education: Right from the Start**, joining organisations from across the sector in advocating for every Australian child to have access to quality music education. These national conversations connect strongly with the work occurring here in South Australia through the Music Education Strategy and initiatives such as *Music – Can Do!* Advocacy is important, but it becomes particularly powerful when it is accompanied by practical work that helps make quality music education possible.

There is important work happening within ASME too. Nationally, the organisation has undertaken a substantial revision of its Rules to broaden representation in decision-making, and the coming year will see work begin on ASME's first **Reconciliation Action Plan** and a new **National Strategic Plan**, alongside a renewed focus on collaboration between the National body and State Chapters.

And that collaboration will have a very visible home in **Adelaide in 2027**! Next September, we will welcome music educators from around Australia to the ASME National Conference at Prince Alfred College under the theme **Music Connects**. It feels a particularly appropriate theme after the year we have had. Whether connecting teachers with one another, strengthening pathways between different stages of music education, bringing SA and NT educators together, supporting young musicians, or connecting local practice with national advocacy, so much of ASME's work depends upon relationships.

None of that happens by accident, and none of it happens without volunteers. This year five members of our Council were recognised through the Educators SA Volunteers' Service Ceremony, representing service ranging from a first year through to more than 30 years - shout out to Keith Huxtable! Behind every conference, workshop, award, newsletter, meeting and advocacy conversation are educators giving their time because they believe that music education matters. **World Teachers Day 2026**, celebrated on October 30, will provide another opportunity to acknowledge the incredible work of our volunteers. If you would like to contribute to our team and be part of building a more musical future, that continues to support educators and advocates for music education for all, I hope you will consider registering for our upcoming AGM, and joining our chapter Council.

So, as 2026 comes to an end, my deepest thanks go to our wonderful SA Chapter Council, our presenters and partners, and particularly to **you, our members**. Thank you for attending, contributing, sharing resources, asking questions, encouraging colleagues and remaining part of this professional community. Perhaps that is the thing I will remember most about ASME in 2026. Our impact is not measured simply by the number of events we hold. It is found in what happens because people connect: a teacher trying something new; a colleague feeling less isolated; a generalist teacher finding the confidence to make music with their class; a young composer deciding that their music is worth sharing; a teacher becomes a leader.

Those connections matter and I am excited to see where they take us next. I wish you, your colleagues, and your families a smooth sail into the end of the school year, and I look forward to continuing our work together in 2027. *Warm regards,* ***Samara Churchett,*** *Chairperson, ASME (SA)*

ASME 2027 National Conference in Adelaide

The Organising Committee has been working with Nectar Creative Communications (the conference organiser involved in the ASME National Conference in Brisbane in 2025). The Organising Committee includes members from SA and Victoria as follows:

SA	VIC
Kellie Blacker	Sue Arney
Hamish Buckley	Katie Hull-Brown
Emily Dollman	Emily Wilson
Sarah Horne	
Veronica Marrie	
Chris Narroway	
Jenny Rosevear (convenor)	
Fiona Turner	

We are pleased to announce that the conference will be two full days on Thursday September 30 and Friday October 1, 2027, with some pre-conference activities being planned for the afternoon of Wednesday 29 September, 2027. The conference venue is Prince Alfred college, which is ideally suited for such a conference.

The Organising Committee has been exploring ideas for presenters, and as indicated in the Term 3 Newsletter, **Dr Anita Collins** has already been secured as a keynote speaker.

Conference website: https://www.asmeconference.org.au/

Gathering for Darwin and NT music teachers

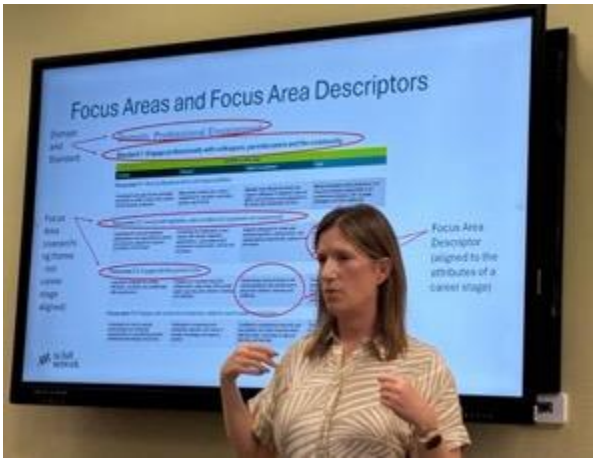
An informal gathering for Darwin and NT music teachers is being planned for mid-term, with the aim of fostering connections, collaboration, and a stronger sense of community among music educators across the Territory. If you are interested in attending, please contact **Elspeth Carnegie** at elspeth.carnegie@essington.nt.edu.au. It has been wonderful to hear from so many teachers who have already expressed their interested in attending such a gathering, and it is hoped even more will join the conversation.

Report on ASME SA HALT Workshop

By Amanda Rugari, ASME SA Council member

This ASME/HALT Network Shared Professional Development workshop, titled *Know Your Standards, Improve Your Practice,* was held on Saturday September 12, 2026 at the Education Development Centre, Hindmarsh. This workshop was in response to teacher interest in the HALT process from an Arts lens which paired well with gaining an understanding of the AITSL standards and how these could be used to improve practice. **Belinda Parr** (Lead teacher, HALT Assessor, Pedagogy Coach) explained the lexicon of the AITSL standards and attendees discussed what would be considered good evidence to demonstrate the relevant standard. This type of discussion was beneficial to not only aspiring HALT's but Pre-Service Teachers and Early Career Teachers as they work towards proficiency.

My experience of gaining Highly Accomplished Teacher Certification was well worth the effort. My practice has strengthened, leading to personal career growth through leadership opportunities, student outcomes have improved, and music has grown at my site. I collected data to inform practice and researched what teaching pedagogies would have the most impact for my cohort. I embedded different pedagogies and practices until they became habit. The growth in my practice has enabled me to support colleagues at my site, through offering support and advice and delivering professional development. Whether or not you are thinking about pursuing HALT certification, having a good understanding of the AITSL standards and identifying areas of improvement will support you in becoming and maintaining excellence as an educator.



R: Belinda Parr

* *Editor's note:*
Another component of the workshop was on Graduate Teacher Performance Assessment for which guest presenter **Kate Goodes** outlined what is involved. Developed by the Education Council, comprising all Australian Education Ministers, the GTPA seeks to meet the national requirement for all preservice teachers to undertake a summative assessment to demonstrate professional readiness.

2026 Young Composers Awards - Showcase and Concert

By Felicity Davies, Coordinator of ASME SA Young Composers Award, ASME SA Council member

You are warmly invited to attend the **2026 Young Composers Award Showcase and Concert**, a celebration of South Australia's emerging musical talent. The concert will feature selected works from a wide range of categories, and the announcement of this year's award winners.

Date: Sunday 29 November 2026
Time: 4.00pm - 6.00pm
Venue: Pembroke School Music Department Rehearsal Area

Entry: The Grandstand building is located at the end of the Kensington Community Leisure Centre YMCA, accessible at 344 The Parade, Kensington Park SA 5068

The concert is a wonderful opportunity to hear the work of young composers, songwriters and arrangers, and to celebrate the next generation of local creators. The quality of submissions this year is outstanding, and we invite teachers, students, and the wider community to come along and show their support for these talented composers.

Tickets:
Tickets are available here or at the QR code →

- **General Admission:** $10 (supports ASME SA in running this annual competition)
- **Free Admission:** Performers, award winners, and children under 15

Come and join us for an inspiring afternoon celebrating the next generation of South Australian composers!

Details of the 2026 ASME SA Young Composers Awards [YCA] are on the ASME website for YCA:
Home page - https://asme.edu.au/
Click on 'Chapters'
Select 'South Australia'
Select 'Chapter Activities'
Select 'ASME SA Young Composers Award' – contains general information, results from the last three years, Conditions of Entry and Categories 2026.

ASME Victoria – Sound Connections conference

By Anthea Mur

Sound Connections 2026 - a Bursary recipient's ever-so-grateful perspective!

The ASME Victorian Chapter *Sound Connections* Conference was held over two very full days, September 30 and October 1, 2026 at the stunning Scotch College in Hawthorn. I successfully applied for a bursary from ASME (SA) which covered my registration fee to attend.

As a long-term instrumental Woodwind teacher here in Adelaide, with students ranging in age from six to 86, there were many sessions that were very suited to my work and many sessions that I chose to open my mind further about this great world we work in! Having pored over my notes, I have included a few pieces of gold, some people you may be keen to connect with or follow on Linkedin ☺

Texan **Dr Nicholas Enrico Williams** (ABODA), a trumpet player currently the Director of Bands and Professor of Music at the University of Georgia was an entertaining and informative speaker; his topic being 'Creating Meaningful Rehearsals in Limited Time'. Nick emphasized the importance of planning your rehearsals, sharing that plan with your students, varying your starting points within each piece and ensuring your warm-up exercises actually connect with your planned repertoire. For teachers experiencing limited rehearsal time in particular, make good use of older students to mentor those with less experience (it benefits both!). Identify the 20% of your score that contains 80% of the 'difficult' music. Instead of referring to a 'rehearsal', he likes to call it 'musical growth time'. Gold. And always remember, 'what gets rewarded, gets repeated'! Nick also recommended Ingrid Martin's book 'Planning Effective Rehearsals'.

Dr Sue Arney (The University of Melbourne) spoke about 'Powerful Partnerships to Strengthen Music Programs'. While she was reflecting on her experience working in smaller, regional schools, I think we have all had experience in schools where we could strengthen and grow our programs. Sue emphasized the importance of developing a wide circle of partnerships with staff and colleagues; create and strengthen, talk and listen, value, allow and celebrate and understand others (it is not always about us!). Undertake a SWOT analysis; what are our program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats? Use your student leadership and their passion for music! Know other staff i.e., don't hide in the music staffroom, mix with others in the main staffroom. Remember, very few Principals and members of the Leadership team have ever been music teachers - show them. Involve them. Develop strong connections with parents; encourage their involvement. Remember also that local governments often provide funding for youth projects and groups such as Lions/Apex/Rotary are often keen to get involved in creative youth projects.

Sammy J, a keynote speaker, was an absolute highlight of the conference for many attendees! Truly hilarious, his presentation titled 'I blame my teachers' was on point, creative, fast-paced (of course) and generous in spirit. While referencing Tom Lehrer, John Marsden and Ralph Vaughan Williams, his main message was that while curriculum is an important part of education, it is the belief that his teachers had in him that is most memorable. Those small moments when you show your students that they matter; listen to them and be present.

Having many adult students, I was particularly interested in the Community Music sessions, which were varied and informative. **Dr Craig Barrie** and **Nicki Johnson** from Community Music Victoria ran a great workshop full of participation and singing! Their emphasis was on the various aspects of Community Music; Playful, Immersive, Embodied, Communal and Participatory. I currently have students in six Adelaide bands and loved the ideas presented in this session about having a 'buddy' system for welcoming new band members and setting aside a social time, before, during or after the rehearsal to ensure all feel welcome. After all, making music is a wonderful experience that we want to share!

Arzu Yuvariak (VMTA) gave a fascinating presentation on Community Music as a participatory, culturally grounded practice and her experience in the Melbourne Turkish community. The concerts that she has organized were just incredible!

John and **Carolyn Conway** spoke of their long history at Darebin City Brass and the band's use as a vehicle for diversity and inclusion. The number of young people who have benefited from tuition, mentorship and performance opportunities was truly inspiring.

While this is only a taste of some of the sessions I attended, I hope it gives you an idea of the amazing conference presented in Melbourne last week. I sincerely thank ASME SA for the opportunity to attend; I came home inspired and ready to jump into Term 4 with energy and new ideas! If you have any queries, please reach out to me through any of the usual channels.

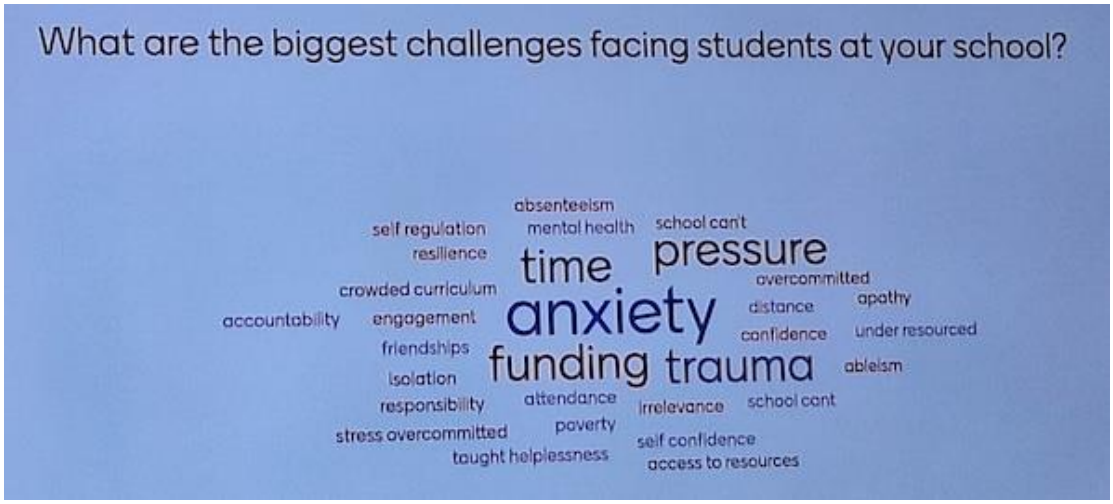
Bless you all for a wonderful Term 4 full of creativity and joy, Anthea.

P.S. ASME Victoria put together a fast-paced reel showing pictures and video snips on their Facebook page which you view via this link: https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1CnL9tigxi/

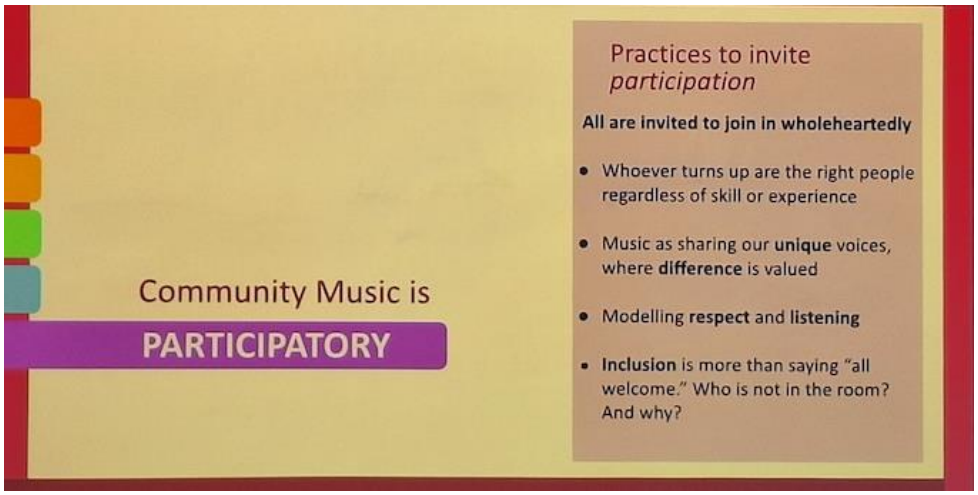
Left: AMEB First Nations Panel
L to R: Steve Hodgson (moderator), James Henry, Aaron Wyatt, Dr Candace Kruger

R: Keynote by Sammy J, titled *I Blame My Teachers*

L to R:Lara Sydenham, Anthea Mur, Michelle Forbes, Linda Duke reunite with their former Adelaide Uni Music Ed lecturer, Jenny Rosevear

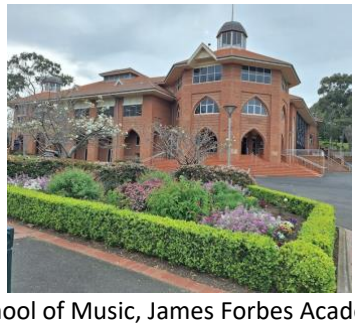


Above: Feedback from participants during a session.

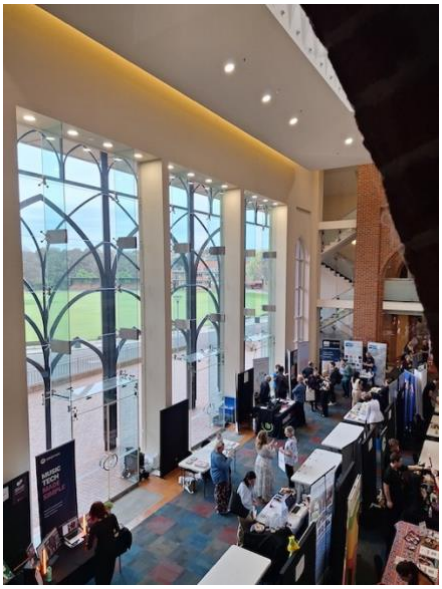


L: Community Music

John and Carolyn Conway, Darebin City Brass



Above: School of Music, James Forbes Academy Scotch College



Above: Trade display

Reflections on the Kodály National conference, Adelaide

By Veronica Marrie, Chris Narroway and Jenny Rosevear - ASME SA Council members

Adelaide welcomed music educators from across Australia and the World for the 2026 Kodály Australia Conference, *Sing, Move, Thrive: A Kodály Journey for Every Learner*, held from September 28 to October 1, 2026, at Pulteney Grammar School.

The conference brought together educators, practitioners and musicians for four days of professional learning, practical workshops, presentations, musicianship sessions and performances. The conference theme invited delegates to consider how Kodály-inspired pedagogy can support every learner, across diverse educational settings and stages of musical development. Through practical music-making and professional dialogue, participants had opportunities to reflect on their teaching, share experiences and consider new possibilities for music learning.

The ASME SA Chapter proudly sponsored two sessions at the conference, supporting ASME Council members - **Felicity Davies** and **Veronica Marrie** - to share their practice and contribute to the national conversation about effective music teaching and learning.

Felicity's interactive workshop on the topic of **The Second-Best Time is Now: Weaving Kodály-Inspired Practice into Secondary Music Classrooms** considered the question: *is it ever too late to begin a Kodály journey?* – thus exploring what working with secondary students, who may have had little or no previous experience with Kodály-inspired learning, might look like. Felicity shared practical, inclusive strategies for building confidence through voice, movement, listening and musical ideas, including ways to introduce singing in welcoming, low-stakes ways within existing programs. Felicity demonstrated that Kodály-inspired practice does not require a complete curriculum overhaul. She suggested ways to incorporate contemporary genres, technology, creativity, inner hearing and differentiated learning, offering a timely reminder that a Kodály journey can begin at any stage of a student's musical development.

Veronica Marrie presented **What Happens When Kodály Meets a Primary Band Program?**, sharing insights from the implementation of St Paul's College's new Year 4 Band Immersion Program. Drawing on her experience as a music educator, conductor and Kodály Secondary Level 3 graduate, and her Master of Education research into the alignment of Kodály-inspired pedagogy with primary instrumental band programs, Veronica explored how core Kodály principles can be embedded within a primary band setting. The practical workshop invited delegates to consider how singing, movement, listening and sequential learning can support the development of musicianship alongside instrumental skills. Veronica shared strategies from the Year 4 program that connect classroom preparation with instrumental learning, helping students develop musical understanding as they learn to play. The session also outlined the program's approach to gathering evidence about students' musical development and the broader impact of instrumental learning, reflecting an ongoing commitment to evaluating and refining the program as it develops.

Each of the four full days began with a keynote speaker, each from diverse backgrounds.

Keynote Day 1 - Naomi Crellin

Naomi Crellin provided insights into her own musical development right from early childhood, through school, graduation from The University of Adelaide in Jazz Voice (having started on classical piano), then joining *The Idea of North,* Australia's premier contemporary professional a cappella group. She became Musical Director of the group at the age of 23 (a position which she still holds more than 20 years later) and she has made a significant contribution to the group's repertoire. In addition, Naomi currently leads Nexus NDV, a high-level harmony group for neurodivergent young adults aged 18-35'ish at the Sydney Conservatorium Open Academy. During COVID, Naomi studied Counselling, and currently shares her time between her wide range of music activities and counselling.

Keynote Day 2 - Dr Jason Goopy

Dr Jason Goopy is a lecturer and coordinator of Secondary and Instrumental Music at Edith Cowan University and a specialist in Kodály-inspired music education. Jason is also the Immediate Past President of ASME.

Jason presented his teaching and learning approach, *Strengths-Based Musicking: Flourishing in a Kodály-Inspired Music Education*. His presentation focused on intentional interactions with students and was built around the following key ideas:

1. Start from what they can already do
2. Name the capability out loud
3. Reach the difficulty through the strength
4. Design the environment

Jason delivered his address with warmth and positivity, providing practical strategies to support student wellbeing through success.

Keynote Day 3 - Lucinda Geoghegan

Lucinda Geoghegan is currently a Theory and Musicianship Lecturer at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, working in both the Senior and Junior departments. She is also a guest lecturer on summer and annual courses at the Kodály Institute in countries across the world, including Australia.

Lucinda's keynote, *Multi-modal Learning in the Classroom – Meaningful Experiences for All Children*, presented her perspective on inclusion. She highlighted that incorporating kinaesthetic, visual and auditory learning in music programs leads to higher engagement, greater accessibility and deeper learning. Lucinda also challenged attendees to think more broadly about access for children with disability in music learning, noting that *"Children with a physical, visual or learning impairment are often disabled by music learning".* She reinforced the importance of focusing on what children can do, rather than on their disability. We were also introduced to Paul Whittaker, a deaf music educator from the UK, and one of his early years resources, *Sing, Sign and Play,* which is available free of charge at: www.nycos.co.uk/sing-sign-play

Keynote Day 4 - Dr Árpád Tóth

Dr Árpád Tóth is a conductor, music teacher, composer and full-time professor at a Hungarian university in Romania. He is well known for his talks about music and singing. Árpád spoke on the final day, and as I overheard someone say, *"He delivered his presentation in his fourth language with no notes".* This remarkable delivery may have contributed to the impact he had on everyone in the room. His presentation was emotive and powerful, drawing on elements of his heritage, history and personal philosophy.

His address, *We Sing Who We Are – Songs as Identity*, told the story of a song his grandfather sang to him as a child and how that melodic thread could be heard in many other musical passages. Across different cultures, religions, places and contexts, the same melody appeared. He connected this idea to his own life experiences and posed the thought-provoking question: *"Can we own a song?"*

Conference Highlights

The conference catered for participants at all levels of learning. It offered seven strands of musicianship learning delivered by highly qualified lecturers, pedagogy coaching and development from preschool to secondary levels, and a fun yet challenging participants' choir. The wonderful uplifting choral performances every lunch break from local and interstate choirs including Young Adelaide Voices, Young Voices of Melbourne and Australian Girls Choir started off our choral sessions with Árpád every afternoon. The many evening events, including a choral concert at Elder Hall, were at capacity with appreciative audiences for spectacular choir performances.

ASME congratulates Kodály SA and all those involved in delivering the 2026 national conference. We extend our congratulations to the presenters, organisers, performers, volunteers and sponsors whose contributions made this professional learning opportunity possible. Through continued collaboration and investment in music educators, we can strengthen music education across Australia and support teachers to create rich, engaging and inclusive musical experiences for every learner.

The conference also provided excellent networking opportunities, meeting up with friends and colleagues, both new, and old.

Above: The SA contingent at the Kodaly National Conference.

Workshop presenter, Veronica Marrie (SA). Award for Excellence 2026 – Innovation presented to Veronica at the conference.

L - Chris Gould (accompanist, Australian Girls Choir), R - Katie Carey (Conductor AGC) with their former Adelaide Uni Music Ed lecturer, Jenny Rosevear

L – Maxine Lee-Morath,
R- Deborah Brennan, former Music Ed students with Jenny Rosevear

Primary Schools Music Festival

By Catie W (year 10 student, Aberfoyle Park High School)

Catie W, a year 10 student at Aberfoyle Park High School, performed in this year's Primary School Music Festival Orchestra during Week 9 of Term 3 in the Adelaide Entertainment Centre.

Catie writes:

> The Festival of Music Orchestra is an amazing experience for young musicians of different skill levels to be able to be part of a professional music production. All of the school students in the Orchestra have a passion for music and are keen to perform with the Festival of Music Choir. The students are from Year 5 all the way up to Year 11. I am a Year 10 student and I have been a part of the Festival of Music for several years. I was in the choir for two years in primary school, and this is my third year in the orchestra. It has been an amazing experience where I have gotten to meet students from a wide variety of different schools who also have a passion for music.
>
> There is one rehearsal after school every week up until the performances, with a few full-day rehearsals to practise the whole repertoire of songs. At all the rehearsals there are talented conductors who make the songs come to life, along with heaps of other music teachers who are keen to help you. There are also rehearsals a few weeks prior to the concerts, when everything starts to come together and we get to play with the choir and performance troupe. Then, of course, there are the performances, when you get to play for thousands of people over multiple concerts. It is such an amazing feeling being part of such a professional production, and it's the part I look forward to each year.

Above: APHS Students in PSMF Orchestra –
L to R - Leo J (year 7), Catie W (year 10) and Rohan J (year 10)

Above: 2026 songbook cover

Catholic Schools Music Festival - Many Voices. One Journey

By Veronica Marrie

> *What happens when thousands of young musicians from Catholic schools across South Australia come together to share a stage?*

The Catholic Schools Music Festival is a large-scale celebration of music performance, but it is also an extended learning experience. It asks students to prepare, listen, collaborate, respond, perform and discover their place within a much larger musical community. In 2026, the Festival's theme - *Many Voices. One Journey* - provided a fitting reflection of this experience. Students from different schools, with diverse musical backgrounds and levels of experience, came together through a shared commitment to music-making.

One of the most striking features of the Festival is the diversity of ways in which students participate. The 2026 Support Acts included stage and big bands, choirs, vocal jazz ensembles, vocal quartets, solo singers, pianists, an accordionist, a guzheng player, an acoustic/electric guitarist and a senior drum corp. Repertoire ranged from classical and traditional works to jazz, contemporary popular music and musical theatre, including music by Mendelssohn, Pachelbel, Stevie Wonder, Guns N' Roses, The Church, Florence + The Machine and Sarah Bareilles. This breadth is significant. There is no single definition of what it means to be a young musician at the Festival. A student's musical voice might emerge through singing, instrumental performance, improvisation, ensemble playing, solo performance or a particular cultural musical tradition. Each provides a valuable pathway into music-making.

For an audience member, the Festival may be experienced primarily through the finished performance. For students and teachers, however, the performance is the culmination of considerable preparation. Students learn repertoire, develop technical skills, rehearse with others, respond to musical direction and learn to listen beyond their own part. They also navigate the practical demands of performance, from sound checks and equipment management to working with technical staff and maintaining concentration in an unfamiliar environment. These are musical skills, but they are also transferable learning experiences.

Playing in an ensemble requires students to understand that their individual contribution matters while recognising that the quality of the whole depends upon the contributions of others. They must listen, adjust, respond and contribute to a collective musical intention. In this way, the Festival provides an authentic context for experiencing the social and collaborative nature of music-making. The Festival also provides an important bridge between music education within individual schools and the broader musical community. Students encounter musicians from other schools, work within a large-scale performance environment and experience what it means to contribute to something much larger than their own ensemble.

Behind these experiences is the significant work of music educators: preparing repertoire, developing musical skills, rehearsing ensembles, supporting individual students and creating opportunities for young people to perform. The applause may last only a few moments, but the learning that leads to that performance can extend much further.

As with the government Primary Schools Music Festival, the Catholic Schools Music Festival offers young people an opportunity to experience themselves not simply as students learning music, but as musicians contributing to a larger musical community. Many voices. One journey. And, for thousands of young musicians, an opportunity to discover where their own voice belongs.

ABODA School Band Festival 2026

The Australian Band and Orchestra Directors' Association (ABODA) presented the annual SA School Band and Orchestra Festival (SASBOF), where over 3000 students from nearly 40 schools performed at Westminster School and Brighton Secondary School over 5 days in August.

NASSSA and Northern Sound Systems

By Amanda Rugari

Northern Adelaide State Secondary Schools' Alliance [NASSSA] is an alliance of northern Adelaide secondary schools, formed to increase learning opportunities, career pathway considerations, retention and educational outcomes for students, by collaborating, combining resources and connecting with local community and industry.

NASSSA Music Showcase
On Wednesday September 2, Riverbanks B-12 College hosted the first ever NASSSA Music Showcase. This showcase was an opportunity for schools within the NASSSA CAT to present a set of performance items of their choosing and involved 100 students. The event was organised through NESMEA (Northern Environs Secondary Educators Alliance) and supported by Northern Sound Systems and NASSSA. On the evening, Headspace provided information on their local resources and attendees could provide donations.

The event was a testament to the collaboration between the different organisations in providing a performance opportunity for our young people that was different to a competition or Eisteddfod. Our young people enjoyed watching peers from other schools and gained inspiration from the different styles of music and ensembles that were presented. The programme ranged from rock and heavy metal bands, solo singer/songwriters, jazz and contemporary choirs and a big band. At the end of the night, affirmations had been given, friendships had been forged and students gained confidence from the power of music bringing a community together.

ASME(SA) AGM

The ASME(SA) AGM meeting is to be held in Term 4 – date and details to be advised.

ASME (SA) Chapter Council

Chairperson:	Samara Churchett	
Vice Chairperson:	Gemma Heath	
Secretary:	Jenny Rosevear	
Treasurer:	Antony Hubmayer	
Council members:	Elspeth Carnegie (NT)	Beth Lyon
	Felicity Davies	Veronica Marrie
	Emily Dollman	Chris Narroway
	Ben Fuller	Amanda Rugari
	Keith Huxtable	Kay Smith
	Sarah Horne	Alistair Ward

Contact ASME (SA) - asmesa.music@gmail.com

ASME YouTube Channel and Social Media

Link to ASME YouTube Channel is here – please subscribe.

The ASME (SA) Facebook page continues to support music educators, while another initiative of ASME (SA) – the Music Teachers of South Australia Facebook group - provides a wide forum for music educators. Regularly people are posting job opportunities, a range of PD available or a variety of performances available to schools.
Click the images below to visit the pages on Facebook!