

School of Music - Conservatorium 2009 End of Year Newsletter



Monash School of Music in 2009 - Reasons to Celebrate!

As we all know, 2009 has been a very difficult year for Music in the higher education sector in Victoria. The Australian National Academy of Music was beset by financial and management strife earlier in the year, and our colleagues at the Victorian College of the Arts / Faculty of Music at the University of Melbourne are still plagued by controversial reforms that continue to be discussed and criticised in the media in response to public concerns over the quality of tertiary music education.

By comparison we have enjoyed a very successful year and we have much to celebrate and to be thankful for. For example, at the time of writing there has been a staggering 44% increase in first preferences for our BMus degree and the number of applications for our postgraduate programmes has also soared.

Our Achievements in 2009

Curriculum Review

One of the most vital projects in the School for 2009 was the commencement of a review of the Bachelor of Music curriculum that will take effect from 2011. So far considerable progress has been made with further changes and refinements under consideration (to be approved by the Arts Faculty) in 2010.

The new curriculum proposes to:

1. Re-badge 'Chief Practical Study' as 'Chief Musical Study' to enable majors in Musicology (including Ethnomusicology) from Second Year.
2. Replace 'Exploring Music 1' and 'Exploring Music 2' with three brand new (and compulsory) units at first-year level:
 - Harmony, Aural Training and Analysis (semesters 1 and 2);
 - Western Music (semester 1);
 - World Music (semester 2) (Exact unit titles to be confirmed).

In years 2 and 3, there will be much greater scope for students to choose their own electives and to tailor-make their own pathway in composition, musicology or performance.

Website

Our website underwent two major transformations in 2009: a complete overhaul of content and the design of a new home page.

Two new 'pages' were added to better sell our degrees: '10 reasons to study music at Monash' and '10 reasons for undertaking a higher degree in music at Monash'.

A giving 'page' has recently been added to give donors the opportunity to support our school. It includes current donors to the school.

Further improvements in 2010 will see the addition of more graphics on the site and more detailed information about course structures and pathways arising from the new BMus curriculum.



Concerts and Community Engagement

The School participated in two very successful community engagements.

Monash Sinfonia members Michael Zhou, Edward Antonov, Alex White and Tim Hennessy travelled with Elizabeth Sellars, Alex Rasch and Fred Wallace to Gippsland to play in the Gippsland Bush Fire Relief Fund-raising concert at the Gippsland Campus.

Sinfonia played to an audience of more than 600 people alongside a community of country, folk and pop singers in an epic event which included an auction of donated items. The event rose close to \$30,000 and the students were honoured to be able to contribute to the fund-raising efforts of the Gippsland community.



In August the classical voice students under the direction of Loris Synan staged a 'Songathon' in the School. It was compered by Julie Houghton (from 3MBSFM) and accompanied by pianist Angela Dhar, recorder-player Katrina Dowling, percussionist Liz Zetzman and guitarist David Mozur. A total of \$7000 was raised for the Creative Connections programme at Bethlehem Hospital.

Student Achievements

This year's Concerto Competition winner was Jin Shi Tang. The finalists were Zoe Stephen, Jin Shi Tang, Amy Tcheupdjian and Jason Xanthoudakis.

Timothy Lawrence won the 2009 Monash Music Society/Frankston Music Society composition for his work 'Overture for the Modern Hero' and was performed by the Frankston Symphony Orchestra and the Mornington Peninsula Chorale at the Proms Concert on 20 September.

The Picnics, a Monash School of Music flute ensemble, won the flute choir section at the Australian Flute Festival, University of Adelaide in October.

PhD student, Julie Waters, was winner of the Faculty of Arts poster competition featuring British composer, Alan Bush.

Musicians' Agency

One particularly successful endeavour in 2009 was the continued success of the Monash Musicians' Agency. Comprising School of Music students, ensembles are hired out at professional rates to all manner of social and cultural engagements. Some of the 41 engagements this year have included the 'Taste of Melbourne' Festival, various appearances for the University's Vice Chancellor's Office, the Distinguished Alumni Awards, the Oakleigh Community Festival, the Welcome Ceremony for the new director of Monash Prato and the Chinese Consulate of Melbourne's festival 'Day of China'.

Zavod Classic/Jazz Fusion Performers Award 2010

Pianist and composer Allan Zavod's performance prize will be administered and granted by Monash University, School of Music. Ambassador and Benefactor of the prize is Dame Elisabeth Murdoch.

Unveiling of Jazz Sculpture

Albert Dadon AM, Chairman of the Australian Jazz Awards, donated the Jazz Bell Sculpture to the School. The unveiling was held on Tuesday 15 December 2009 in the Courtyard of the Performing Arts Complex.

Staff Achievements

Dr Tony Gould was awarded Australia's most valuable and prestigious individual music prize—the Don Banks Music Award funded by the Australia Council. The Council presented Tony with the \$60,000 award at a ceremony at Bennetts Lane Jazz Club celebrating his rich contribution to Australian music.

Tony was also awarded the 2009 Classical Music Award for the Instrumental Work 'The River Meets the Sea' jointly composed with David Jones and Imogen Manins.

Professor Margaret Kartomi was Guest of Honour at a celebration in the Matheson Library on 30 March to mark the inclusion of the 'Kartomi Collection of Traditional Musical Arts in Sumatra' in the Library's online ARROW repository.

Dr Thomas Reiner visited Alaska in March where his Alaska Sinfonietta was premiered at the Juneau Arts and Cultural Center and the community outreach centre at Auke Bay Elementary School.

Tamara Smolyar (piano) and Ivana Tomaskova (violin) performed the following works at this year's 'Music in the Round' by Thomas Reiner, 'Folk song without words'; 'A variation on Tim Buckley's Song to the Siren' for violin and piano and 'Transgressions and Dysphoria' for violin and piano; and by Otmar Macha: 'Elegie for Violin and Piano' (1982, Australian premiere).

Awards

Dr Tony Gould was Highly Commended in the Dean's Teaching Award.

Loris Synan and Peter Sheridan were winners of the Dean's Sessional Teaching Awards.

Jodie Wood received a Commendation for Exceptional Performance by Professional Staff.



Grants and Prizes

Three major grants were secured by School staff in 2009:

1. Professor Margaret Kartomi was awarded \$297,000 over three years for an Australian Research Council Discovery Project on female body percussion in west Aceh, Indonesia.
2. Dr Paul Watt was awarded a Monash Europe Travel Grant (\$6800), which funded a Visiting Fellowship to the Institute of Musical Research, University of London and to the Department of English Literature and Culture, Radboud Universiteit, Nijmegen, the Netherlands.
3. Fintan Murphy and Liz Sellars were awarded \$5700 from the Collier Charitable Fund for the purchase of baroque bows for the performance programme.

Many staff have applied for funding for various projects in 2010 and 2011 for which we wish them the best of luck!

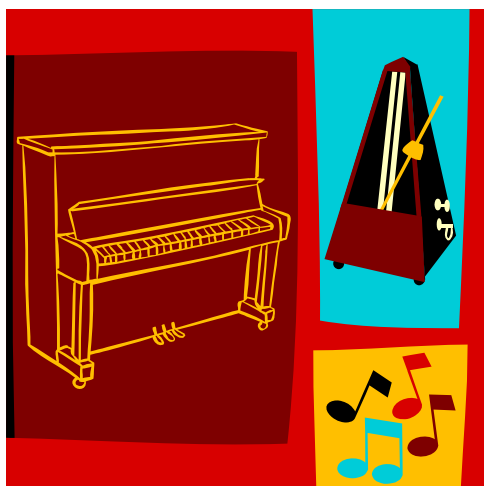
Publications

Publications by School of Music Staff and Research Adjuncts are too numerous to list, but some of the highlights for 2009 were:

Dr Kay Dreyfus and Dr Joel Crotty guest-edited a second volume of *Music and Politics*: <http://www.music.ucsb.edu/projects/musicadnpolitics>

Kay and Joel have also been commissioned to edit the first special issue of *Musicology Australia* to be published in December 2010 entitled 'The 1960s'.

Peter McIlwain was a contributor to *The Oxford Handbook of Electronic Music*.



Visiting Scholars

In 2009 the School hosted a number of distinguished guests. In February Professor John Baily (Goldsmiths, University of London) and Dr Veronica Doubleday visited to undertake comparative research on Afghan music.

John and Veronica participated in Research Work in Progress Seminars in the School, gave a recital and undertook fieldwork in Melbourne and Sydney.

UK pianist, composer and teacher John Taylor visited the School in May and participated in a concert at BMW edge on 26 May.

Reading and Writing Group

A Reading and Writing Group was established as a forum for postgraduates and staff to discuss and critique each other's work in progress. The Group meets once a month and a week before the meeting participants email each other anything they have in draft for comment and feedback.

So far the group have provided feedback on a number of articles that have subsequently been accepted for publication.

Alumni

Monash Music PhD graduate Dr Ahmad Sarmast received significant press this year for his efforts to rebuild the national Institute of Music in Afghanistan. His pioneering efforts were reported in the *Age*.

More alumni will be profiled in the School's website during 2010.

New for 2010

New Scholarships

Three new scholarship schemes were established for 2010:

1. Monash-Pratt Postgraduate Award (\$6000) for a top-up for postgraduate research.
2. The Monash Memorial Hiroyuki Iwaki Orchestral Award (\$6000) for postgraduate performance studies
3. Monash Jazz Music Scholarship (\$6000 funded by an anonymous donor) for 48 credit points over one year of study

Exchange Opportunities to the Czech Republic

From December 2010 students will be eligible to undertake an exchange at the Katedra Muzikologie (Department of Music, Palacky University). The trip is proposed to occur mid-November thru to mid-December 2010, comprising 4 weeks in total. The aim of the program is to provide students with learning in a central European university and to allow students to immerse themselves in the music and culture of the Czech Republic.

In addition, students will attend several rehearsals of the Moravian Symphony Orchestra; attend a variety of rehearsals of the Moravian Opera; if an instrumentalist: perform in the end of semester student concert within the Katedra, and join in any activities of the Katedra and its students.

The cost will be \$6000 and students can apply to have this intensive program credited to a unit within Professional Practice 1, 2, 3, or 4.

Interested students are to advise Thomas Reiner on 9905 3228 or thomas.reiner@arts.monash.edu.au.



School of Music to Partner with Melbourne Opera

The School of Music is currently exploring a partnership with Melbourne Opera to provide performance opportunities for budding singers, as well as work experience in arts administration, and research potential for those interested in studying the work of a community-based arts company.

It is proposed that in 2010 Melbourne Opera will offer performances of at least one production at the Alexander Theatre, and that students might also have opportunities to perform in the chorus of their season in Melbourne.

International Conference on British Music

From 17-19 September next year the School of Music will be hosting the first ever conference on British Music to be staged in Australia. Delegates from Australia, the UK and the USA will descend on the School for three days of papers, lectures and recitals.

Closer to the time we will be asking for Student Volunteers to help run the conference so if you want a free ride to a major conference, here's your chance!

Research, Reading and Writing Guide

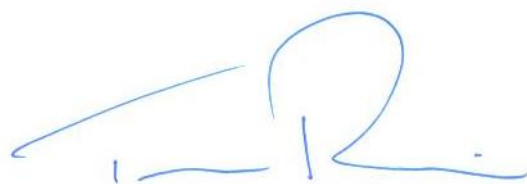
In order to help students plan, research and write essays, Dr Paul Watt has written a short guide to help students make the most of their resources and talents. Final tweaks are currently being made to the booklet and it will be published soon.

The Guide gives practical tips on how to read and analyse scholarly literature; suggests books students should read and gives instructions for formatting references and footnotes, plus much, much more.

The *Guide* will enable students to polish their writing skills and to hopefully get better grades!

Thank you

It has been a great pleasure and honour to work with all of you here in the School of Music in 2009. On behalf of the School I'd like to thank you all for your amazing work this year. The achievements and activities listed in this final news letter for 2009 demonstrate that we are well placed for another creative and prosperous year in 2010. I wish you all a wonderful summer and look forward to working with you next year.



Thomas Reiner
Head of School

Thank You