

SING IN TUNE

Many people in our community have developed good pitch matching skills, and can sing fine along with others, even in four part harmony, but struggle to sing a song in tune on their own. I often say to these people that they just don't know the song as well as they think they do! If a person internalises the building blocks of the western music system, for instance, the major scale, it is much easier to learn and remember simple songs, because they are mostly just different arrangements of that scale. Of course, there is probably also some basic pitch matching skill needing development, hearing a note internally, then reproducing it accurately, and this requires practise and some guidance.

Our new course, Sing In Tune, taught by Rachel Bayliss on Monday nights will help students develop this skill and will also include a bit of basic music theory. Attending the 'Introduction To Music Theory' workshop in January would be a great help to people wanting to sing more tunefully, combined with the Sing In Tune course, but both can be attended independently.

8 Monday nights, 8 February – 29 March, 7.30pm – 9.30pm

Cost: \$80.00/\$75.00 (Friends)

COACHED PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

We have two coached performance opportunities coming up. 'Singing Your Song' with Valerie Wycoff on Tuesday evenings is an opportunity to improve your singing and performance skills under Valerie's wonderful guidance. The performance will be self accompanied or unaccompanied. There are no pre-requisites for this course. Each of Valerie's courses will only take place once a year, so get in quick to be part of this unique opportunity. Lisa Tui's New Zealand Music Month Concert course will start in term one and continue on Saturday mornings through some of term two,

culminating in a concert in May to celebrate New Zealand Music Month. Students will learn about N.Z. music as well as help to organise the concert. This course is open to anyone who has attended a course with Lisa and also any past students who have studied for a term or longer. Lisa's student concerts in 2009 were a great success. This is an opportunity to be part of the inspiring, supportive team that develops around such activities.

SINGING YOUR SONG

7 Tuesdays 7.30 to 9.30

16 February to 30 March

Cost: \$120.00/\$110.00

NEW ZEALAND MUSIC MONTH CONCERT

11 Saturdays, 1.00pm – 3.00pm

February 13, 20, 27 & March 6, 20, 27 &

April 24 & May 1, 8, 22, 29

Plus Concert – 6.30pm – 9.30pm

\$130.00/\$120.00 (Friends of The Muse)

COME HOME TO YOUR BODY

Valerie is offering her Awareness Through Movement® classes in the Feldenkrais method® at The Muse this term. These courses are useful for all people, but of particular benefit to singers and musicians wanting to develop ease and comfort in their playing and singing.

7 Tuesdays, 16 Feb. to 30 March 6.00pm – 7.00pm

Cost: \$75.00/\$70.00 (Friends of The Muse)

WEBSITE – www.themuse.org.nz

Almost anything you need to know about The Muse is now on our website, with more content being added all the time. If you are looking for someone's phone number, or want to send an email to any of our tutors or volunteers, all that information is on the website. It saves us quite a bit of time, if you have a look for something first before ringing or emailing us for information, and good for us to know if some information is hard to find. Well, that's it from me. Wishing you all a relaxed, productive and creative 2010!

Nikki Berry



Newsletter of
THE MUSE
Community Music Trust
Summer 2010

As the new year begins, it's time to reflect on the successes and challenges of the past year, and look forward to those of the next. At The Muse we have had some fantastic times, and I hope you got to attend at least some of the events and activities you wanted to. I would like to share some highlights and I'm sure they will jog some happy memories.

2009 started with a weekend sleepover at Okains Bay, with a singing workshop led by Stephen Taberner. Learning songs with Stephen in the Okains Bay hall was great fun, and the opportunity to hang out with old friends and new, share tasks and meals and make music gave the year a great beginning. I really enjoyed the workshop opportunities we had this year; Parissa Bouas, Sanna Valvanne, Brenda Lydiard and Mark Laurent, each offering something different. Our own workshop for migrants with music to share was small, but pretty special too.

Last year we took up the opportunity to share some of our thinking and teaching with others involved in education, presenting workshops at the Adult and Community Education conference and the Music Education New Zealand Aotearoa (MENZA) conference. We offered some great courses last year, repeating some popular musical opportunities and trying out some new ones (more to come, see below). Our courses are varied, to meet the different needs in our community, but always reflect the Muse philosophy that we learn best when we feel safe, well supported and are having fun. *(Continued next page)*



Darryl weaves his magic at 'Muse on Show'

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I always enjoy the opportunity to talk to people about their goals and needs, and helping people find the course that suits them best, often a Muse course, but not always, is one of my favourite jobs.

Another highlight has been the increasing number of concerts our community has held at The Muse. Our concert room is a wonderful concert venue, with a P.A. system, lights and our lovely cafe style tables. It's great to see these resources well utilised.

Challenges for us this year included the loss of school funding for Adult and Community Education. At The Muse we hear many stories about how much benefit there is in learning, exploring and rediscovering music as adults, and we know that this experience changes lives. The reduction in educational opportunities this loss of funding will cause will far outweigh any financial savings. We are fortunate to have Ace funding support from the University and C.P.I.T. who are committed to supporting us as long as they are able.

We were devastated by the death of one of our Trustees, Juliet Anstice, this year. We miss her generous heart, her wry sense of humour and her courage as well as her musical gifts.

Looking forward to the year ahead is always exciting. We have a family music camp, new courses and who knows what other opportunities will turn up. Keep on making music wherever you are.

Jacinta O'Reilly

MUSIC THEORY & MUSICIANSHIP COURSES

Our Foundation Musicianship Course has now been broken down into two segments. The introductory weekend gives people a chance to learn the absolute fundamentals of music theory, but doesn't focus on musicianship skills. It is a necessary step for people wanting to enrol on the twenty week Foundation Musicianship Course, but will also be a great introduction for anyone who doesn't yet know how to read music, or doesn't understand how the music system works. It will be especially helpful for people wanting to attend Rachel's 'Sing In Tune' course and indeed any of Lisa or Valerie's singing courses. Many people are scared of music theory, but when it's presented systematically with kinesthetic learning aids, it is very accessible to everyone.

Saturday & Sunday, 23 & 24 January, 10.00am - 5.00pm \$130.00/\$120.00 (Friends)

FAMILY MUSIC CAMP

I am busy writing some vocal/marimba pieces for the Family Music Camp at the end of January. A few people have asked if it's ok to come without children. Our concept is for the camp not to focus on any particular age group, but to include all people. This is something that you would expect in many other cultures in the world, but something we have become a little unfamiliar with in Pakeha N.Z. society. Many parents tell me that their children know all the songs in the Open Song repertoire. I would love to have young people in the choir, but the late night makes it difficult. The idea of a Family Music Camp doesn't mean it's just open to people in traditional nuclear families. It's more about us coming together as a big family, to play, connect and enjoy music in a lovely environment.

Nikki Berry

FAMILY MUSIC CAMP - 7.30pm January 29 - 3.00pm Sunday, January 31st.

Cost: \$70.00/\$65.00 Children by donation

SING LIKE A BLOKE

The spooky men's chorale has been an enormous success both in Australia and at Festivals in Europe. Stephen thought it was about time his Christchurch friends experienced the 'bloke phenomenon'. This workshop is open to 'blokes' of all genders but we really hope the men out-number the women for a change! **Sunday, 24 January, 10.00am - 12.30pm, \$30.00/\$25.00 Friends**

LEARNING TO SING IN TUNE

As many of you know, I believe everyone can learn to sing in tune. I have heard of a very rare condition called 'tone deafness' but in all my time of teaching, I have only met one person who I suspect may have this condition, but we haven't explored the possibilities or limitations yet, so even then, I'm not sure. Someone with this condition would not be able to differentiate between one note and another. For most people who struggle to sing in tune, they are either having trouble with basic pitch matching, or they are having trouble with sequencing, or both. The first important skill to learn is pitch matching. This means that when a note is played, the person knows how to make their voice 'match' that note. This is a learned skill, that many of us learn as children, but some people need help to learn later. When I've worked with young people who are not yet pitch matching, it has usually taken about twenty minutes to help them figure out how to match my voice. With adults it varies between several hours to two or three years. It is not helpful for people who are still learning to pitch match to practise on their own, as they need someone else to confirm if they are singing the same note, until they build a sense of confidence in understanding when they are matching the note being played or sung. We have realised that people who are not yet pitch matching are excluded from many music making activities, so we have are creating a program to support the development of this skill, and have decided to subsidise it, so that

no one is excluded from the chance to learn. Our first opportunity will be a pitch matching clinic, run by Rachel Bayliss and Ken Rapson. It will be from **6.15pm - 7.15pm every Monday** during term time. You can sign up for it any time during the term, but it is helpful for us if you let us know you are coming, by booking through the website, or ringing The Muse. We suggest a donation of between \$5.00 and \$15.00 per session, depending on your income, but everyone is welcome, even if you can't afford any donation. The next step will be to train volunteers who can work one to one with people practising pitch matching, so that people can practise more than once a week. If you are a reasonably strong singer, and would like to help someone learn to pitch match, please contact The Muse. We are also purchasing some new software, called 'Sing and See' that allows singers to see a visual representation of the note they are singing. This will allow students to practise independently in our computer suite.



Ukulele Band at Muse On Show



New Performers Club Concert