



The Musician

Journal of the Musicians' Union
Summer 2021
theMU.org

Robert Vincent

Cover star: singer songwriter
and leading light of UK Americana

Music And The Mind

How musicians are making a real
difference in tackling dementia

Tomorrow's Warriors

An organisation playing a pivotal
role in nurturing new jazz talent

Jamie Njoku-Goodwin

Why the new CEO of UK Music is
optimistic for the industry's future

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**Musicians'
Union**



Getting Back To Normal?

As lockdown restrictions begin to relax, musicians still appear to be at the back of the queue. So what can we do to counteract the effects of both Covid and Brexit?



Horace Trubridge,
General Secretary

As I write this, the live music industry is emerging from its enforced slumber and preparing for what we hope will be a hugely successful summer of live. Nevertheless, there remains some perplexing inconsistencies and head-scratching regarding what can and cannot take place under the existing guidance.

For instance, again, as I write, it's okay for people to pile into a pub without masks or social distancing, but the people who want to see a show at the theatre next door are required to wear masks and socially distance. This makes no sense whatsoever. Furthermore, the fact that busking was still an illegal activity at Stage 2 of the Secretary of State's roadmap when it was okay to travel on public transport and queue up for Primark again made absolutely no sense.

We all appreciate that the pandemic is – sorry, I'm about to use last year's most over-used word – unprecedented, and there is no handbook for catastrophic events such as this. But it has seemed at times to me and my colleagues that this government has taken an unbalanced approach to assessing the risks to the public and performers inherent in live performance compared to retail, elite sport and hospitality.

Resilience And Ingenuity

The COVID pandemic has dealt a cruel blow to our profession and many of you will have been forced to look for other areas of employment to get by, and I stand and applaud your resilience and ingenuity. The MU membership is on the rise again after a long period where leavers outnumbered joiners, and that is a sure sign that the sector is recovering and musicians are at last finding work again.

That said, in terms of work opportunities for musicians, Brexit has to be the evil cousin of COVID. This government in the negotiations around what is laughingly called the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) has effectively thrown the performer community under a bus. I know we are all now almost numb

to the mendacity of our PM, but to tell the House that his people were 'working flat out' to solve the myriad of obstacles musicians now face in performing in EU member states is right up there with the best of his porkies.

We need a concerted effort from Lord Frost and his colleagues to carve out a side agreement that delivers on visa/work permit waivers, cabotage and carnets. Without these relaxations it will simply become uneconomical for many UK musicians to ply their trade in their own back yard, and you can rest assured that your Union is lobbying at the highest level to bring this about. After all that our sector has been through – many of you unsupported financially due to the chancellor's petty SEISS criteria – is it really that much to ask?

“Nothing will ever, ever replace the beauty, power and majesty of live music”

The Power Of Music

To close, I want to remind you of this: nothing, no machine, no computer program, no Netflix blockbuster, no AI, no hologram, or anything else that can be dreamed up will ever, ever replace the beauty, power and majesty of live music. This summer and beyond, get out there and knock'em dead!

Very best wishes
Horace Trubridge



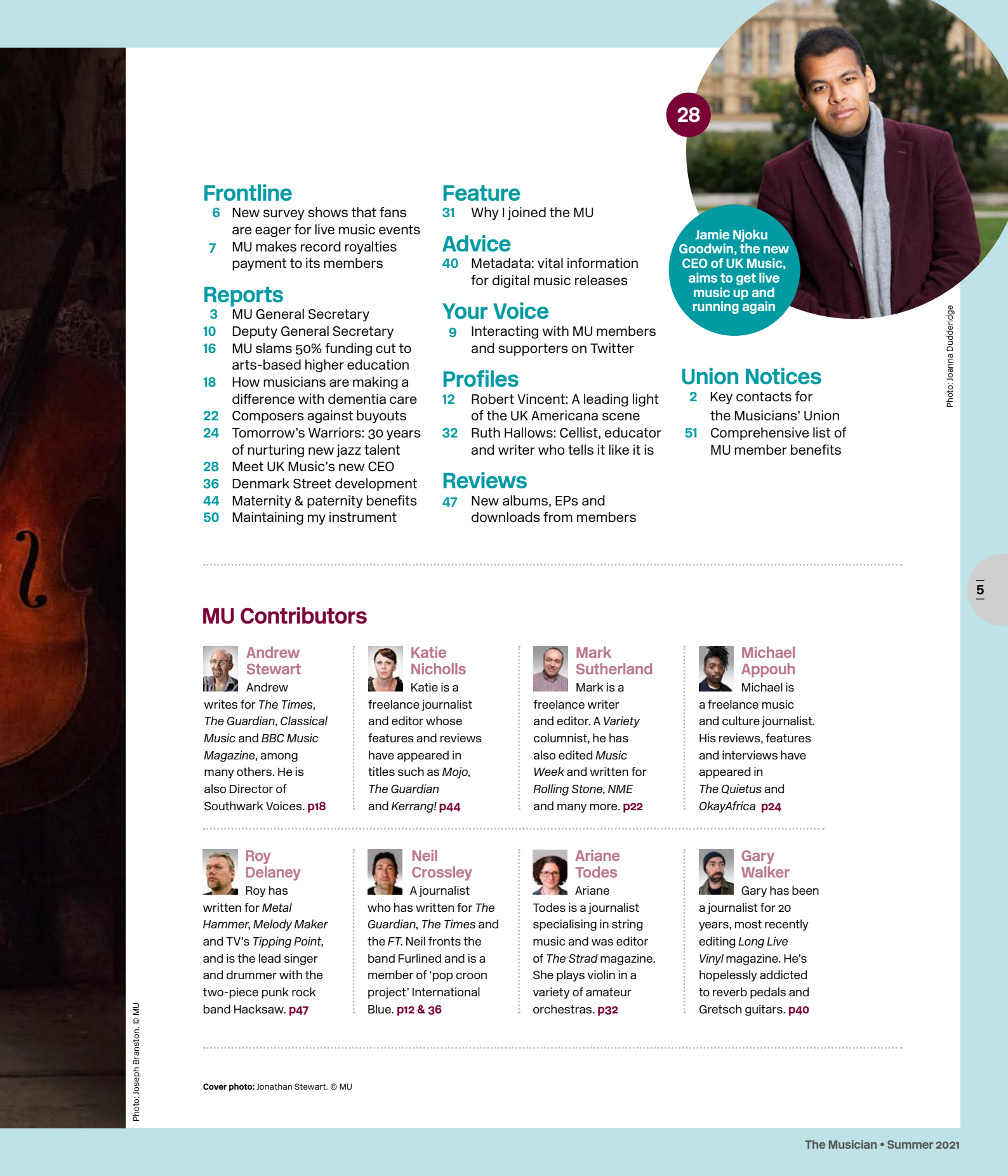
**TO HEAR MORE FROM HORACE,
VISIT [THEMU.ORG](https://themu.org)**

"It's nice for someone to tell you 'You are worth this amount of money' and 'Don't you dare take anything less than that'"

Ruth Hallows

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Photo: Joanna Dudderidge

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Andrew writes for *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *Classical Music* and *BBC Music Magazine*, among many others. He is also Director of Southwark Voices. **p18**



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Katie is a freelance journalist and editor whose features and reviews have appeared in titles such as *Mojo*, *The Guardian* and *Kerrang!* **p44**



Mark Sutherland

Mark is a freelance writer and editor. A *Variety* columnist, he has also edited *Music Week* and written for *Rolling Stone*, *NME* and many more. **p22**



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Michael is a freelance music and culture journalist. His reviews, features and interviews have appeared in *The Quietus* and *OkayAfrica* **p24**



Roy Delaney

Roy has written for *Metal Hammer*, *Melody Maker* and TV's *Tipping Point*, and is the lead singer and drummer with the two-piece punk rock band Hackshaw. **p47**



Neil Crossley

A journalist who has written for *The Guardian*, *The Times* and the *FT*. Neil fronts the band Furlined and is a member of 'pop croon project' International Blue. **p12 & 36**



Ariane Todes

Ariane Todes is a journalist specialising in string music and was editor of *The Strad* magazine. She plays violin in a variety of amateur orchestras. **p32**



Gary Walker

Gary has been a journalist for 20 years, most recently editing *Long Live Vinyl* magazine. He's hopelessly addicted to reverb pedals and Gretsch guitars. **p40**



SUPPORT THE MU Encourage your friends and family to sign up as MU Supporters at theMU.org/supporters

frontline

Summer 2021

The MU in action, working on behalf of professional musicians

New Survey Shows Fans Are Eager For Live Music Events After Lockdown

Music industry association LIVE (Live music Industry Venues and Entertainment) surveyed 25,000 music fans to get a clear indication of what live music events will look like once lockdown restrictions have been fully lifted. Some promising results from their survey indicate that music fans are more passionate about going to more shows than before the pandemic started, with only 3% saying they will no longer attend.

Key headlines from the report included:

Desire For Live Music

Fans want live music, and they want it now. Over 50% of fans are ready to attend music events right now if they can, with a further 25% ready to attend once they feel the right mitigations are in place.

Sales Are Up

Tickets are selling: 73% of fans have already bought tickets since March, and by July 63% of music fans will have been to a show. Of those who have yet to buy tickets (27%) a third just haven't seen something they wanted to go to yet.

Covid Passport

Three-quarters of those who responded said they would be happy with the idea of Covid certification to attend an event.

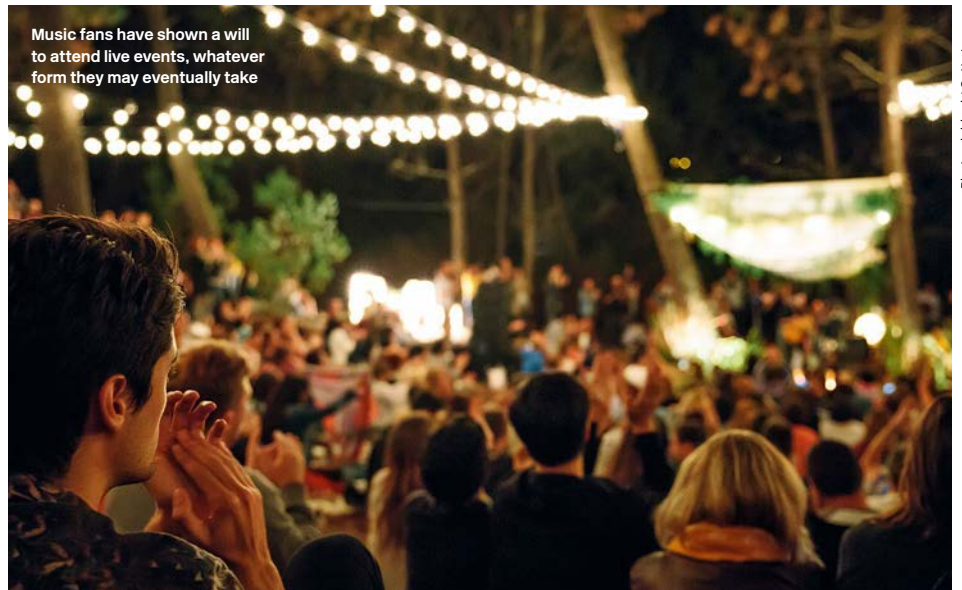


Photo: dobie.d / Getty Images

Passionate Fans

The 25,000 music fans who took part in the LIVE survey in April 2021, are more passionate about going to more shows than before the pandemic started, with only 3% saying they will no longer attend.

Dave Webster MU National Organiser for Live Performance welcomed the report: "This excellent survey from LIVE will hopefully give artists the confidence that when lockdown lifts, their audiences are chomping at the bit to get back to that unique experience that is live music."

For full details of the results of the survey please visit livemusic.biz/research-publications/

"This survey will hopefully give artists the confidence that when lockdown lifts, their audiences are chomping at the bit"

Dave Webster

MU Makes Record Royalties Payment

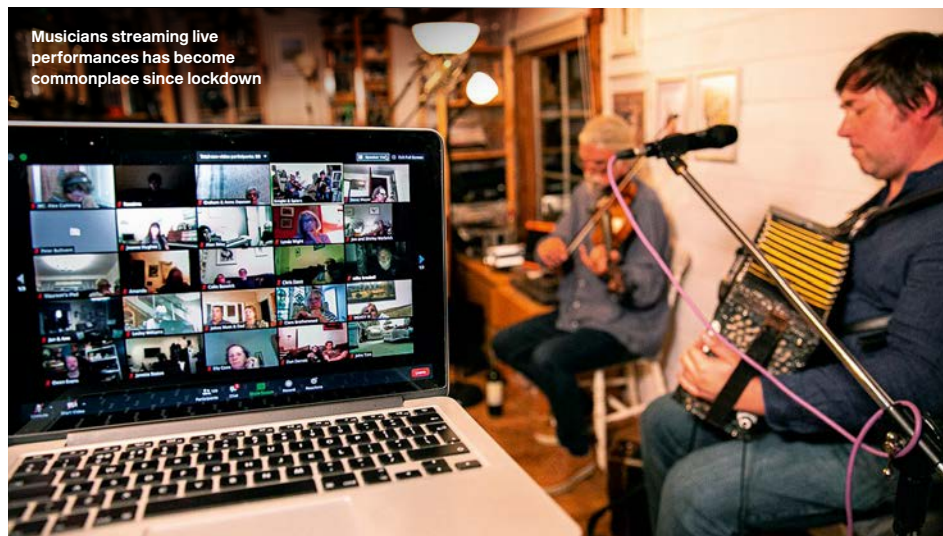
The MU made record royalties payment to members in the first quarter of 2021. This follows the first distribution of BBC 'dubbing' money (royalties for use of background commercial audio in BBC programmes), which totalled £290k, and brings the total distribution so far in 2021 to just over £500k.

"Despite the pandemic, session musicians continue to benefit from use of background commercial recordings in TV programmes," said Geoff Ellerby, MU National Organiser for Recording & Broadcasting. "The team have worked extremely hard in prioritising the mass of data work required to expedite payments to help members in these worrying times. The MU actively collects payment for use of session musicians on commercial audio recordings used in sync for advertising, film, and television. Should members hear a recording they have performed on in a film or advertisement, and have not had a suitable royalty payment, please keep us informed at licensing@theMU.org"

Culturally Specific Mental Health Help

The charity Black Minds Matter (BMM) UK has highlighted the need for culturally specific mental health resources for musicians who are experiencing racism. Musicians are up to three times more likely to suffer mental health issues than the general public, according to a 2016 Help Musicians survey.

This can be compounded for musicians who experience racism, who are less likely to receive help, more likely to need it, and who may need culturally specific understanding, knowledge and safety. In a blog published on 10 May, BMM outlined research that suggests Black people are far more likely to be misdiagnosed, mistreated and even rejected from mental health support. For more visit tinyurl.com/yz22x6pc and blackmindsmatteruk.com



Live Streamed Concerts Are Here To Stay

New research into the live streaming of gigs suggests that both musicians and music fans are overwhelmingly positive about the value of this approach in the post-pandemic world. Thousands of musicians began live streaming as a temporary response to successive lockdowns and the closure of all live music venues, but the research suggests live streams have a viable future as society slowly emerges from the ravages of Covid-19.

The London-led research, conducted by Middlesex University and including project partners such as the Musicians' Union, found that 90% of musicians and 92% of music fans believe live streaming concerts will in future be a successful tool to reach audiences unable or unwilling to go to physical venues.

The research, which was published in May and covers a broad range of genres, concludes that musicians are confident about the power of accessing new audiences via live streaming. It also suggests that music fans are not deterred by having to pay for some live streamed gigs and concerts. 72% of live music fans and 74% of musicians agree that live streaming should be paid for.

Julia Haferkorn, senior lecturer in music business and arts management at Middlesex University and principle investigator on the live streaming research, said: "The vast majority of musicians have been hit very hard financially by the pandemic. We are hoping that our report will make it easier for musicians to use monetised live streams as an additional income source".

Industry Stats

7.4%

The global recorded music market growth in 2020 – the sixth successive year of such growth

90.2%

Drop in revenue for festivals in the United Kingdom in 2020 since the beginning of the pandemic

77%

Musicians expecting their earnings in Europe to decrease due to new documents and fees

For the latest news on how the Musicians' Union is helping you visit theMU.org



ASK US FIRST Check through our list of promoters before agreeing to accept an engagement at tinyurl.com/askusfirst

MU Environmental Policy For 2021

The MU's first action under its new environmental policy will be to phase out the annual issue of plastic cards to members.

The issue of new cards upon membership renewal will cease immediately, as the MU strives to become a zero-plastic organisation. MU Head of Membership, Wasim Yunus, said, "If you're unsure or you need further proof of your membership, contact our membership team on 0207 840 5570 or email: membership@theMU.org"

For more news on the MU's environmental policy, please visit: tinyurl.com/yb6fvvrr

Dementia Charter

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan has launched the world's first Dementia Friendly Venues Charter for cultural public venues, in a bid to ensure that every Londoner with dementia and their carers has an accessible and friendly cultural space on their doorstep.

Kate Lee, CEO of Alzheimer's Society said: "It is fantastic that people affected by dementia will be encouraged to fully take part in cultural activities across the city through this initiative." For more info, or to sign up to the Dementia Friendly Venues Charter for public venues please visit london.gov.uk/dfvc



Photo: fermate / Getty Images

Ivory Ban Update

The MU and other music industry bodies have responded to the consultation by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), on the implementation of the UK's ban on importing, exporting and dealing in items containing elephant ivory.

The MU has lobbied extensively for an exemption for musical instruments. MU National Organiser for Live Performance, Dave Webster, outlined the MU's position: "The MU fully supports the principles behind the ban in the trading of ivory," he said.

"Our work with other industry bodies has ensured that the vast majority of instruments are protected. We recognise the value of our members' instruments and hope we can continue to work with DEFRA to limit the impact of implementation."

Statutory Notices

Members are reminded that the following statutory notices are no longer sent to members by post, and are available from the MU website at **theMU.org**

- **Summary financial statements**

Available in June each year (the latest full Accounts remain available upon request).

- **Executive Committee election results**

Available in November each year, except in the case of a casual vacancy. See MU Rule IV.

The above notices are required under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (Amended).

The following will also be published on the website.

- **Regional Committees**

Calls for nominations and election results. (See MU Rule III).

- **Section Committees**

Calls for nominations and election results.

Members who wish to receive paper copies of these communications should contact their Regional Office. Members will be notified by email about the publication of the above notices so members should ensure the MU has their latest email address on file. Please log into theMU.org to check your details.

Dates For The Diary

1 Jun

What: DIY Music: How Do You Do It Yourself?
Looking at DIY music tactics used throughout UK music
Where: Online
Info: tinyurl.com/diybimm

3 Jun

What: The Show Must Be Paused: One Year On.
Has the industry changed since Blackout Tuesday?
Where: Online
Info: tinyurl.com/showpause

25 Jun

What: Stage Presence: Breathing Room.
Improve the way you move with the Feldenkrais Method
Where: Online
Info: tinyurl.com/feldmove

3 Jul

What: Scottish Electronic Music Conference.
Covering all facets of the electronic music industry
Where: Edinburgh
Info: semconference.co.uk

22 Sep

What: Brighton Music Conference.
Electronic music conference and networking event
Where: Brighton
Info: tinyurl.com/brimuscon

Your Voice

This selection of tweets, emails and letters reflects the diverse range of dialogue between the MU and its members.

Fight The Cuts

The government are proposing a vicious 50% slash to HE arts funding. We cannot let them further hobble our livelihoods and the future of our country's arts sector.

john pope @BassPope

Reputation At Risk

The arts are such an essential part of British culture and we can't afford to see our creative reputation damaged.

Mhari Aurora @MhariAurora

Complete Disconnection

It's disgusting the way the arts are being treated. It feels like the current crop of politicians are completely disconnected from reality. Where did all the music and films they like come from? Artists and musicians.

Jerry Turner Esq
@Jerryturner262

Preserve Of The Rich?

Another horrific example of how culture and the arts for all are being discarded by this government. Is being a musician going to become the preserve of the monied?

Dos Floris @dosfloris

The Arts For All

I'm incredibly lucky to have been able to get this far. Music

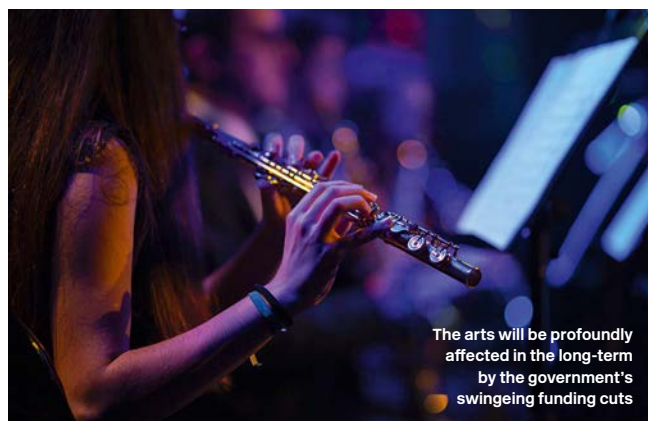


Photo: Paulo Sousa / Getty Images

careers are already hard to access and maintain for people on lower incomes – let's not let that get worse because of COVID and Brexit.

James Brady/Pinepod
@jbradymusic

No Compensation

I'm one of the excluded ones due to my PAYE teaching being slightly above half my total earnings. Have had zero compensation for the 45% of my income from gigs etc.

patrick naylor @PatrickNaylor1

Art Is Life

Without art, life is mundane and ordinary. Art lifts our spirits and our souls. It eases mental

health problems and gives meaning to life.

@TonyCowan @TonyCowan

Music Therapy

The arts broaden the mind and promote empathy – attributes humans need to survive in an increasingly volatile world.

They're also therapeutic. The few slivers of joy during the last horrific year have come from TV, film and music. It's the oil that keeps the grind going.

Sian Harries @sianharries_

Carry On Touring

Real People, Real Lives, Real Jobs. #CarryOnTouring

Tim Brennan @TimmoWorldWide

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See p2 for the contact details of Musicians' Union offices.



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Improving Treatment Of Musicians By The Industry

Naomi Pohl, Deputy General Secretary, looks at recent developments in our campaigning work and across the music industry to make it a safer and fairer place for all – and especially for under-represented groups

NB: Please be aware that this column contains references to abuse and coercion



Since the start of the #metoo movement and launch of the MU's SafeSpace service (which provides a place for confidential reporting of harassment, abuse and discrimination in music) discussions about treatment of freelance workers in particular have widened to include bad contractual terms, coercive control, bullying, and safety at night. The scale of the challenge we face in improving the culture of the industry and making it a safer place for our members appears to be increasing. This goes to the heart of what we do: we are a protecting union.

The old adage is that we should be the fence at the top of the cliff rather than the ambulance at the bottom. Of course, we are frequently both, and that has certainly been the case with our #ProtectFreelancersToo campaign. Until we can stamp out inappropriate behaviour and get changes in the law, our work in supporting survivors remains crucial.

In March, the disappearance of Sarah Everard in London was a catalyst for widespread discussion about women's experiences of walking alone, particularly at night, and the lengths they had to go to feel safe. With echoes of #metoo, women flooded social media with stories of being followed, harassed, catcalled, assaulted and exposed to. We women moderate our behaviour in order to feel safe, and yet the risks do not

abate and abuse continues. My immediate thought was for our members whose work often involves night-time travel, and where engagements on the freelance gig circuit rarely include payment of taxi fares. We held a meeting of our Women's Network at which we discussed issues such as shared or lack of female changing facilities, digs at an unsafe distance from the venue and scarcity of inner-city parking. Initiatives we agreed might help included engaging and educating male colleagues to be active allies, and whether inclusion or safety riders could be promoted.

A Long Way To Go

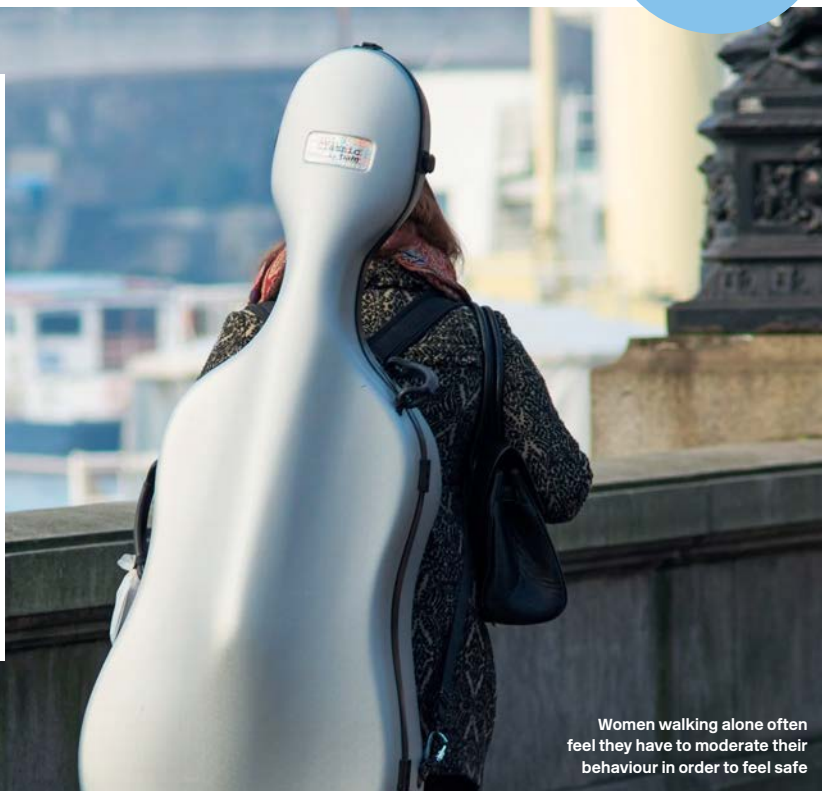
There has also been an important and long-overdue focus in the music industry over recent months on representation and inclusion of Black musicians. Women In Ctrl has thrown light on the lack of representation of women, and in particular Black women, at board level. This has led to a positive shift, but we have a long way to go. The MU has also been working with MU member Kelli-Leigh, Women In Ctrl, and the FAC on a project that began when singers, and more specifically, Black female singers, shared their experiences of how the industry wanted them for their voice, but did not want to give them appropriate reward or recognition. The project will educate singers on their rights in sessions and call for an end to unethical practices that disadvantage some of the most marginalised musicians in our industry.

The publication of the Report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities on 31 March, which failed to recognise the extent of structural and systemic racism in the UK and the lived experiences of those who are subject to it, felt like a major setback. The

"The old adage is that we should be the fence at the top of the cliff rather than the ambulance at the bottom. Of course, we are frequently both"



(Above) The singer Rebecca Ferguson spoke out against abuse at the hands of a music industry executive, and has called for a government inquiry



Women walking alone often feel they have to moderate their behaviour in order to feel safe

Union was quick to respond strongly to the report and we also supported subsequent statements from the TUC and UK Music. UK Music's Ten-Point Plan, developed by its Diversity Taskforce with our involvement and published last year, is already being implemented across the music industry.

Watershed Moment

Another watershed moment in the battle to improve treatment of musicians by the music industry came when Rebecca Ferguson spoke out about years of abuse she suffered at the hands of a senior male music industry executive. She has called for a government inquiry, and met with Oliver Dowden, the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), to propose industry regulation. Since then, the Union has been approached by DCMS officials and we have discussed the range of reports received to our SafeSpace account, legislative changes we are calling for, and our support of Rebecca's proposals. Her call for a regulator ties in with our #FixStreaming campaign and #BrokenRecord – it is clear that major corporations will not always treat artists fairly

voluntarily, and additional oversight is needed. An industry ombudsman could provide an independent forum for investigation of issues ranging from sexual abuse and coercive control to unfair contracts and failure to pay.

It is impossible to overestimate the complexity of this problem. It is entrenched in the culture of the industry. To illustrate: an artist may be signed into an exclusive deal with a lengthy term and an unfair termination clause. They cannot negotiate changes to the contract because they are entering the industry with no representation. They may receive no or very little money upfront and be unable to support themselves day-to-day. They become wholly reliant on the party contracting them who handles their finances and makes a promise of fame and fortune.

There is an informal feel to the relationship. They are told they are 'part of the family', there is an obligation to socialise, and alcohol and drugs are involved. Late nights, hotel rooms, tour buses. Someone within the corporation representing them, a member of their 'team', then starts harassing them and threatening them. They are afraid to speak out. They don't want to lose the deal, the opportunity. They don't know who they can trust. Where do they go?

It's What We're Here For

This scenario is faced by artists on a regular basis and these deals often disproportionately affect women, LGBT+ as well as Black, Asian and ethnically diverse artists. We've had multiple reports of this nature via SafeSpace. It is the reason that SafeSpace exists. On a broader level, it is the reason that the Union exists. We provide a place for confidential reporting of bad contract terms, unfair treatment, harassment, discrimination, unpaid fees, zero hour contracts, bullying, and in fact any form of workplace unfair treatment or abuse. We deal with thousands of members' cases annually, usually behind closed doors, and we get results.

We recover hundreds of thousands of pounds for members in unpaid fees and through employment claims, and that just scratches the surface of the help we can offer. We are the ambulance. But we can also be the fence. The next stage of our campaigning to make the industry a safer place for all will focus on preventative measures. We can improve the culture of workplaces and the moment to do it is now. [mu](#)

A Leading Light

Merseyside Americana singer-songwriter Robert Vincent tells us about his gradual but steady rise to the top of the genre

Profile by Neil Crossley

When someone of the stature of 'Whispering' Bob Harris starts telling anyone who'll listen that you're "the real deal" and your music is "absolutely magnetic" then it's safe to assume you're doing something right. Such is the case with Robert Vincent, a singer-songwriter who spans country, folk, blues and rock and who has steadily built a reputation as a sublimely talented singer-songwriter.

Despite releasing his third album just weeks before the first lockdown, the Ethan Johns-produced long player went on to receive widespread critical acclaim. Vincent spent lockdown recording three stripped-



down EPs and was surprised when his burgeoning fanbase came forward to offer financial support following a number of intimate live online performances. Then, on 28 January 2021, he was awarded both Artist of The Year and Album of the Year at this year's Americana Music Association UK Awards. It's all a fitting testament to an artist who has diligently and steadfastly honed his craft.

Atlantic Crossing

Vincent was born in Crosby, a genteel coastal town seven miles north of Liverpool. The family later moved to Liverpool, and it's a city that Vincent is proud to still call home. From an early age he was fascinated with the power of words, and growing up on Merseyside instilled in him a love of the storytelling tradition. "I always wrote words," he says, "I'm always in that world." His interest in roots, country and blues music was first piqued after hearing his father playing the albums of Emmylou Harris, Charlie Rich and Waylon Jennings. Pink Floyd too were a profound influence on him, due to his older brother playing their albums relentlessly in the room they shared.

After leaving school and a taking up a succession of soul-destroying jobs to make ends meet, he began to gain a foothold on the Liverpool grassroots scene. One album in particular had a major impact on his future direction: the 2007 Grammy-winning album *Raising Sand*, a T Bone Burnett-produced collaboration between bluegrass/country artist Alison Krauss and Led Zeppelin frontman Robert Plant.

"That album gave me a lot of inspiration," says Vincent, speaking to *The Musician* by phone from his home near Sefton Park in Liverpool. "But it was a bit kind of odd to do that style of Americana in Liverpool at that time, because it was coming off this wave of Bandwagon club nights with bands like The Coral and The Zutons."

Despite such misgivings he followed his instincts, released a string of singles and EPs, slowly built up his fanbase, and began touring extensively. In 2013, Vincent released his debut album *Life In Easy Steps*, a collection of songs with a defiant country feel that highlighted his strengths as a songwriter, and yielded favourable reviews. But it was his 2017 album *I'll Make The Most Of My Sins* that really made people sit up and take notice.

Sense Of Space

Opening with a 40-second slice of ambient music, the album kicks into life with *So In Love*, a strident, weighty anthem, with an infectious Southern swamp rock groove. By contrast, the rest of the album is a far more intimate, acoustic affair, featuring piano, strings and howling pedal steel, with Vincent's gravel-tinged voice drawing comparisons to Richard Hawley. Contemporary sounds sit alongside classic country-style tracks such as *All For You*. Sonically, there's a real purity to Vincent's music, heightened by his strong awareness of the use of space.

"Roger Waters was a great believer in space and not being scared of it," says Vincent. "It's those moments – if you've just said a line, you don't want something else to then counteract what you've said. I feel sometimes the weight of the line or the weight of the melody is enough, and then that person's got two or three seconds to let that sink in before they hear the next thing. Sometimes, that is the most important thing – less is more – all those great sayings that people have come out with in the past."

"It was a bit kind of odd to do that style of Americana in Liverpool at that time"

The album received glowing reviews. "A young man filled with dreams, regret and shocking talent, giving his all," concluded *Mojo* magazine in its 4/5 review. The real breakthrough though came when Vincent and his band performed [a searing version of *So In Love*](#) on the revamped *Old Grey Whistle Test* in 2018. The performance

established him as a leading light of UK Americana and catapulted the album to No.1 in the iTunes Country Chart.

That performance also highlighted the talents of his band, whose subtle nuances elevate the songs to real heights. Another major asset is singer-songwriter Anna Corcoran, whose rich textured voice blends seamlessly with Vincent's. "We've been singing together probably for about 12 years now," says Vincent. "And Anna's been like a real constant throughout all of the recordings. And again, that initial thing of the Robert Plant and Alison Krauss vibe. There's a song from there we did called *Killing The Blues* – whenever we're together we'll do that in the set, 'cos it just suits us so well."

Organic Approach

Corcoran and the rest of the band – Adrian Gautrey (guitar/vocals), Danny Williams (bass), Robbie Taylor (mandolin, fiddle, banjo) and Jim Kimberly (drums, ➔



Photo: Mike Walker

Robert Vincent
with drummer Jim
Kimberley and bassist
Danny Williams

percussion) – were integral to the recording of Vincent's third album, *In This Town You're Owned*, released in early 2020 and recorded at Rockfield Studios in Monmouthshire with legendary producer and musician Ethan Johns at the helm.

Johns had been Vincent's dream producer of choice ever since he could remember, having been bowled over by his work on Whiskeytown's *Pneumonia*, Ryan Adams' *Gold* and Ray La Montagne's *Trouble*. "I kept seeing his name coming up but absolutely loving everything that he did," recalls Vincent. Johns is renowned for his organic approach to recording, which was evident from the first day that Vincent and his band set their gear up at Rockfield.

"Sonically, he'd find the right positions for everybody, but he does that in such a way that you don't even realise that he's done it. So everyone's doing their thing without even knowing, and then before you know it after

"We live in such a communicative world, but I think we've lost the art of discussion"

a few hours it's just feeling and sounding great. It was just such a lovely experience. He has this way of making people feel comfortable with what they're doing and bringing the best out in the song, and also capturing a fantastic song. Also, we've got to give a shout-out to his engineer Don Monks, who's just a sonic genius as well. Between the two of them you can't really go wrong. I think between him and Don, it's the way that they hear a room."

Vincent and his band recorded live onto sixteen track tape. When Johns suggested contributing some parts himself, Vincent was happy to comply. "He's a fantastic musician too, so he'll come in and he'll sit in and go, 'how about if I do something like this?'. And I'll

go, 'Right, yeah man. I've waited 20 years for you to come and sit in on one of my songs, so yeah, you just crack on (laughs)."

Universal Themes

Lyrically, the latest album is driven by political events of the last few years. And while [tracks such as *This Town*](#) reference Liverpool, universal themes pervade.

"*In This Town You're Owned* was to me about the political things that have been going on the last four or five years, whether that be Trump in America or Brexit over here," explains Vincent. It just felt like we were being owned or controlled by something, whether it be the tabloid press or whether it be social media, and that was what scared me about what I could see going on around me"

"In Liverpool, you can't go into a pub or a cafe without having some kind of political discussion... but what was different about it was the anger attached to it, the unrest



Vincent feels that he owes a great deal to his home city's long tradition of storytelling

Photo: Jonathan Stewart. © MU



Photo: Jonathan Stewart. © MU

attached to it. That's what I felt it created. We live in such a communicative world, but I think we've lost the art of discussion. I think we've lost the art of actually communicating with each other. So a song like *The Kids Don't Dig God Anymore* is not just about religious faith. It's about trying to find another system, trying to find another way of doing things or seeing things. Just embracing things slightly differently. Whatever that may be."

Live Return

As the UK cautiously emerges from lockdown, regains a semblance of normality, and looks to the future, Vincent is looking towards his

fourth album. He has written a lot of new material during the pandemic he says, but as with the songs he brought to Ethan Johns for *In This Town You're Owned* he is not yet entirely sure about them. "I'm a musician so I'm bound to be insecure about every little tiny thing that I do and I am, because I believe that the minute I stop being bothered, that's when I have to pack up and go home."

In August, Vincent will return to the US, this time as guest songwriter at the five-day Buddy Holly Songwriters Retreat in Lubbock Texas. It's the second time he has attended and he is looking forward to the event. Last time, he met Sonny West, who co-wrote *Rave On*, the 1958 hit for Buddy Holly. "He's just such a lovely guy," recalls Vincent. "I think he's about 83, but he seems about 20 years younger. I got to hear, sitting around the campfire, his experiences of meeting Buddy Holly and playing on *Rave On*. I mean there's nothing else that's going to inspire you to write a song more than that."

Like tens of thousands of other musicians right now, Vincent's main objective is to get back on stage. Pencilled tour dates in the UK, US and Europe have already been moved four times, he says. He is hoping that dates he has booked in July will happen.

"I'm just trying to focus on what I can do live as much as possible," he says. "The primary concern for me moving forward is to get out and play to people, because people have been starved of it now for a year. The thirst for live music is going to be so strong." **mu**

For more information on Robert Vincent visit: robertvincentmusic.com

Online Action

Like many musicians, Robert Vincent took to doing online concerts when the pandemic shut down live work. He was surprised by the response. "Very quickly, within one or two shows of me doing that, people – especially American people who were tuning in – were asking if they could tip and donate. Even if they're just sending you the price of a pint or a coffee, or going to your shop and buying merch, just sending you a donation or a tip. So it kind of kept me moving forward, it kept a little bit of money coming in."

"At first I didn't know how to feel about it really. But it became something people wanted to do. I really got this feeling that people wanted to help. Regardless of anything, they believed in you enough as a musician that they wanted to try and help you through what was going on. And that in itself is such an amazing feeling, you know."

He also released three EPs, *Home 1, 2 and 3*, each featuring tracks from his three albums respectively, plus a cover version from an artist that inspired him at the time of writing each album. *Home 2* features an inspired version of *Four Season's In One Day* by Neil Finn of Crowded House.

"I'm really happy with that track," says Vincent. "I remember being 13 or 14 years old and buying *Woodface* [the third studio album by Crowded House] and being like 'woah, what's this?'. There's a lot of pop sounds on there but also – and he probably wouldn't thank me for it – there's a lot of Americana singer-songwriter vibe going on with what he did. And it was really inspirational to me growing up."

Arts Education Cuts

With funding for arts-based higher education courses set to be slashed by 50%, the MU is urging the government to think again

Report by Henry Yates

The arts sector has joined the MU in condemning government plans to cut funding for arts-based higher education courses by 50%. Following a recent consultation with the Office for Students (OfS), education secretary Gavin Williamson has proposed a drastic reduction in subject funding for courses "not considered strategic priorities", including music, dance, art and design, performing arts, media studies and archaeology. Funding would drop from £36m to £19m, with Williamson's letter to the OfS warning that "we would then potentially seek further reductions in future years".

The government has justified these proposals as necessary to "support the skills this country needs to build back better" in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, pledging more investment in STEM subjects and those courses "identified as supporting the NHS and/or specific labour market needs".

But with the planned cuts set to be signed off in June and affect students from the 2021/22 academic year onwards, arts practitioners, universities and figures from across the gamut of British culture – from former Pulp star Jarvis Cocker to Grammy-winning Bond composer David Arnold – have added their voices to MU concerns that the move could be fatal to the future of UK arts. Compounding

"The cuts will be catastrophic for most music provision at university level"

Chris Walters

the frustration was the short window and poor visibility of the consultation, whose closure on 6 May gave the music industry little time to make its case.

"The cuts will be catastrophic for most music provision at university level, affecting the financial viability of music courses and training for the next generation of musicians," the MU's National Organiser for Education and Training, Chris Walters, told *The Guardian*. "The UK's world-leading status in music and the arts could be in serious jeopardy."

An Obstacle For Artists

With the prospect of fewer arts-based university courses, and higher costs for students who attend them, there are deepening concerns that aspiring UK artists from disadvantaged or under-represented backgrounds could be shut out of the arts. Currently, a full-time arts student is awarded £243 funding, but this would fall to just £121.50 under the new scheme.

"The thought that a child's talent might go unnoticed, or that a teenager might not get an opportunity because of their socio-economic status, cannot be borne," says MU Deputy General Secretary Naomi Pohl. "As a parent, I want my children to have the opportunity to follow their calling in life. There should be a full kaleidoscope of study and work opportunities open to us all."

Jarvis Cocker echoed those concerns, telling *The Guardian* that the cost of an arts course would place yet another obstacle in the career path of working-class voices. "I think it will really just put off people from a certain background, and that's a pity because it's about mixing with people with different ideas, and then you get this cross-pollination of stuff that makes things happen. It always

seems to be that it's art education that seems to be this expendable thing, as if it's not important, and it is."

As well as closing career avenues for young musicians, argues Chris Walters, the funding cuts would also decimate a host of higher education institutions who nurture upcoming talent, with University College London alone projected to lose £5.8 million. "The cuts will mean different things to different universities," he says. "Will it destroy a Russell Group music department that can draw on relatively healthy finances to make up the shortfall? Probably not. Could it close a course at a more local university catering for a less privileged student cohort, where budgets are tighter? Yes – which hardly supports the government's own 'levelling up' agenda."

A Failure Of Government

Following on the heels of Brexit legislation that threatens the viability of touring in the EU, a flawed Cultural Recovery Fund that failed many MU members in England at the height of the pandemic, along with last October's vilified advertising campaign encouraging arts practitioners to retrain in tech, the proposed funding cuts have underlined a growing sense that the current Conservative government does not value the contribution of the arts. "For years, we've been highlighting the economic and social benefits of music and the incredible work our members do," says Naomi Pohl. "But how quickly this is forgotten when it comes to funding decisions."

From a financial standpoint, the government's planned cuts are unjustifiable, with the creative industries generating £102bn for the UK economy, and music alone contributing £5.8bn in 2019. "The UK's excellent university and college music departments underpin all this activity," says Walters, "which delivers astounding results for the nation's economy year after year."

If the government's finding cuts go through it could make music and arts education the sole preserve of the rich and privileged

Photo: Hill Street Studios / Getty Images

Photo: Mark Allan

Taking Action

The proposed funding cuts were perilously close to being signed off as this issue of *The Musician* went to press, but MU members still have time to make their voices heard and help to reverse the government's plans. As well as signing the petition launched by Public Campaign For The Arts, you'll find several different avenues for action on our Campaigns webpage.

The first option is to write to your local MP. You can use the MU's template letter, but remember to include your own personal thoughts on the proposed funding cuts and the impact they'll have on your career. In our Campaigns section, you'll also find a draft letter for Gavin Williamson that you can send via the Department For Education's contact form. In addition, you can make a complaint direct to the Office For Students: once again, it's easy to adapt our template letter based on your own experiences.

And finally, be sure to keep your eye on the Union's social feeds, monitoring the latest developments as they occur and adding your voice to this vitally important campaign. For more information, see musiciansunion.org.uk/campaigns.


Beyond the economics, David Arnold told the BBC, the UK government has a duty to protect an industry that does so much to bolster the country's profile on the global stage, impacting everything from tourism to diplomacy.

"Our artists, performers and creators consistently produce world-class work and the benefit to our cultural and world standing is, to me, obvious. This is something we excel at, so why block the path? Denying so much talent the opportunity to learn, develop their craft and blossom. The bottom line is that this is a short sighted, tin-eared, mean-spirited idea made by people who cannot truly care about the cultural future of our country."

Health Benefits

Meanwhile, some of the sector's most eloquent voices have argued that – while perhaps harder to quantify – the arts are every bit as vital to society as medicine and technology. As the renowned set designer for Kanye West, Es Devlin has spoken of the

importance of "maintaining our cultural national health", while in a letter to the MU, DJ and presenter Edith Bowman wrote about the intangible but far-reaching human cost of failing a UK arts sector whose output gave the nation succour during lockdown.

"Arts education doesn't just teach children to play an instrument or give their best dramatic performance," she said. "It's a mental and physical experience, not only for the person who is taking part, but also for those watching and enjoying. The proposed cuts would be devastating to the hundreds of thousands of young people who are currently enjoying their own artistic journey – but looking further down the line, it would be catastrophic for the future music and art industries." 

Music And Dementia Care

Music therapy can have a real and lasting effect on those living with dementia. Here *The Musician* talks to the people who are making a difference in this area

Report by Andrew Stewart

Longevity in developed societies, for all the inequities exposed by Covid, appears to be here to stay. The 100-year life will be a reality for most millennials, raising hard questions about the endemic diseases of old age and provision of decent care for those unable to care for themselves in their later years. Science and a consensus on how to fund social care may provide answers. Yet they will surely come too late for the million or so living with dementia in the UK today. The need for practical solutions and increased state investment has never been greater, as anyone with a relative in care knows.

Music and musicians have a leading role to play in improving the quality of life for everyone affected by dementia, a proposition supported by neuroscience, a growing library of evaluation reports and the experience of care home staff, family members and those coping with the outcomes of an incurable neurodegenerative condition.

Over the past 30 years musicians have developed increasingly sophisticated interventions that address some of the most troubling aspects of dementia – loss of memory and identity foremost among them. Their work brings pleasure and a sense of wellbeing to participants and practitioners alike.

Vital Sessions

Viewed from the perspective of health and social care budgets, sessions animated by professional musicians deliver some of the best value, highest impact of experiences for people living with dementia. MU members in search of new sources of work would do well to explore existing training pathways and routes into making music within the world of dementia care.

“Every MU member will know how uplifting and powerful music can be,” observes Clare Morel, who was inspired to develop her own practice by the passion of members of the End of the Road Choir.

“One guy even checked himself out of hospital to perform with them and went onstage with a drip attached,” she recalls. “I wanted to be part of that. This work can open people’s emotions in ways that nothing else does.” Her assertion chimes with the experience of the Alzheimer’s Society’s Singing For The Brain programme, Music for Life, Lost Chord, Golden Oldies, Live Music Now and others.

In addition to working with a Manchester-based singing group for people with chronic conditions, Clare Morel also makes music in a hospital delivering end-of-life care to

Musician and educator Clare Morel makes music in a hospital that delivers end-of-life care



Photo: David Donovan-Brown

Music Life

Daisy Swift
Learning Director,
Wigmore Hall

"During the first lockdown Wigmore Hall took its Learning programme online. It's since delivered almost 300 virtual events, including Music for Life sessions in care homes. We even managed to hold a weekly choir session for people living with dementia on Zoom. We've been able to employ lots of freelance musicians over the past year and learn to use technology in new ways. I can't overstate how meaningful it's been for them to engage in this type of work and connect with people. The musicians have been amazing at navigating the challenges of online activity. Despite the difficulties of not being in the same room, they've been able to improve the lives of people living with dementia and give them something truly valuable at such a tough time."

dementia patients. "They're in the final weeks of life but still engage in the sessions, conducting me, mouthing words, moving, smiling, making eye contact. We respond to music at such a deep level. It can take us back to our teens and connect with memories that nothing else can reach. Music is actual magic for humans."

The Right People

Linda Rose established Music for Life in 1993 to build the skills required for professional musicians to work with vulnerable older people living in care homes. Its management was taken over by London's Wigmore Hall in 2009, since when it has raised a raft of training programmes and convened regular sessions in residential care homes and other settings.

"To know whether someone is going to feel right for this work is really difficult until they get to do it," Rose observes. "Musicians definitely grow into it as part of a constant programme of learning about themselves and others. But they have to be prepared to take risks and open themselves in order to make these connections."

Music for Life's family of musicians, she adds, are taught to represent the values of the work. "Your values affect people from the moment you walk through a care home's door. They

should be there from the first to last minute, not just in the session itself. Integrity and authenticity are the most important things. Don't ask me how you measure that in a person, but that's what our team represents.

The simplicity and complexity of being yourself is part of it, coupled with the very high level of musical skill that this work demands. It's about the willingness, the intention, the passion to connect with another person. It's not an easy journey – it requires great resilience and readiness to take whatever comes at you." →

"We respond to music at such a deep level. Music is actual magic for humans"

Clare Morel

Wigmore Hall's Music for Life project. Photo: James Berry

(Above) Music for Life at work giving music therapy to dementia patients at Lennox House
(Below) Daisy Swift, learning director at Wigmore Hall

Photo: Benjamin Ealovega

“We always aim to find songs that mean the most to people”

Vernon Fuller

While Music for Life has largely recruited young musicians, work in the field of dementia is open to professional performers of all ages. Long-standing MU member Vernon Fuller moved from involvement in community music groups to work with people living with dementia. He joined Singing For The Brain's training programme and subsequently established Musical Memories, a 50-strong singing group based in St Helens.

“Sometimes I'll take my guitar or we'll just work from song booklets,” he observes. “We always aim to find songs that mean the most to people. We begin with an introduction song, include some action songs and mostly have a lot of fun. Carers, family members and guardians also enjoy it

because they find some respite and can share their experiences with others.”

Meaning And Autonomy

Composer and singer Livia Sevier has long experience of helping young and old to create music. Her work portfolio includes regular singing sessions at Age Concern's Sunflower Centre in Sandwich, a dementia day-care facility for people over 50.

She speaks of the critical importance of promoting meaning and autonomy when leading music sessions for people living with dementia. Repertoire choice, she adds, should connect with clients, care staff and family members and create the conditions for everyone to feel involved.

“It's about finding the songs that the people you're working with know,” she explains, “whether that's in a nursery, a care home, a day-care centre or wherever. It's about common ground. I also take songs of my own but only bring them out when the subject matter connects with people. That could be opera, folksongs, Indian raga or improvised pieces. Whatever you do, whether

working with a group or an individual, it has to have integrity, it has to be real. Find that authentic relationship with the people you're caring about, engage with them with deftness and honesty, and find songs and music that you all love.”

Louise Braithwaite has achieved distinction as a professional oboist, lecturer and speaker. Some of her most rewarding experiences, however, have come from her work as a community, healthcare and dementia music practitioner. Trained by Mindsong, a Gloucester-based charity, she has led sessions for people living with dementia both as a member of Orchestra of the Swan and through self-generated projects in care homes and long-stay hospitals.

With music sessions for people living with dementia on the rise, Braithwaite urges practitioners and their employers to be mindful of the psychological pressures and pitfalls of the job.

Rewarding Experiences

“The emotional aspects of this work should not be underestimated,” she says. “They're really quite profound, in good ways and sometimes very challenging ways. The music industry is starting to wake up to the fact that the mental health of those delivering the work needs to be taken care of as much as that of participants.”

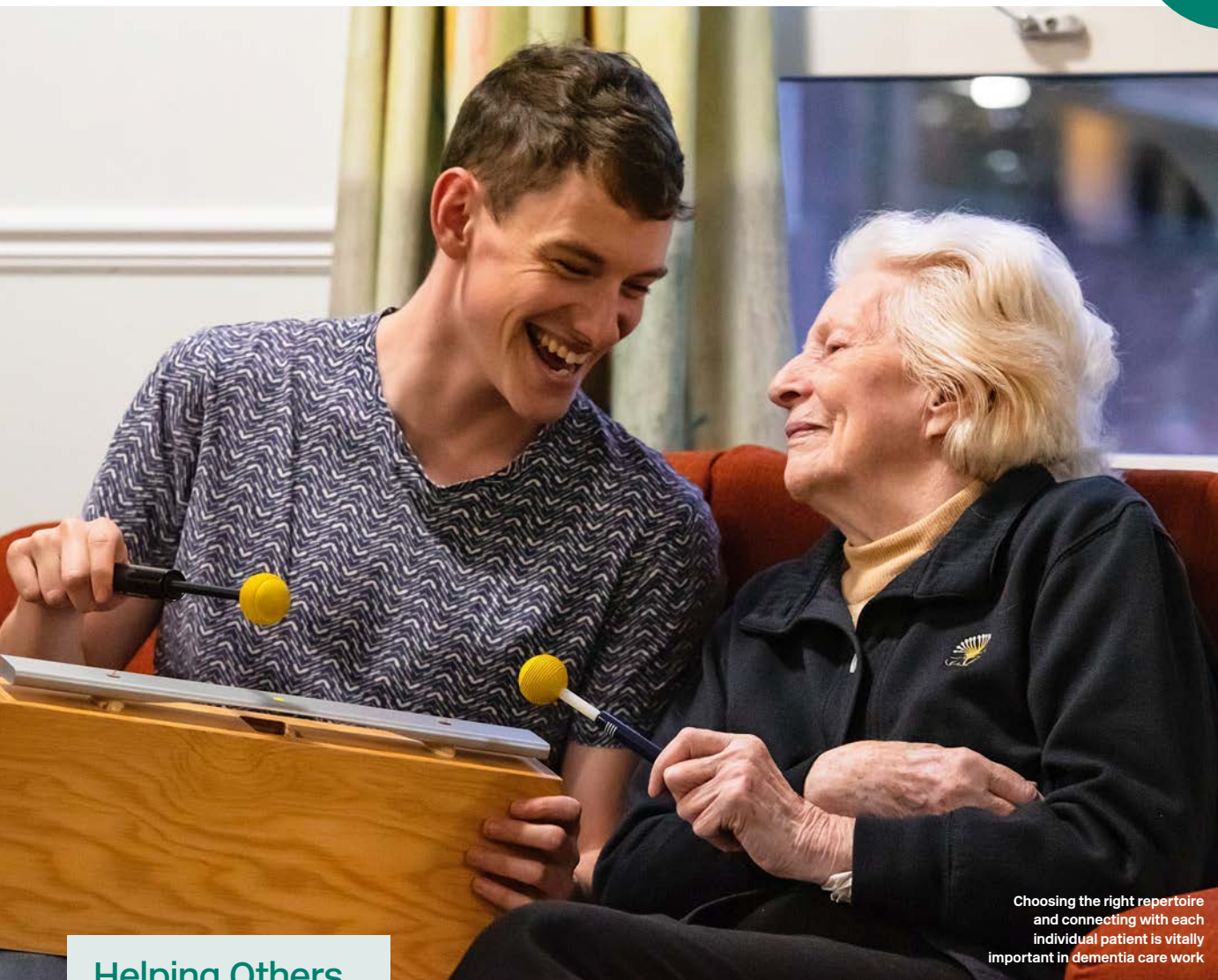
Braithwaite says that it would help when organisations are applying for funds for this type of work if they included an amount to provide specialist trained support to practitioners. “I get huge satisfaction from doing this work, but there's definitely a need to look after yourself, especially at times when you're experiencing difficulties in life or your mental health is not at its best.”

Braithwaite's insights have deepened since she began work as a domiciliary carer, a consequence of lockdown limits on live performance and the need to make a living. She's become more convinced than ever of the importance of empathy and people skills to the quality of care, whether it involves making music or changing sheets.

“It's a case of maintaining an individual's autonomy, or at least giving someone as much control as possible over what they're experiencing. If you're thinking about working as a dementia music practitioner, have a go,



Photo: David Donovan-Brown



Wigmore Hall's Music for Life project. Photo: James Berry

Helping Others To Help Yourself

The view of an anonymous Music for Life musician:


"I'm sure I'm not alone in having felt an acute sense of loss of identity during the past year. I wasn't prepared to have such a strong emotional reaction after my first online session. I knew I'd missed working in this way but it hit home just how much I need this kind of human connection and outlet for creative expression in my life – to feel inspired by others in this way. Suddenly the inner void felt a little smaller than it had done for months."

but consider the repertoire carefully before you start. Think about its quality first, find or make good arrangements of what you intend to perform and take people with you."

Daisy Swift is a passionate advocate for what music brings to people living with dementia. Wigmore Hall's learning director cites a combination of scientific evidence and the evidence of what she and her Music for Life colleagues have witnessed.

"Music can empower and connect, enable self-expression and creativity, and build communities," she observes. "Because of the things we believe music can do, we want to engage people with limited experiences of connection, self-expression and empowerment."

Their training pathways programme includes an annual trainee music leader scheme. Its members are paid the London living wage to attend sessions three days a week. "We encourage people to train to work with people living with dementia, whether through a formal programme, or by joining our musician teams and observing what they do," notes Swift.

"We want to include and welcome musicians from all backgrounds, ages and musical experiences, and identify where the gaps are in terms of representation. So many musicians involved in participatory work have been busy even during lockdown, which is why we're certain demand is only going to grow." 

Choosing the right repertoire and connecting with each individual patient is vitally important in dementia care work

Ban The Buyout

With media commissioners increasingly pushing towards detrimental buyout schemes, composers and musicians are getting together and fighting back

Report by Mark Sutherland

Can you imagine your favourite movie, TV show or video game without its soundtrack? Would *The Godfather* have been so gripping without the sweeping Nino Rota score? Would the tension in *Line Of Duty* be cranked quite as high if the Carly Paradis theme music wasn't there? And would video games from *God Of War* to *Final Fantasy* be quite so addictive if their soaring soundtracks were to go missing?

The answer is surely no, no and no. Yet, despite the value added to media by such memorable musical moments, more and more composers are struggling to make a living from their work, thanks to the rise and rise of 'buyout' deals.

A buyout is an agreement where the company commissioning the music pays a single, one-off fee for the composition and recording, acquiring some or all of the composer's rights and future royalty income in the process. As production companies look to cut costs, composers are coming under increasing pressure to agree to such deals, leading the Musicians' Union and The Ivors Academy to launch the Composers Against Buyouts campaign.

The campaign has already been supported by the likes of David Arnold – whose credits include scoring five James Bond films – and Hannah Peel, who has written for *Game Of*

Thrones, as it aims to stem the drift towards buyouts. But MU Deputy General Secretary Naomi Pohl says many commissioners are putting pressure on composers to sign away their rights. "Even if you've got a big agent, it's still often a case of 'take it or leave it'," says Naomi. "Royalties are decreasing, upfront fees are getting smaller, and deals are getting worse. It has a detrimental effect all the way down the chain."

American Practices

Many put the rise of such deals down to the growing influence of US companies on the UK media landscape. In the US, 'work-for-hire' contracts are standard practice, and some companies are seeking to bring them in over here, thereby acquiring composers' mechanical, publishing and performance rights – even where writers have assigned their performance rights for collection by PRS for Music.

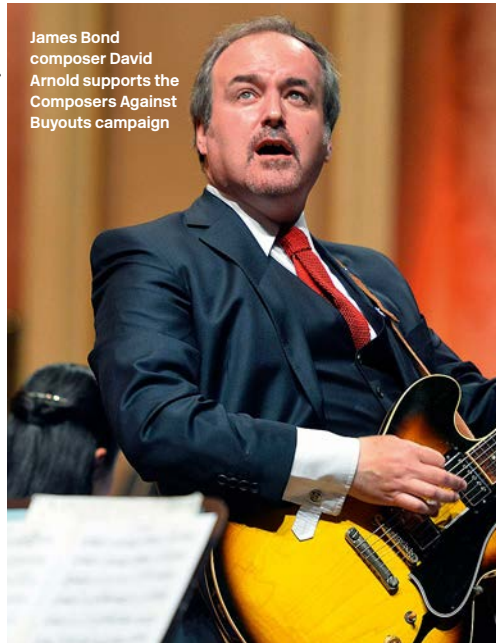
"A buyout model is potentially okay, as long as the commission fee's decent, for a flop," notes Ivors Academy CEO Graham Davies wryly. "But for something that's a hit, it's a disaster, because you have no mechanism to enjoy the upside. If you write the music for the next *Friends* for a couple of hundred quid, and then 20 years later it's a multi-multi-billion earning show, you're still stuck with a couple of hundred quid, and that's just not fair. Whereas the royalty model pays you as the music is used – and, if you speak to any composer, those are the royalties that pay the bills."

Top composer Nainita Desai agrees. She is now well-known for her work on productions such as the Oscar-nominated *For Sama* and the hit Netflix documentary *American Murder*.

But she started her career composing music for daytime TV fare such as *Police Interceptors* and *Road Wars* – and says the royalties from

Photo: Katerina Sulova / CTK Photo / Alamy Live News

James Bond composer David Arnold supports the Composers Against Buyouts campaign



those shows were vital in allowing her to pursue her vocation.

"It made up for the thousands of hours invested in learning my craft and practising, and the money I'd spent on software, equipment and keeping up with the latest trends," says Desai. "Ultimately, as a composer, I just want to be creative. Now, I'm coerced into accepting these work-for-hire buyout contracts. If I want to work, I have to accept the deal, otherwise I live in fear of being blacklisted."

And if things are bad for big name composers, they're much worse for those just starting out, with Desai warning media composition could become "the preserve of hobbyists and the rich, which doesn't make for a culturally and musically diverse creative industry".

"The more experienced the composer, the more leverage you have for negotiations – it's as simple as that," says Amanda Street, director of DNA Music, an agency which represents the likes of Erran Baron Cohen, Sister Bliss and Tom Kelly. "However, sometimes it doesn't matter who the composer is, the budget is the budget, and that's when you have to be creative with rights negotiations."

"I have to accept the deal, otherwise I live in fear of being blacklisted"

Nainita Desai



(Above) Composer Hannah Peel, who has written music for *Game Of Thrones* (below) also supports the campaign

Don't Back Down

While some pushback from composers has been successful – last year, the Discovery Channel Network was forced to back down over its plans to impose ‘direct source licences’ – other broadcasters are becoming more inflexible. Many firms even make money from the acquired rights, assisted by some large publishing companies who sub-publish the compositions. But it is not as if there is a shortage of cash in the content business. TV and movie streaming subscriptions, as well as gaming, have surged during the coronavirus pandemic, while UK television revenues alone amounted to £16.36bn in 2019. Epidemic Sound, a controversial production music library which fully acquires the rights to composers’ music before licensing it, was valued at \$1.4bn (£1.02bn) during a recent funding round. Plenty of people seem to be making money out of the sector – just not the composers.

“It’s quite shocking,” says Nainita Desai. “Music is part of the emotional experience for audiences. When you watch a film that you’re very moved by, music plays a large part in that. Without the song or the score, everyone underneath that pyramid – the musicians,

recording studios, music editors, music supervisors, publishers, record labels, streaming platforms – can’t exist. And yet the slice of the pie that the composer generates is going to someone else. There’s huge unfairness there.”

And it’s that inequality – and the tradition for stunning soundtracks – that Composers Against Buyouts seeks to protect. Because making people an offer they can’t refuse should be reserved for the movies, not the people soundtracking them... **mu**



Photo: Pictorial Press Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo

Possible Futures

What happens next? Execs on possible ways forward for the commissioning process...

“It would be good to get a code of practice in place. We might start with the BBC, because we have a very good relationship with them. We’ve also got a manifesto that we’re hoping composers will sign up to, which sets out some basic principles. But I could really see a select committee inquiry coming in the future.”

NAOMI POHL,
MUSICIANS’ UNION

“There needs to be legislation driven by the music unions and societies to protect composers from the continuing escalation in buyouts. If we continue to head towards buyouts being the new norm, then commissioning fees need to increase substantially – but this is not happening.”

AMANDA STREET, DNA MUSIC

“We need to put a floor under some of the behaviours and commissioning practices. We have to say, look, there’s enough money in this industry to pay for one of the most valuable inputs for your product. So let’s have some standard commissioning guidelines. Let’s explore whether minimum rates should be put in place and start to push back the tide.”

GRAHAM DAVIES,
THE IVORS ACADEMY

New Flavours Of UK Jazz

When they began to notice a lack of Black faces in the British jazz scene, Janine Irons and Gary Crosby decided to make a stand

Report by Michael Appouh

For the many names that have been regarded as a part of the current jazz vanguard in the UK, one that has flown under the radar despite its massive impact has been Tomorrow's Warriors. The talent development organisation and music education charity has been a paragon of self-determinism since its creation in the early 90s, thriving under the leadership of its founders Gary Crosby OBE and Janine Irons MBE.

Now celebrating its thirtieth year, Tomorrow's Warriors' achievement in diversifying British jazz has only become more apparent with each outstanding generation of alumni. Some of the biggest names in the genre have come through its ranks, supporting the careers of Soweto Kinch and Jason Yarde to Ezra Collective's Femi Koleoso and Nubya Garcia.

Origins

The UK jazz scene, now described as 'liberating' by *The Guardian*, was far from that in 1991. Still under the illusion that jazz could only be understood as a high concept art form divorced it from the masses, and crucially for Crosby, the people of its origin. "The idea was to diversify a community that I loved. I just didn't see enough Black people in a music that I was engaged in and I wanted to work on that." The aim to change the face of jazz was not to threaten the appreciation for technique

and reverence of the greats. Rather, Crosby set about carving out a new canon that challenged the Eurocentric narrative. "Jazz is a high art form. There is no doubt about it, it had changed, it had grown as an art form. That's the real reality. The problem is that we didn't take the Black audience with us."

Gary's experience in Jamaica had a direct impact on the organisation today. "The idea came while I was in the mountains with my cousins, they were very Afrocentric in their politics and the things they were doing for their community. And when they asked me what I was doing in England, I embarrassed myself by hearing my answers in comparison to what they were doing. It was hanging out with those two that made me think I need to do something more than just go down to Ronnie Scott's and have a good time. I have to use my skills to help improve things."

The earliest form of that fell on a Sunday afternoon at Camden's Jazz Cafe. Gary hosted jams at the north London venue weekly, inviting friends and colleagues to illuminate a then limited jazz circuit to the new generations of talent that was out there. What began as fun amongst friends would morph into the platform that would change the landscape of

Zara McFarlane and Renato Paris are two artists who have carved careers in jazz with the help of Tomorrow's Warriors

Photo: Pat Pascal

British jazz once Crosby's partner Janine Irons came into the fold. Gary teases, "We were having fun, then Janine came along. And then we stopped having fun and it became work."

Despite the jokes, his reverence for Janine's dedication to providing infrastructure for talented artists to climb up the music industry ladder is evident. Janine questioned how the talented musicians she saw at the Sunday jams got little to no recognition from the mainstream jazz circuit. "There was nobody championing young Black talent", Irons states, "so Gary and I, we got together. And I had no experience in marketing or anything like that, but I just did what felt instinctive. To start doing things in a different way." Quickly, their work paid dividends. The jams widened the audience to a younger, more genre fluid crowd, all the while maintaining a level of quality that attracted musicians such as Billy Higgins and made fans of the likes of Gilles Peterson. Their success translated to the creation of Dune Records, building a platform for future Warriors to record music, and allowing Crosby's band Nu Troop to release

"There was nobody championing young Black talent, so Gary and I, we got together"

Janine Irons

Each One, Teach One

The adage Each One, Teach One, an African proverb originating from Antebellum America, is one closely held by the founders and alumni of Tomorrow's Warriors. Becoming popularised in 1930s Jamaica, the country of origin for both Janine and Gary, the philosophy dictates that what one person learns, must be shared with another to benefit the community as a whole, without the need to formally teach.

For Tomorrow's Warriors, that expanded past musical skills, bringing in former Warriors to mentor and advise current members on marketing and management despite it not being official parts of the programme. Stars such as Shirley Tetteh, Denys Baptiste and Binker Golding all have active roles in the Tomorrow's Warriors faculty, with the number of former members who offer their time far outweighing the three.

For Janine, becoming a success post-Warriors has just as much to do with what one gives back to the community. "The guys that you're seeing now who are the international stars – Moses Boyd, Theon Cross, Nubya Garcia, Sheila Maurice-Grey, Shirley Tetteh, Cassie Kinoshi, Femi Koleoso – they truly understood the ethos of Tomorrow's Warriors. The 'Each One Teach One' approach. That sense of responsibility to the community of Warriors. They understood that they've benefitted from years of free training from us. So they will give back, they're always supportive of those who are coming after them."



Photo: Fabrice Bourgelle

an album and tour. With Jazz Cafe needing a new band to step in, the reins were handed over to a new generation that would blend elements of jazz, hip-hop, funk and reggae.

"It was sacrilege to a lot of the old school of jazz," Janine remarks. But it was becoming increasingly popular with an audience that was confident about being Black and British, and happy to finally see the genre alongside other musics of Black origin. The first Warriors generation was quickly followed by Jason Yarde and Jlife, and again by the likes of Tom Skinner and Denys Baptiste, with the latter going on to release a Mercury Prize nominated album in 1999. The ladder was finally being built.

Ethos

The next ten years produced a number of different incarnations of the band, but jumping from Jazz Cafe to short stints at Islington's

Rhythmic and Watermans Arts Centre, and eventually to Soho's The Spice of Life meant much of the administrative efforts were spent scouting for venues. What did remain consistent through this time was the drive to provide talent the opportunity to blossom and experiment, naturally attracting what are some of the biggest names in the UK scene today (Boyd, Cross, Hutchings). Saxophonist and former Warrior, Binker Golding, first heard of the Sunday jam sessions through what he described as "sheer luck", being introduced to it by a friend of his sister. ➔

Return To Live Music

After what has been a difficult year for the industry at large, it feels fitting that Tomorrow's Warriors' return to live music coincides with their 30th anniversary, recently announcing a barrage of dates for emerging musicians including Cheltenham Jazz Fest and a number of digital showcases and physical shows hosted by The Albany through summer 2021. Alongside this, their professional ensembles return to the stage in July, with Jazz Jamaica All Stars celebrating Trojan Records at Royal Festival Hall and Nu Civilisation Orchestra perform *Parallel – A Tribute to Joe Harriot* at King's Place.

Performing live is particularly important for the Warriors hands-on approach to learning, motivating students with "a taste of what professional life will be like if you work hard," according to Binker Golding – but also as a chance to learn and affirm young musicians' right to be on stage.

For Cherise Adams-Burnett, "learning through doing" has been key in developing bravery as a performer and built upon the trust that is innate within Warriors' tight knit community. "Gary's belief is you have just as much of a right to be on stage and perform as anybody else. You don't need to have academic validation or virtuosic ability before you get on stage. You learn that while you are there because you're in a community and that's a very different approach. I think that has been a better route to access and diversity."

"The reason why it's kept on going is because we started it for a good reason. And those good reasons were not only social, they were personal"

Gary Crosby

But it was the Warriors' willingness to bring people into the fold and the ability to explore their own artistry that willed him to stay. After being a regular at the jams for many years he recounts how Crosby scouted him to play, saying, "We were at this jam session and he sat us down and just started talking to us as though we were in his next band. He just jumped the gun and said 'when you start playing music in Tomorrow's Warriors...' and that was it." The personal relationship Crosby established between the Warriors fed into the shared vision that sustained the organisation through the 2000s, passing down the importance of being an active force in the diversification of jazz.

"It's only by people standing up and doing things for themselves, as we have done as a company, that things are gonna change.", explains Golding. "That's why we think that the programme is so important, and why it remains free, so we can say if we're describing you, then this is where you can come. We can help you with that progression. And to me, that's the most important part of it." Creating an avenue where young musicians without the

privilege to pay their way through a tired traditional route has remained a crucial part of it, even more so when considering the intersections between ethnic background and income inequality in the UK. But Binker also stresses the importance of getting each student to realise their artistic potential, stressing that the music is still the key to redressing the landscape. "The students that have come here have been more consistently artistically successful than in any of the any of the music schools across London. The reason is because it puts artistry first, which is one thing that most institutions don't really do."

Impact

Taking up residency at London's Southbank Centre in 2009 provided the organisation a consistent space for the musicians that attended Crosby's workshops. As attendance increased and the range in age, gender and abilities widened, more structure was needed to keep up with the demand. "We had the Violet Room, right in the belly of the Southbank Centre," recalls Janine. "Gary used



The organisation has given a creative home to a huge number of young players such as Sheila Maurice-Grey

Photo: Pat Pascal



Eamon Coates (piano), Keira Chakraborty (flute), Reuben Cookhorn (bass), Mia Runham (sax) and JR Carlyon (drums)

Photo: Pat Pascal

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to host sessions there every Saturday from 10 till 2, then it went to 10 till 6. Then we started doing Sundays. Then we started doing Fridays." The expansion of their capabilities meant more musicians, such as flautist and vocalist Cherise Adams-Burnett, would be able to receive a quality musical education free of charge. "When I was 16 years old, I was doing a lot of searching for a creative home. I knew I wanted to be a musician, but I didn't know how to gain access to the jazz community without money or a network," she says. "And when someone makes resources available that you've been fighting so hard for, you're in a bit of a state of disbelief... I had fallen into a goldmine of access, community, safety, and art."

A growing reputation among young musicians and the industry at large brought more opportunities for the organisation in the years that followed. Performances, seminars, workshops, access to professional musicians, visiting artists and mentors all became part of their offer to their students. Ensembles of new Warriors were paired with alumni such as

Peter Edwards who directs their professional ensemble Nu Civilisation Orchestra, as well Golding who has taken on a teaching role after seeing the growth of the charity first hand in the early 2010's. Through the embodiment of their 'Each One, Teach One' principal, what was first a platform for young musicians struggling to make a breakthrough after coming out of a Conservatoire or University became a preparatory school, for those wanting to study their craft and follow the path to become a professional musician.

Reflection

Championing the same mission for 30 years seems an impossible task looking from the outside, the inherent precariousness of operating as a charity and the number of similarly intentioned projects that have fallen by the wayside is long. But the list of artists whose careers can be traced back to the influence of Tomorrow's Warriors is motivation enough for Gary and Janine. "A friend of mine 25 years ago said it would take 25 years to sort itself out," Gary laments, "but the reason why it's kept on going is because we started it for a good reason. And those good reasons were not only social, they were personal".

Creating the ladder towards legacy has produced moments of pride for them both. As professionals, Gary and Janine have been honoured with an OBE and MBE respectively and as mentors moments such as Peter Edwards making his BBC Proms debut at the Royal Albert Hall was particularly emotional. But for the pair, the ultimate point of pride will always be for the work.

"We can see the wall but we can't see ourselves on it..." says Janine. "Tomorrow's Warriors places them in the heart of the Warriors 30 year legacy, and they can see themselves as part of that, part of the Black British jazz tradition. It's about identity, it gives you confidence, you know your place in this and how you have contributed to it. That's why you see a really culturally diverse, racially diverse, gender diverse community, that now makes up that wall. It's only when we think really deeply about it do we realise this was the intention." **mu**

For more information on Tomorrow's Warriors please visit tomorrowswarriors.org

Change At The Top Of UK Music

The new CEO of UK Music couldn't have arrived at a more difficult time for the industry. But Jamie Njoku-Goodwin is optimistic about the future

Report by Neil Churchman

UK Music's new chief executive Jamie Njoku-Goodwin has arrived as the sector grapples with the twin challenges of Covid and Brexit. Just 30 years old, the trained pianist, conductor and former government insider is doing what he describes as his dream job, representing an industry he loves and is determined to defend. He spoke to *The Musician* as UK Music launched its latest Creators' Survey – a key study whose findings could help shape how the industry emerges from its darkest crisis.

What made you apply for the job, given the current state of the industry?

Music has played a really important part in my life for many years, and it's always been something – when I was working in government and before that – I have been incredibly passionate about and really committed to. Lots of people thought it was a strange time for me to want to come into the industry. It was actually because it seemed to be in such desperate need that really persuaded me to think that, there's something I can do to help the hundreds of thousands of people working in it.

“Many industries going into this pandemic were in decline, but music wasn't one of them”

What do you see as UK Music's most pressing priorities at this time?

The main one is getting live activity up and running again. The music industry is an ecosystem in a way that a lot of people outside it don't truly appreciate. The absence of live music has hit all parts of the business. Publishers see how it impacts on commissions and royalties. The impact on performers themselves goes without saying, but rights holders are also affected, along with composers and songwriters, and even record labels are seeing the impact.

What has been driving you, day-to-day?

Being a musician is not a job. It's something you hone, you work for years and years, you train, you practise. Look at professional musicians and how much they invest in their careers, through lessons, instruments and time at a young age. It's a vocation, a way of life that people have seen taken away from them in the past year. I hear from musicians every day telling me stories of how difficult it has been. Half the time it depresses me, but the other half it fires me up.

Music is a part of the UK's identity. Whether you are talking about Purcell or Tallis, Elgar, Britten or Lennon, Adele, and Sheeran, it is something where the UK has been consistently a world leader, and seeing this industry that has done so much for so many people around the world in such a desperate situation now is awful. But it also motivates me and the whole team to do everything we can, working every waking hour, to try to get the industry back to where it can be.



Photo: JUSTIN TALLIS / Getty Images

Many industries going into this pandemic were in decline, but music wasn't one of them. The government should be doing everything it can to protect, strengthen and promote it, because when we come to the post-pandemic period, we are going to want industries with strong growth – job-centred industries that say something about the UK, and can be successful on a national scale – and that's the music industry in one.

So what progress is being made, especially on the issue of a government-backed insurance scheme to protect festivals and venues from pandemic-related cancellations?

We are doing lots of work with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and their events research programme to ensure mass events can return from 21 June without social distancing in a safe way. And, of course, the cultural recovery fund has been very beneficial for venues to make sure that infrastructure is there. But what we really need to take the sector from the hibernation that we have seen it in, to kickstart that, is an insurance scheme.

We are pressing incredibly hard on this, because we see it as the last piece of the puzzle, but a piece we desperately need. Without an insurance scheme, lots of events won't take place, and without those events there'll be less work for musicians.

Jamie's Music Story

Jamie Njoku-Goodwin's passion for music flowered relatively late. His conversion came when, thanks to the Cavatina Chamber Music Trust, a charity which gives free tickets to concerts to disadvantaged young people, he found himself at the age of 17 in the audience at the Wigmore Hall in London.

"It was a string quartet. They played pieces by Beethoven and Brahms, which I found really boring. But then they played a quartet by György Ligeti. It was all over the place, wild and crazy, and I just sat there and thought it was absolutely amazing."

Inspired, the teenager from a north London council estate applied himself to the piano and got a place at Nottingham University to study music.

"Lots of people there were great musicians who had been learning since the age of four. I thought right, everyone's got a competitive advantage here, so I got into conducting." Now an accomplished pianist, he sits on the advisory boards of the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the English National Opera.

"The thing that amazes me about music is, when you go to a gig with 500 people, every one of those is going to have a different reaction. Some people might walk out saying it's awful, others might say that was transformative. Four string players basically changed my life. And that's something that very few professions can say. Musicians can inspire people on a daily basis, doing something they love and something they are good at. That is one of the things that makes this industry so phenomenal."



Jamie has a strong background in music and political lobbying

There's nowhere near enough movement on this as we'd like. It's absolutely crucial. The government introduced it for the film industry. It has protected 14,000 jobs, it has enabled 200 productions to go ahead, and the film industry generated something like a billion pounds in the quarter after they introduced it.

Without something similar in the music industry, we could find ourselves in a quite bizarre situation whereby in June, events will be allowed, but they won't be happening, because they'll have to cancel for lack of insurance.

You have worked at the heart of government, as an advisor to Matt Hancock at DCMS, and later in the health department among other things. What do you bring to UK Music from the world of politics?

An understanding how the levers of power work, and how to make sure you achieve your

objectives. I view everything as a campaign – you need to have a campaign mentality to absolutely everything you do. On the insurance issue it's about working out who the key decision makers are, where the power lies and who are the people who influence them, who are the advocates we can mobilise, what we have to do strategically, and where do we want to be in six months' time. It's bringing that campaign experience into the music industry.

I came from a musical background, and I am really passionate about music, but I am not a music industry insider. I present myself as someone who knows how to operate politically, and can see what the industry





Photo: Richard Baker / Getty Images

Opera lovers await the start of the first socially distanced performance by English National Opera (ENO)

wants and needs, and work out how it can be delivered.

The 2021 UK Music Creators' Survey has been launched, with thousands of artists, composers, writers and producers being asked to give details about their work, income and expenditure. It will be used to compile an influential report for policymakers and the media. What are you hoping this year's study will show?

I think we know what is going to come out of it. It'll show that musicians have been awfully impacted by the past year and found themselves in really dire situations. But one of the reasons this Creators' Survey is so important is that, as we are making a case to government in this year of all years for more support for freelancers, to get live music up and running, and to take action to mitigate some of the effects of Brexit, we need hard data. It's so important in any business, but particularly when your job is to be lobbying and engaging with government.

Do you feel there has been a general lack of this sort of information?

I think this is something that the music industry has suffered from in the past. Take someone along to a concert, and they will get, right there and right then, how important our industry is. Take them along, for instance, to a music project aimed at improving people's mental health. All you need to do is watch for a few minutes and you see the benefits, but try and translate that into data and you struggle.

We need to go to government not just with strong arguments, not just with individual case studies, but with a survey of thousands of people giving an accurate picture – that is vital. Data doesn't lie. I would urge anyone who cares about the future of our industry to take part. [The details can be found at surveymonkey.co.uk/r/UKMusic2021CS]

One of your stated goals is to get the music industry fully recognised as a key national asset. Why is that so important?

One of the problems our industry has is that people like it. Everyone loves music. It almost

"Data doesn't lie. I would urge anyone who cares about the future of our industry to take part"

creates a blind spot where people don't recognise how important it is on other levels. When you win the argument over it being a national asset, and convince policy-makers and the public of that, other things that you are trying to unlock become a lot easier. The case for supporting freelancers is a lot easier to land when government accepts that music is a key strategic British industry. So is getting action on music education, and making sure issues around Covid and Brexit are being prioritised.

Are you optimistic that the message is hitting home?

One of the nice things I have been hearing is how dependent other industries are on us. And it really helps make our case. Hospitality have really missed the music industry, because live music generates footfall for bars and pubs. I hear people in the NHS talking about the really positive effect music has on mental health. You have people in the education sector talking about the importance of music in creative education, and how Google, Facebook and the tech firms want to employ people with creative backgrounds.

Look back at last year and the debate about re-opening. Music was often lumped in with sport and theatre, always being seen as a side player. Now there are whole working groups and events research programmes very much focused on the music side of things. It feels like we have started to make headway in championing our industry and making sure our policymakers understand how important it is. But there's a long way to go yet.

Why I Joined The MU

We asked three young performers why they joined the MU and why they treasure their membership



BILLY WATMAN

I first came across the MU aged 14 when I needed insurance for some festival performances. As a music student the value for money is fantastic, both for liability and instrument cover. I moved to London in 2019 to study at RCM and planned to busk to help fund my studies. Sadly, Westminster council have made this all but impossible with their licensing arrangements, but it's great to know that the MU is standing with musicians in this struggle. I also frequently perform across Europe, and Brexit may cause some travel headaches – again it's good to see the MU are already on the case to help.

Described by Tony Visconti as “a little genius” Billy is a 20-year-old classical and fingerstyle guitarist, who in 2016 reached the grand final of Sky Arts *Guitar Star*. His online videos have around 100 million views, including a viral busking performance of *Bohemian Rhapsody* at Edinburgh Fringe. In 2019, he released his first album *Riversong*, followed by the 2020 EP *On With The Show* – a selection of instrumental Queen arrangements. Equally at ease on steel or nylon strings, and refusing to be pigeon-holed, his live show offers a mesmerising journey through the genres. For more info, go to billywatman.com



SOPHIE KILBURN

The MU is a support network that is truly there for you as a musician and as an individual. Like many, the pandemic made it extremely tough financially for me to survive. Without the MU Hardship Fund it would have been nigh on impossible for me. They help and support me through all the vital admin and legal stuff that I would just brush under the carpet, hoping it would go away. The MU's professional and concise advice helped me to take control of my own career and not get overwhelmed. As lockdown starts to ease the MU are still there, like they were a year ago, making sure my rights are protected and voiced.

Sophie is a Derbyshire-born singer, songwriter who merges melancholic pop with indie-angst. She has received global praise and recognition as an “undeniable songwriting talent” (*XS Noize*), as well as backing from *BBC Introducing* and *Mahogany*. Her stripped back and intimate single *Call Home* led to her playing Amazing Radio's virtual CMJ Festival alongside Declan McKenna and Wolf Alice, and being named 'Best of 2020' by Chalk Pit Records. Sophie returns with new fiery indie-pop single *Movements*, which is the first installment off her debut EP *My Room Made Public*. For more info, visit sophiekilburn.com



ROB WHEELER

The unpredictable waters of the music industry have never been more difficult to navigate, and the MU is a much needed port in the storm. My career over the last four years has been a heady mix of chaos and creation. On one hand I have formed my own label, signed with one of the UK's leading publishers, and built a recording studio. And on the other hand, well, the other hand was broken – literally! A snapped middle-finger which nearly ended my career and left me physically, mentally and financially fragile. The MU offered me all the support and guidance I desperately needed to heal, both outside and in.

Somewhere between the haunting melodies, delicate musicianship and fragile lyrics, Rob has discovered a refreshing new way of telling stories with his songs. His catalogue is a collection of folk-inspired ballads and Americana-pop songs, with a typically British cynical view. Hearing his raw, yet smokily smooth voice deliver his tender melodies, you feel you have just experienced the musical equivalent of sipping a perfectly aged whisky, sat next to an open fire, as the cruel world outside disappears. His new album, *Ten Embers*, will be released on 18 June. For more on Rob, go to RobWheelerSongs.com



Sharing Stories

Young cellist Ruth Hallows isn't long out of music college, but her blog that highlights the value of musicians helping each other out is becoming increasingly popular

Profile by Ariane Todes

It's a bit like Wizarding – there are musicians and there are muggles. It's nice to feel part of something special." At the age of 28 and only a few years out of music college, cellist Ruth Hallows is still enthralled by the career she signed up for. She is under no Harry Potter spell, though. Using her blog to explore the ups, downs and myths of life in the profession she is at the vanguard of the movement to open up the mental health issues of musicians and to tell the truth about musical life. "If I can create a less perfect world for the next generation to be okay with," she says, "I think I'm doing a good job."

Hallows started the cello relatively late, aged 13, having begun on violin. She never felt a choice about being a cellist, though: Everyone else has a story about how they saw a cello in an orchestra and knew that was what they wanted to do. I've never been like that. It wouldn't be a question to do anything else. I can't imagine my life without it.

She always felt the pressure of her late start, even as she went to the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. I wasn't the standard I should have been when I did my audition and I was lucky to get in. I was very aware of having to play catch up and being the underdog. That's something I've struggled with throughout my studies.

Her mental health suffered at college, and after taking a year out to reboot, she joined the three

year MPerf course at the Royal College of Music, studying with Alexander Chaushian. He often had to protect her from herself and some of the ways that young musicians learn. It took me a while not to come back and say, 'I've done double the amount you asked for,' just to please him. As a child you're taught you'll get more praise if you do your homework quicker or do double the workload. Alex was firm in saying, 'I've pushed you as far as you can go. If you go any further, you'll make yourself ill, so please don't.' He noticed it a few times and was strict in getting me out of those bad habits.

Changing Ethos

The intense self-criticism required to learn an instrument combined with an education system that aims to produce competitively viable musicians is a recipe for damage. Does Hallows think the ethos of music colleges is changing? It was making a transition while I was studying. When I went to the Welsh it wasn't something we talked about. As I started the RCM, health and wellbeing were kicking off and people were having to put things in place to look after students. The RCM looked after their students brilliantly. Colleges are making health and wellbeing a big part of their study life now and I think it will help. I also think the only way people are going to get past it is by working through it themselves with the help and support of supportive staff, teachers, friends. That's how I've done it.



"I was very aware
of having to play
catch up and being
the underdog"

"If we're all a bit more open about the difficult bits it's so healing and comforting"

Now, as a teacher herself, she brings the insight of her own experience: "How you react has a huge influence on how someone feels about what they've just shown you. I remember I was in a rehearsal for an awards ceremony at school and the deputy head slated my playing. She wasn't even a musician and ripped me apart before the performance. I was a mess. I'm aware of how I react to things in an encouraging way that doesn't make students feel judged and doesn't feel personal. Anything I say is about the cello, not about them. This is something Alex taught me. When he saw that I couldn't differentiate between the cello and myself in lessons, and that I was getting upset thinking I'm not good enough as a person, he would say, 'That's ridiculous, I'm talking about the cello'. I make a big effort not to repeat the habits that messed me up."

Self Assessment

Paradoxically, lockdown has helped: "It forced me to assess things I'd been pushing down because I'd been working so hard trying to do my degree, get a job, be a freelance. I'd been neglecting a lot of emotional stuff. I'd been neglecting myself. I had time to work out how to cook food properly and to discover what a balanced diet is. It's been nice to not be so horrible to myself. It's a huge problem at music college. If you don't get something right in practice you start being verbally abusive to yourself. That talk can wear away at you. It's been nice not to hear it. I was given this space to finally look after myself."

In her blog she attempts to open up all these subjects, writing honestly about subjects such as performance anxiety, motivation, her experience of lockdown and the recent loss of her mother, as well as interviewing her peers and offering practical suggestions. She explains, "If we're all a bit more open about the difficult bits it's so healing and

Now a teacher herself, Ruth is grateful for the life lessons that she received as a student



Ruth says that the mental health of music students is being considered more these days

Ruth's Blog

Initially, Ruth's blog was going to be a travel journal from Hong Kong, where she took a job as a cello teacher after graduating. When that role didn't work out, she used it to confront her own professional anxiety: "Scrolling through Instagram and Facebook, you're bombarded by what people are doing. Everyone makes the effort to look like they're busy even when they're not. My biggest fear was seeing everyone else moving ahead. How could I get on top of this fear? By asking people what they've been doing since graduating. It was a good switch in my brain. Instead of this competitive world we're brought into through music college, I was celebrating what my friends were achieving. It took away my fear because I was supporting them and coming from a healthier place."

It helped that her friends could be open, too: "The people I was speaking to felt at ease enough to say, 'I've had some dark times'. I realised I'm never on my own about how I feel about the music world. Everyone else is feeling the same. It's nice to hear that it's helped people along the way. It's been really cathartic."

Ruth is proud of what she's achieved with the blog: "I'm not one of the trailblazers doing amazing things, but the blog is the place I can make a difference, I can help others and help myself at the same time. It's been so helpful to help blow the lid on all of these issues we face, especially in such a tricky time, going from student to young professional."

comforting. Fear drives us so much and we have this horrific obsession with perfection. My own obsession with perfection has crippled me."

She is optimistic about the way things are going in the music business: "The old way of thinking is being forcibly pushed out, because the new soloists, orchestral players and graduates are so of the mindset that everyone should be equal. We're less comfortable sitting with injustices and we're not afraid of speaking out. The music world is listening and has had to adapt. We still have a long way to go, but the people who are coming out of education and into the industry are so passionate and driven that the business is going to have no option but to change."

Make A Stand

Some habits die hard, though. "It's optimistic to assume there aren't certain problems with gender equality. We still have to iron out some of the conversations. If someone makes a sexist comment, it's not just laughing it off,




but saying, 'You can't say that'. In this job we look up to the people before us. It's a natural progression. If there's sexist banter, it gets copied and then it doesn't stop. We're starting to recognise this, but it takes being brave enough to say, 'We can't say that any more'."

Transitional Phase

Hallows' career is a combination of solo, orchestral and chamber music performance and teaching. She's currently working on an album of previously unrecorded works by female composers including Mary Howe and Louise Farrenc, and her dream is to be in an orchestra. Like many graduates, though, she faces a triple threat – Covid, Brexit and the lack of orchestral opportunities in the post-graduation and pre-profession no-man's-land. There are a few ensemble schemes that cover this tricky phase, such as Southbank Sinfonia and Firebird Orchestra, with whom she plays, but not enough: "I'm grateful to have Firebird because it means I have this experience while I'm in this limbo, but we need more of it."

Meanwhile, Brexit is stymying her applications to European orchestras. "The jobs I'm applying for are on the continent and I'm not getting anywhere. The amount of immediate rejections has definitely upped since Brexit was announced. They're not saying it's because of Brexit, but by the timescale it must be. We're more expensive to get over and if you're putting on a gig in Germany, you can get a German cellist to do the job. It's just good business."

Indeed, her blog includes an article written with the MU's Keith Ames and David Barnard, answering practical questions about Brexit and what it means for musicians. She joined the MU as a student, and as well as input with the article she has received help a couple of times: "I emailed about a contract when I needed a little extra support to feel like I was protected and they told me what I needed to ask for and write. It felt so personal". She has no doubt about how important its work is, especially now. "Coming out of lockdown, that horrific thing of, 'Oh, you're going to be working for exposure' is going to be rife. It's nice for someone to tell you 'You are worth this amount of money' and also, 'Don't you dare take anything less than that'. As individuals we're so bad about saying 'Oh, but I love what I do so it's fine' and people assume they can get you for free. It creeps in everywhere. For musicians, especially naive postgrads like I was, it helps if you have a huge army that knows what it's doing."

As musical life starts to return, she remains positive, albeit with a pragmatic reserve. "I think we've become kinder. But I worry this will be forgotten as soon as normality kicks in and that we'll forget lockdown ever happened and forget the things we learnt. If as musicians we can keep that kindness and the acceptance that we couldn't practise because we were too exhausted with lockdown, and carry that healthy approach into the next stage of normality, that would be good for the industry." 

For more information on Ruth's career and to read her blog, please visit ruthhallows.com

A New Era For Tin Pan Alley

On the eve of the opening of a bold new development that will transform London's famous Denmark Street, *The Musician* assesses its legacy and its future

Report by Neil Crossley

On 31 October 2021, a 34,000 sq ft development described as "a unique multi-sensory experience" will receive its much-awaited soft launch at the intersection of Oxford Street and Charing Cross Road, in central London. It's all part of a £1bn commercial redevelopment of the area in and around Denmark Street, the thoroughfare dubbed Tin Pan Alley that has served as a vibrant hub for London's musicians, music publishers, recording studios and musical instrument shops for over 100 years.

Giant LED screens will beam immersive advertising, promotional stunts and art installations, on what is being called the largest digital canvas in the world. Shops, galleries and a boutique hotel called Chateau Denmark are other prominent features. The development will see the creation of three new live music venues: a 2,000-capacity venue hailed as the largest live music venue to be built in central London since the 1940s; the preserved and resurrected 12 Bar Club; and a 300-capacity venue within the hotel.

There will also be a strong focus on developing new artists. Outernet Global has partnered with the BPI to launch the BPI recording studio, a facility offering *pro bono* recording for the next generation of UK music talent from all genres and backgrounds.

"The burgeoning London session scene offered well-paid work and plenty of it"

Regent Sounds is one of the remaining musical instrument shops on this historic street



Photo: Dan Kitwood / Getty Images

Outernet Global has also partnered with broadcaster Bob Harris and his multi-platform music and production company, Under The Apple Tree, to bring "beautifully filmed sessions and live music to its Denmark Street district". At a time when the live music industry is ravaged by venue closures and the devastating impact of the pandemic, this all seems hugely positive news. Those with a vested musical interest in Denmark Street wait keenly to see how well the new development will reflect and enhance its rich musical legacy.

Publishing Pedigree

As cultural London landmarks go, Denmark Street has a unique prominence. Over the decades it has been at the heart of the British music industry. It was initially known

as a hub for music publishers, with the first, Lawrence Wright, setting up premises there in 1911. Wright also went on to found the *Melody Maker* in 1926, by which time another music publisher, Campbell Connolly, had moved its offices to the street.

But it wasn't until the 1950s when Denmark Street really began to make its mark as a focus for music publishers, songwriters and arrangers working in popular music. Lionel Bart, writer of the musical *Oliver!* started his writing career for music publishers here and went on to become known as 'the king of Denmark Street'.

The vision of what the new Denmark Street development is intended to look like



In 1952, the *New Musical Express* was founded at 5 Denmark Street, and by the mid-1950s it was also home to the first generation of rock and pop managers. Most notable among these was entrepreneur and manager Larry Parnes, who built up a roster of British rock 'n' rollers such as Marty Wilde, Billy Fury, Joe Brown, Vince Eager and Georgie Fame.

By the early 60s, the music publishing trade began to decline as emerging bands such as The Rolling Stones showed it was possible for artists to write their own material. Some publishers lost touch with changing tastes, a fact highlighted in the 2009 book *From Back Rooms To Ballrooms* by Madness singer Suggs, in which he recalled how Mills Music Ltd, based at No.20 Denmark St, told London-based singer-songwriter Paul Simon that his songs *Homeward Bound* and *Sound Of Silence* were uncommercial.

Studios And Sessions

As the new wave of beat bands emerged, recording studios began to appear on Denmark Street. One of the first of these was Regent Sound Studios at No.4 Denmark Street, launched in July 1961 as a unit for

publishers to record their songs. This was where The Rolling Stones recorded their first album in 1964, and where in October that year a talented young player called Clem Cattini would lay down a session on the band's single *Heart Of Stone*.

Cattini started out as a house drummer at the 2i's coffee bar, before joining touring band The Beat Boys, backing Larry Parne-managed acts such as Marty Wilde and Billy Fury. He went on to join Johnny Kidd and the Pirates, playing on their No.1 hit *Shakin' All Over*, before becoming Joe Loss's house drummer, co-founding The Tornados, and playing on their 1962 instrumental hit *Telstar*. By 1964, Cattini had grown tired of relentless touring and meagre pay packets and wanted to spend more time at home in London with his young family. The burgeoning London session scene offered well-paid work and plenty of it. Denmark Street was its hub and nowhere was more integral for finding the next job than No.9, the Giaconda Cafe. ➔

What Outernet Will Offer

The Musician asked Philip O'Ferrall, CEO Outernet Global, how the new development will benefit musicians and musical instrument retailers:

What do you think Outernet London can offer musicians?

"So much and to all levels of musicians. The fact that all the music stores will thrive, the *pro bono* studio for those starting out, and the three venues for artists who are further on their journey. At the heart of Outernet is making sure that this area continues to be a place musicians love to come to, whether it be to buy instruments, perform, record or go to gigs."

Do you think its possible for musical instrument shops to still offer a specialised service to musicians in the heart of such a commercialised environment?
"Our approach to Denmark Street is driven by a long-standing commitment to retain and restore its authentic spirit. So the shop-fronts are being faithfully repaired, the leases say that the shops have to remain music shops and they have preferential leases."

"We aim to amplify Denmark Street's global reputation as THE place in London to buy musical instruments, whether in person or online. Shops such as Sixty Six Sounds tell us they want more than a shop – they want a platform to connect with their audience either physically or online via shopping and music content. Only Outernet can provide that to Denmark Street as a whole."

"The street's always been a close knit community and we look forward to illustrating just how much we believe specialism and commerce can live together in a comfortable and complementary fashion."

British Sea Power at the
Tin Pan Alley Festival
Denmark Street, London,
16th July 2006

Street Smarts

Lee Anderton, managing director of Andertons Music Co in Guildford, shifted his business's entire operation online when the pandemic hit and saw sales more than double. He believes there is still a place for city centre 'bricks and mortar' instrument retailers such as those on Denmark Street, but only if done extremely well and offering a specialised service.

"If you want to stay in business as a physical retailer you've just got to be very, very good at it," he says. "I mean maybe Denmark Street will become four or five cool stores that deal in vintage instruments and have blue plaques outside saying 'Jimi Hendrix was here', and it'll still work."

The challenge, he says, will always be that businesses opening premises in the suburbs will always have the advantage of more space and easy parking, because of cheaper rents.

"That's the one thing they've got. Space to put stock on display, to have boxed brand new stock ready to go when someone wants to buy one, parking... and of course in London no one's really able to do that. But I think you're going to see a weird rebalance over the next ten years in terms of what does it cost to live in London and what does it cost to have a shop in London. And that might be the saviour of a street like Denmark Street."



From the 50s through to the 80s the Giaconda was the place where musicians would meet and eat. David Bowie recruited his first band, The Lower Third, there. Jimi Hendrix and The Small Faces were regulars, as were Elton John and Bernie Taupin, who wrote *Your Song* on the rooftop of No.20 Denmark Street one morning when John was working as an office boy for a music publishing firm.

The Giaconda was where Clem Cattini would chat and drink coffee with fellow session players Big Jim Sullivan, John Paul Jones and Jimmy Page. By then, more studios had opened on the street, such as Central Sound Studios, and for accomplished session players, offers of work were never far away. "Guys would come in and go 'Are you busy Clem? Could you do a demo for me? I'll give you six quid,'" recalls Cattini. "So I used to go round all the publishing companies and do little sessions. And then I started getting calls from people going 'Did you do the demo for such and such? Well can you come and play on the master?'"

New Generation

By 1975, a new generation of musicians was making its presence felt, headquartered above a rehearsal studio at 6 Denmark Street. Malcolm McLaren had bought the property off the band Badfinger and it became the headquarters for his new charges, The Sex Pistols. The rehearsal room at 6 Denmark Street was later used by original Pistols' bassist Glen Matlock, for his new band Rich Kids. In 1980 it became the home of Keren Woodward and Sara Dallin of Bananarama.

By then, the businesses on Denmark Street were shifting once again, as music instrument retailers – particularly guitar stores – began to dominate the street, a trend that continues to this day. One of the first was Andy's Guitars, at 27 Denmark Street, which opened in 1978 and built up a strong reputation before its closure in 2007. Stores that still remain include Rose Morris at No.10 and Regent Sounds at No.4, a shop created on the site of the original Regent Sound Studios.

Like most instrument retailers on the high street, the last year has been devastating. Crispin Weir, who was worked at Regent



Photo: Tina Korhonen / Photoshot / Getty Images



Bill Haley and Chris Barber are pictured with The Comets outside the Tin Pan Alley Club

Photo: King / Mirrorpix / Getty Images

“We can refocus it as a beacon for British music... we won't stifle that essence”

Philip Ferrall, Outernet Global

Increased Footfall

The musical legacy of Denmark Street is at the forefront of Outernet London's promotion of the area. The company points to a predicted footfall of 48,000 pedestrians per hour. This should bode well for the instrument shops on Denmark Street, but there are concerns that the increased commercialisation of the area will stifle the raw essence that made it so notable in the first place. Philip Ferrall, CEO Outernet Global, refutes this view. Denmark Street has been under increasing pressure from online retail for years, he says. This new development will regenerate the area.

“We can refocus it as a beacon for British music aided by being surrounded for the first time in many years by a wider music area – the music venues and the BPI recording studio for example. What we are doing won't stifle that essence – in fact quite the opposite. We're looking at the whole musical history of the street and helping illustrate the fact it is unbound by genre and more than ever a place for all music and artists.”

It's easy to view Denmark Street through rose tinted spectacles, its gritty, alluring past overshadowing 21st century realities. Like neighbouring Soho, Denmark Street has undergone a dramatic transformation. For retailers like Crispin Weir at Regent Sound, the challenge is securing long-term viable leases while embracing the predicted vast increase in tourists to the street.

“Balancing the tourism and musicians is something we've always had to do, so it's not strange to us at all and we'll still have a lot of professional and often very famous musicians coming in, so it's fantastic that they're not put off. Ultimately you've got to roll with the punches. It's hard to say if it will be better or worse, it's going to be impossible to tell until we do it. So let's just try and make it work.” **mu**

instrument retailers will be able to prosper within the forthcoming Outernet London development. “My own feeling is it's either going to be a huge success or a massive flop. It's really hard to know at this stage. It's very impressive when you see the films and the plans and everything. It is absolutely amazing in terms of what they're trying to do. The difficulty is reconciling that with the history of Denmark Street and what the musical instrument retailers do, because being a specialist environment, specialist shops, it's quite hard to put that in the thumping heart of a very commercialised development.”

Instrument Stores

Weir is positive about the new Denmark Street and says he and other musical instrument retailers are keen to stay and make this work. “We are all at the final stages of negotiating the leases. The problem is making sure that there is affordability certainly for the next 15 to 20 years. Other than that it will be the case that everyone will have to leave.”

He accepts that they may have to diversify in response to the shifting customer demographic. Already, he has installed a recording booth in the shop so that customers wanting to record tracks can do so, straight onto acetate. He may have to look at selling records and other imaginative merchandising options. “I'm nervous about future rents and how much I'm going to have to move into merchandise. Like Tony Iommi slippers, you know, in order to pay the rent.” he laughs.



Photo: Jansos / Alamy

Sounds since it opened in 2004 and bought the business in 2010, says the business lost 95% of trade in the last year.

Weir estimates that 25% of his trade is from professional players, many in bands who are passing through on tour. He says the strength of his business is in offering a specialised, bespoke service. Most professional musicians would never dream of buying a guitar online, he says, as they recognise that no two guitars play, feel or sound the same, even if they are exactly the same model, produced at the same factory on the same day. He hopes that by continuing to provide a bespoke service for discerning professional players, he and other

Once you have your track,
it's important to tag it
correctly before you
put it online



UNDERSTANDING METADATA

If you've ever written or contributed to a piece of recorded music, chances are you want it to be heard and you want to get paid. But that's impossible without metadata. Gary Walker delves into a vast and quickly evolving subject

Metadata has existed for as long as music has been released physically. Think back to the first time you lowered the needle on a record and sat back to read the sleeve notes – metadata is all of the information attached to a recorded piece of music. It may seem a dry, daunting topic, and it is a labyrinthine, constantly evolving subject, so we'll only be covering the basics here. The most fundamental and significant implication for musicians is – if your data's not right, people are less likely to find your work and you probably won't get paid.

The picture became wholly more complicated with the advent first of MP3 downloads and then streaming platforms such as Spotify and Google Music, as a vast digital paper trail of song and album titles, track creators and performers, record label information and royalty splits began to emerge. Some of this data is incomplete, inaccurate or entirely absent, and without standardisation between the multiple platforms, distributors and labels the value of unclaimed royalty payments has spiralled. Add in the fact that for every one of the millions of pieces of music online exists the composition, the recording and often multiple releases stemming from it, with compilations, remixes and cover versions further muddying the waters.

“Without the right metadata attached to a song, it can be lost in a maze of databases”

Paul Di Lorito

Then consider that songs may be written by numerous collaborators, rights vary between global territories, and bands or artists can switch record labels, and you begin to get an idea of the scale of the problem. “Without the right metadata attached to a song, it can be lost in a maze of databases being accessed by millions of consumers and companies all across the world,” says Paul Di Lorito of songwriters association The Ivors Academy. “The chances of anyone finding and listening to your song without the right metadata attached are slim to none. And the chances of getting paid are even slimmer.”

What Is Metadata?

In a nutshell, metadata is information about a composition or recording, and at its simplest it's the name of the song's writer and performers and its title. It can be descriptive or made up of identifying codes such as the International Standard Recording Code (ISRC) or a performer's unique International Performer Number (IPN). In some cases, it is permanent (a song's title), in others transitory (the record label/publisher). “Metadata is used everywhere,” says Di Lorito, “especially by digital online services to make music discoverable, market it to the right listeners, and report its sales or plays. Most importantly, music metadata contains information such as ownership share-splits and important identification numbers that are crucial requirements for getting paid accurately each time music is used.”

Organisations such as PRS for Music and Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL) collect royalties on behalf of their members, with PRS holding representation agreements with societies in 100 countries so that its members can be paid for use of their music

globally. Ali Condon, the organisation's head of policy and public affairs, explains: “Poor quality or incomplete data can lead to delays in money being paid to the creators. Incorrect data can result in the incorrect parties receiving royalties. PRS for Music can only pay out against a correctly registered work.”

Do It Yourself

Metadata should be entered at the point you upload your music via a digital distributor such as TuneCore, CD Baby, Ditto Music or DistroKid. You should also ensure your tracks are registered with the appropriate royalties collection agency, such as PRS for Music if you're the creator and PPL if you played on the track. By this point, you should also have discussed how you'll split any royalties you make with the other writers and performers, as you'll need to fill in the song-split percentages.

Ensuring metadata is correct and up to date is particularly important for unsigned acts, as they are likely to be taking care of business themselves. But even if you are on a label it's worth checking your data is up to date. “When we put out our first EPs back in 2007, in those days we did everything ourselves,” says Paul Gregory of 2020 Mercury Music Prize nominees Lanterns On The Lake, who are signed to Bella Union. “We planned our own releases and had no label or publisher involved. We used TuneCore to distribute those EPs digitally, and we quickly learned about ISRC codes, royalty collections and distribution. We all joined PRS for Music and made sure all the tracks had the correct credits attached.”



“Your credits are like your pension. Investing in your publishing data is investing in your future as an artist”

Tyler White



HELP IS AT HAND

The data debate is a huge one, but many organisations have sprung up in an attempt to help artists retrieve the royalties they're owed. Session's Creator Credits software, developed by Bjorn Ulvaeus, Max Martin and Niclas Molinder, is designed to tackle the problem at source. It can be embedded into digital audio workstations such as Pro Tools, ensuring that metadata is captured at the point a piece of music is created, and then stays with the track on its journey to labels, publishers and streaming platforms.

Music recognition technology software is also emerging to help match music to rights holders. PRS for Music recommends its members register their work with Soundmouse, and is in the process of trialling similar solutions for public performance, live and online work. If you are a PRS member and think you may have unclaimed royalties outstanding, head to the organisation's website and check out the informative *How To* guide on how to claim.

For further reading on metadata, the excellent Synchtank site recently published a report titled *Drowning In Data* which is fascinating for anyone interested in finding out more about metadata. It is available as a free download from synchtank.com

Photo: Pekic / Getty Images



Photo: Daniel Coupe



Left: Ensure your metadata is accurate and up to date. Above: Paul Di Lorito, Independent Advisor to the Ivors Academy. Right: Lanterns On The Lake didn't realise the importance of accurate metadata until well into their careers

Don't Miss Out

As the creator of music, you are entitled to the money you've earned by having your music used. "Accurate publishing metadata is essential to ensure you get paid as a songwriter," writes Tyler White, senior product manager for Spotify's music publishers and songwriters group. You should also see time spent getting your metadata right as an investment in your future. "For songwriters, your credits are like your business card," adds White. "It's your next opportunity, your chance to get your big break. Your writing credits are like your pension. Investing in your publishing data is investing in your long-term future as an artist."

Different Types Of Data

There are three types of music metadata, with descriptive data including basic information like the song title, artist, track number, release date and cover art. Ownership metadata sets out how the revenue from any streaming, airplay or synchronisation will be split. Recommendation metadata helps get your music discovered and includes subjective areas such as genre, mood and similarity to other artists. This is the most complex and fast-moving of the three types, and will only get more important with the continued growth of streaming algorithms and the development of artificial intelligence and voice-activated smart speakers. Just imagine what's going on in the background when someone says, 'Alexa,

play me a new song I'll like'. "Songwriters and other contributors are recognising the benefits of discovery metadata and how it can help fans find their entire body of work, no matter who recorded it," says Di Lorito. "But while descriptive metadata is essential, it can be more easily misinterpreted or misrepresented, so it's not always a case of more is better. You want to make it easy for consumers to find all your work, but not so that the search-and-sort process becomes full of superfluous metadata that drives consumers away."

The Scale Of The Problem

"It would be unfair to say the music industry has done little to address data issues," says Di Lorito, who advocates the introduction of an industry-wide Minimum Viable Data standard. "But a unified global solution has yet to be achieved." It's impossible to quantify the amount of money outstanding for unpaid royalties globally, but in the US, the Mechanical Licensing Collective (MLC) recently recovered \$420m that it is now seeking to match to copyright holders. "That money dates back some time, and you can argue it's ultimately a result of one or many of these data issues," Di Lorito suggests. "So



Photo: Henri Calderon

in terms of how big the problem is, this can give some indication.” Condon adds: “It is a significant challenge. A composition may have five songwriters, meaning there are possibly five different publishers attached. Those splits aren’t necessarily equal and must be agreed by the parties involved. All of that information needs to be present and correct in order for everyone to be accurately attributed and paid. Then you add the data pertaining to the sound recording, possible cover versions, syncs, use in a compilation... all of those manifestations create more relevant metadata. And little details can make a difference.”

It's Not Too Late

If you’ve previously neglected or been unaware of metadata and think you may have missed out on royalties, you may still be able to claim what you are owed. “We didn’t know PPL existed until we were on our third album and it can only be back-dated so far,” says Gregory. “It was only by accident we found out. So it’s not just getting the actual data part right, it’s understanding who actually collects the royalties and making sure you’ve signed up with them.” You should also devote some time to ensuring your historical metadata is still accurate. “It is important not just to register correctly from the outset, but to update the data as and when anything changes,” says Condon.

How you do that will depend on which streaming platforms and distributor you use, but most have help pages on the subject. iTunes Connect also enables artists to submit a request to update metadata retrospectively. Tracking down money from legacy releases in this fragmented digital landscape is a complicated detective task, though. “While we operate a robust automatic and manual matching process to ensure that we identify as many works as possible and all of that information feeds in to our AI tools,” says Condon, “if a work is not registered correctly, we will not be able to pay it in a given distribution. We also have a tool by which members can claim usage that has gone unidentified, which similarly helps to improve our database.”

The message from everyone we spoke to is the same – don’t overlook your metadata, and don’t delay. “Consider it immediately!” urges Gregory. “If you wrote a song, or played on a song, and your name isn’t on there, you won’t get paid. I think a lot of musicians are put off looking into it because it’s all so murky, but it’s something you really have to do.” **mt**

Top 5 Tips

How to manage your metadata

1

Right first time

Spending a little extra time on accuracy at the upload stage is invaluable. A simple typo at this point may result in payment problems, or your music not being discovered at all.

2

Talk money

Agreeing the song-split percentages between the creators and performers up-front is key to everyone getting paid correctly. It’s not a conversation you should be having retrospectively.

3

Register your track

As well as filling in your metadata, you should ensure your music is listed with PRS for Music if you’re the writer of the track and PPL for everyone who contributed to the recording.

4

Keep on top of it

Don’t just fill in the data when you upload your track and then forget about it. A little housekeeping once in a while will prevent payment mistakes.

5

Get what you're owed

If you didn’t initially fill out metadata correctly don’t worry. The money is out there somewhere and there are means by which you can recover it.

**TOP
TIP**

MAKE IT AUTOMATIC

To ensure that you get the right information input at the right time, make it as much of an automatic process as writing a tracklist.

Fair Play And Fair Pay For Parents

Becoming a parent is a right, not a privilege. But how does the government support musicians who have children?

Report by Katie Nicholls

Discovering that you are going to become a parent can be an emotional tsunami. Compounding this whirlwind are the more prosaic, but nevertheless vital, considerations of what benefits you are entitled to and how it will affect your future career as a musician.

What you can claim in terms of payment and leave can be separated into two camps: the employed and self-employed. Employed musicians can claim statutory maternity, paternity (adoption) pay and statutory maternity/paternity/adoption leave. Employed musicians also have the option to take advantage of shared parental leave and pay, which means the mother (or main adopter) can share their leave and the payments with their partner during the first year. There are, of course, conditions regarding eligibility, and employed musicians who have recently discovered they are pregnant should arm themselves with pen and paper to work out if they qualify, as it involves getting entangled in some bamboozling calculations.

Pregnant self-employed musicians, on the other hand, are not entitled to statutory pay or shared parental leave, but can claim maternity

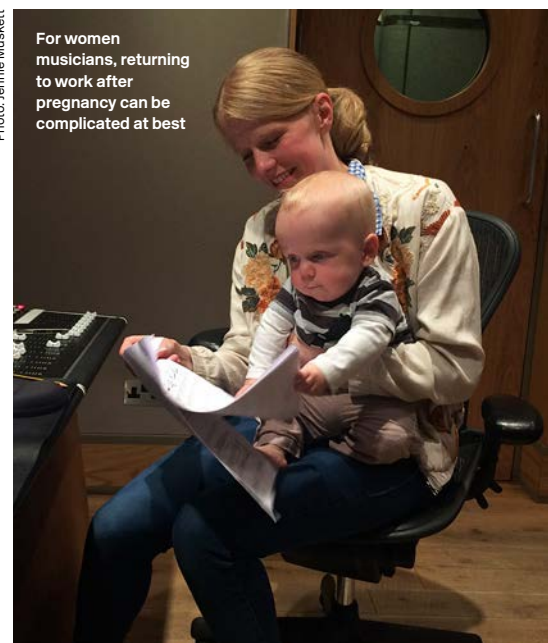
allowance (90% of your average earnings with a maximum of around £150 per week) for up to 39 weeks. Maternity allowance can only be paid to the mother (it's not currently available for adopted parents or fathers) and self-employed musicians are not entitled to share the maternity allowance with partners who may want to share childcare to allow the mother to return to work. You are permitted ten 'keeping in touch days' without it affecting maternity allowance payments. With over 90% of MU members working as self-employed musicians, the issue of reduced benefits and entitlement is a matter of deep concern for the Union as it unfairly discriminates against female musicians in particular.

Sharing The Burden

"There are so many aspects of the parental leave system that are not working," says Olga Fitzroy, founder of Parental Pay Equality, co-founder of Pregnant Then Screwed, freelance sound engineer, and executive director of the Music Producers Guild. "The rules around taking time off are strict, and you only have the option of ten contact days during that leave, which is absolutely devastating for a freelance career," says Olga. "Tracey Brabin, Labour MP, agreed to work with Pregnant Then Screwed and came up with a Ten Minute Rule Bill for shared parental leave for self-employed parents."

The bill advocated that freelance workers should share the same rights as employees. "That was brought to Parliament in 2018 and the MU supported us" says Olga. The bill passed the first reading, but not the second reading which, Olga says, is "standard in that if it doesn't get government support, it doesn't

Photo: Jennie Muskett



progress". It did, however, trigger a government enquiry into shared parental leave, but the results of that consultation have been delayed due to the pandemic.

The battle is far from over, says John Shortell, Head of Equality, Diversion and Inclusion at the MU. "We're lobbying government through the TUC for shared parental rights for self-employed workers. Not being able to share parental leave and pay burdens women workers with childcare. It's saying to women if you have a child and you're self-employed, it's your responsibility to stay at home. What kind of message is that? It's perpetuating that mindset that if you have a baby you have to take a career break, and whether you like it or not it comes with a penalty." The current situation also penalises partners who may want to share that early bonding time with children. A survey conducted by Parental Pay Equality found over 70% of freelancers, or those with freelance partners, would use the scheme if it was available to them.

How Much?

A further prohibitive reality for new parents is the cost and availability of childcare. "A lot of our members are working as part of the

"There are so many aspects of the parental leave system that are not working"

Olga Fitzroy



MPs and campaigners demonstrate for maternity equality outside parliament

Campaign For Change

The Musicians' Union is supporting the campaign for shared parental leave for the self-employed and is lobbying Parliament through the TUC. Parental Pay Equality has a petition supporting this change, which can be found at its website at parentalpayequality.org.uk

The MU is also advocating a change in the law that would offer subsidised childcare from six months old, rather than the current three years old. As part of its work to help new mothers, the MU has created a sample policy for breastfeeding at work, which gives guidance for employers on how to facilitate breastfeeding workers with lactation breaks, milk storage and flexible working. In support of its members, the MU offers maternity, parental and adoption grants of £250 for new parents. For more details on these grants, to download the sample breastfeeding policy, and to find full details on entitlements, visit theMU.org

night-time economy," says John, "so they need out-of-hours childcare, and that expense is out of a lot of member's reach – especially if you've got two self-employed parents. You end up relying on family and friends, and during Covid that whole casual infrastructure of childcare just fell away."

John says the MU is campaigning for subsidising childcare from six months, rather than the current three years. "It's completely ridiculous," agrees Olga, "that there's a two-year gap between maternity leave and when subsidised childcare kicks in. So many women are forced to take a step back out of their careers. And it's generally women who do that because of the gender pay gap. It's a cycle and the only way to resolve it is with properly funded early-years childcare."

A Human Right

The effects of the pandemic on the music industry have been devastating, and for female musicians who have taken maternity in the three years before spring 2020 the situation became worse still. In April 2020, alongside furlough, the government

announced the introduction of SEISS. Payments given to the self-employed are based on 80% of average profits, however, and the calculation does not exempt periods when women were taking maternity leave, effectively penalising those women with reduced payments.

Pregnant Then Screwed took the government to court claiming the calculations breach the anti-discrimination provision of the Human Rights Act and the Equality Act. "We had a court case in January," reports Olga, "and they found that it wasn't discrimination, but we asked for permission to appeal that judgement. We believe that the judgement was wrong and we have a chance of winning an appeal. It's really important to fight this because of the precedent it sets... it's discriminatory."

"It impacted a lot of our members who get less or aren't eligible," says John. "Post-Covid it'll be women who'll suffer the most impact →

Fathers Too

Alongside the burden it places on mothers, the current UK maternity and paternity entitlements also penalise fathers or partners in same-sex couples who want to share their child's formative years. In Sweden, one of the world's most generous countries when it comes to paternity leave, parents are entitled to take 480 days, with 90% of fathers taking leave in the first year.

"The self-employed are more disadvantaged than anyone because Maternity Allowance is awful and the system places the entire burden of childcare onto mothers," says John Shortell. "It's bad for the other parents too because it denies them that time to bond with the children, and it's important in balancing gender inequalities in the home and in the workplace."

Pregnant Then Screwed is advocating three months' ring-fenced parental leave for both parents at 90 per cent of salary. "We believe that if both parents have access to properly paid parental leave this would mean fathers will spend more time with their children, which would have a positive impact on everyone. It would also mean that both men and women will potentially take leave from employment, thereby reducing discrimination towards women alone," it says.

Visit pregnantthenscrewed.com/campaign for more on this and other campaigns.



Photo: Wiktor Szymanowicz / Barcroft Media / Getty Images

Working mothers on a march in central London organised by Pregnant Then Screwed in 2017

in terms of the pay gap and their careers, because it's women who'll be taking on the unpaid caring responsibilities."


Culture Shift

When Rishi Sunak was challenged on the exemption clauses of the SEISS, he responded that "for all sorts of reasons people have ups and downs and variations in their earnings, whether through maternity, ill-health or others". Joeli Brearley, CEO of Pregnant Then Screwed, said in response: "For maternity leave to be dismissed as the same as being sick or taking a sabbatical is not only insulting, but it sends out a very dangerous message about how this government views mothers and the integral role we play in a well-functioning society."

While the MU and other organisations continue to fight for a change in legislation, it's clear that a deeper change is also needed at a cultural level to ensure that female musicians can continue to have successful, supported careers after having children. Olga says that research done by the Parental Pay Equality campaign group shows it takes two years for women to return to their pre-baby earnings. "Taking time out of work to do any caring

responsibilities does have a negative impact on your future earnings and career progression," agrees John. "It needs a massive culture change and we think the government could do a lot to push towards that – but so could organisations as well,"

Beyond the impact on individual female musician's careers, John warns that the wider effect on the music industry will be significant. "The loss of female talent in the music industry will compound other issues, such as the gender balance line-up in festivals, and women in senior positions who can advocate on behalf of other women. It has a major impact on equality and diversity throughout the entire industry."

"Musicians really need to fight for shared parental leave," says Olga. "Having a baby is not necessarily something you plan for. It's not a luxury. The right to a family life is one of the human rights and should be supported. So any opportunity the government gets to improve that, then it's something that we all need to support." 

To submit an album for review, please send links to your recordings and PR material to: TheMusician@theMU.org

You should also forward your cover artwork and/or photos (minimum 300dpi resolution) to: keith.ames@theMU.org

We try to help as many members as possible, and preference is given to members not previously reviewed.



Reviewer: Roy Delaney

reviews

A look at some of the new albums, EPs and downloads released by MU members for 2021, together with links for more information on the featured artists



ONYX BRASS

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Photo: Benjamin Ealovega

This veteran and versatile brass quintet, featuring trumpets, tuba, French horn and trombone, are all seasoned players with illustrious orchestras such as the LSO, the ENO and the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Onyx Brass's mission is to reflect the status of the brass quintet as a serious medium for chamber music.

Their latest recorded project, however, is a deeply important and unusual venture for founder member Dave Gordon-Shute. His grandfather had escaped Berlin in the mid-1930s, and after he died Dave discovered that he had been bequeathed a collection of letters that his elderly relative had collected from many of the musical greats of the

past, including Brahms, Mendelssohn and Richard Strauss. One letter referred to Strauss's *Zwei Gesänge, Opus 34*, which by coincidence Dave had just started to study. This sits alongside works by many of the other composers featured in the letters. At first it feels disconnected, but in reality it's an utterly apt, deeply moving personal project.



» ONYX BRASS Festmusik: A Legacy

Stirring brass pieces in original arrangements by this fine British chamber quintet, from composers the calibre of Shumann, Rubinstein, Robert Franz, Richard Strauss and many other major names. onyxbrass.co.uk

classical



>> LINAROL CONSORT La La Hö Hö

A collection of rare Renaissance viol pieces from the early sixteenth century discovered in a manuscript in Vienna's National Library of Austria, and previously owned by the massively wealthy Jacob Fugger.

resonusclassics.com



>> FENELLA HUMPHREYS Sibelius & Josephson

Violin virtuoso Humphreys joins with the BBC National Orchestra Of Wales to tackle some of the most formidable of works from Sibelius, plus the debut of a new Josephson work.

resonusclassics.com



>> JANE GORDON & JAN RAUTIO Gabriel Fauré

One of the most influential of the fin de siècle French composers, Jane Gordon on violin and Jan Rautio on piano ably work their way around Fauré's distinctive writing, recreating his magical sound in these moving pieces.

resonusclassics.com



>> SCOTT & DEVINE Beyond Beethoven

Horn player Anneke Scott and pianist Steven Devine perform works inspired by Beethoven from his contemporaries Ries, Steup, Starke and Thürner on original period instruments.

resonusclassics.com

rap



>> STEG G Live Today

A true British rap pioneer, Glasgow's Steg G has been doing this for 20 years, but has lost none of his vitality, busting angry raps about real working class life from the mean streets of his nation's biggest city. *Scars* and *Wee Small Hours* are the standout cuts, but it's all pretty incredible.

steg-g.com



>> NATHANIEL CARTIER Can't Get Enough

Laidback and jazzy festival hip-hop from a Swiss musician who's found himself in Edinburgh, and most certainly knows how to get your feet tapping and your head nodding with his laid back style. The sound of summer.

tinyurl.com/nathcart

blues/rock



STRAWBS Settlement

After over 50 years in the business, the Strawbs are still as vital as ever. David Cousins' beautifully ageing voice flits seamlessly from raucous stomps to delicate ballads.

strawbsweb.co.uk



ANDY GRANT BAND Dig The Darkness

Andy's solid outfit deliver unashamedly bold and rousing British blues with the occasional swampy edge. Rousing opener *Thursday's Child* and the more gentle *Need* are the highlights.

andygrant.net



SCOTT MCKEON New Morning

With Scott's latest collection of songs, at times you feel like you're in a dingy downstairs club in a flowery shirt in the late 60s, at others you're in the slickest contemporary rock club. Proper versatile.

scottmckeon.co.uk

STAND OUT

This month's highlights includes some challenging and rewarding new jazz improvisation, and some delightfully skippy pop tunes from Italy via Scotland



ARCHIPELAGO Echoes To The Sky

A deeply inventive and constantly fascinating selection of tunes from this neo jazz outfit, ranging from summery sax meanders to frantic and scratchy electronica, and even metronomic groovedowns. You never know what's coming next!

archipelagoband.uk



ROBERTO CASSANI Ansema We Stand

An uplifting album packed with fun and joy from this Italian double-bass player now based in Scotland. Folk sounds and jazzy pop shuffles from around the globe smash together in this almost uncategorisable collection of happy-go-lucky songs.

robertocassani.com

instrumental

» **PAUL RUANE**
Sound

A beautiful album that celebrates the life and music of the Leeds-born fiddle player who left us too early in 2016. Recorded together with his wife Dee and his closest friends and family, this is a fitting memorial to a great player.

paulfiddle.com

» **MACONOCHY, LEFANU & SWAYNE**
Relationships

The relationships referred to in the title refer to familial and friendship links between the composers and players involved, which makes for some very fine violin and piano pieces.

resonusclassics.com

» **MIKE ADCOCK**
The Ludwig Variations

A delightfully odd collection of sparse and occasionally frantic music that sees Mike improvising on his wheezy old Ludwig accordion. Music to stare at the sea from cliffs on a breezy Spring evening.

mikeadcock.com

singer/songwriter

» **JOE T JOHNSON**
Far From The Sun

Joe's gentle and drifts vocals float effortlessly over the jangling indie folk guitars, evoking long summer nights, and some of the guitar band greats from a variety of British vintages. Sweet.

joetjohnson.co.uk

» **JO ASH**
Here, Then & Somewhere Else

Jo's bold, dramatic voice grabs your attention on the edgy *Innocence* and her nuanced piano on the more gentle waves of the instrumentals *Unspoken* and the porcelain fragile *Petals* leave you all relaxed.

joashmusic.com

» **TIM HOLEHOUSE**
Lost

This prolific minstrel never fails to demand your attention with his painfully honest autobiographical songs. Underground stars like Babar Luck, AJ Simmonds and Ellie Shepherd all guest on this album of collaborations.

timholehouse.com

Folk

» **JOHN RENBOURN GROUP**
A Maid In Bremen

A reissue of a classic show from 1978 in Bremen in Germany from John's post-Pentangle outfit. Featuring Jacqui McShee on vocals, plus players the calibre of Tony Roberts, Keshav Sathe and Sandy Spencer beside him.

mig-music.de

» **ASHLEY HUTCHINGS**
A Midwinter Miscellany

From Fairport Convention to Steeleye Span and The Albion Band, Ashley's been at the very heart of British folk for decades, and this collection of songs and poetry brims with experience and a life well lived.

ashleyhutchings.co.uk

» **DAVE TOWNSEND**
Concertina Allsorts

True to the album's title, Dave plays all sorts of music on his concertina – from the depths of the sixteenth century right up to the present day. From the baroque sounds of *Rondeau* to the more sentimental *Farewell Old Friends*, he visits a whole world of musics from the tips of his fingers.

dave-townsendmusic.com

Roots

» **IAIN MATTHEWS**
Fake Tan

Recorded in Norway with his trusty crew of local musicians, Iain treats us to ten old favourite songs and a brand new one, including a delightfully stripped back version of *Woodstock*, bringing a new verve to it.

ianmatthews.nl

» **GIGSPANNER**
From Poets To Wives

The former Steeleye Span stalwart and his pals open with the wistful fiddles of *She Moved Through The Fair*, before delivering eight more songs, both delicate and joyfully stompy.

gigspanner.com

» **SOLOMAN SMITH**
Birdland Reappraised

From smooth bar room slides to more lusty singalongs, this Cambridgeshire singer-songwriter makes folk, funk and jazz collide into a potpourri of sounds.

solomansmith.com

Tools Of The Trade

Vocalist Louise Clare Marshall explains why her instrument requires just as much maintenance as any other

Report by Gary Walker

Louise Clare Marshall has been singing since she was 15 months old. A former student at Chetham's School Of Music and London's Guildhall, and member of The National Youth Choir Of Great Britain, she is also an accomplished pianist. The Lancastrian has worked with a dizzying array of musicians, including Beverley Knight, David Gilmour, Bryan Ferry and Van Morrison, and is part of Jools Holland's Rhythm & Blues Orchestra.

Photo: Melanie Gail

Louise treats her voice like she would any other instrument



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In 2008, doctors told Marshall she had a nodule on her left vocal cord, and the changes she made to ensure her career didn't end prematurely serve as essential advice. "After that knock back, it was about re-learning my craft," she says. "I had to stop laughing and talking loudly, and I went to a speech therapist. Musicians can put their instrument down, but we're using our voice 24 hours a day – even snoring. I discovered steaming, which helps to put moisture back into the vocal cords, massage because we get tight in our necks and shoulders, and you have to avoid alcohol."

Essential Exercise

Longer sets can be punishing, and Marshall remembers early in her career performing eight times a week in West End musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*. "When I was in choirs, we did intensive warm-ups, but you can get lazy – the gig's in 20 minutes, you're getting your make-up on and you don't warm up,

"You have to keep the motivation up, even if it's just little exercises"

but you need to." Lockdown has left many vocalists unable to sing regularly, and Marshall stresses the importance of staying in shape. "You have to keep the motivation up, even if it's just little exercises – pretending you're chewing a toffee, keeping the muscles in the jaw relaxed, singing a little every day and using your diaphragm. It keeps the muscles moving and the soul happy."

Be Prepared

Like most musicians, Marshall has a gig bag to cover every eventuality. It contains lozenges, Manuka honey, herbal teabags, and room-temperature water. She has a pre-show routine, too. "It starts from what clothes you're wearing, making sure they're not too tight. Wearing high heels can hinder your vocal core, and if the microphone isn't in the right place or you can't hear yourself, you'll be compensating and putting the larynx in the wrong position, creating tightness. I don't have heavy perfumes or hairspray in the dressing room. If I'm feeling stuffy in my sinuses, steam from a hot shower/bath or using a portable steamer can help.

Air conditioning is an absolute no and I wear a scarf to keep my neck warm." Marshall has also learned to put her voice first, even if it

means disappointing friends and fans. "It's great when people are coming to see you before the gig and you're entertaining, but it's all using the motor. You've got to take it easy and allow yourself that space so you can give it 110 per cent."

Look After Yourself

A bout of pleurisy in 2017 saw Marshall unable to work for three months and she's now careful to avoid illness.

"It was scary, but I discovered Zooki Vitamin C, which lifted me back to health. I discovered NeilMed and salt water for rinsing the nasal passages – most colds and illnesses start there. Also too much dairy could cause excess mucus build-up. When in doubt, see a specialist. Once a year, I go to a good ear, nose and throat doctor and have a vocal MOT."

"Another factor is stress and emotion, and I've had times where the voice just won't work. We're using our motor all the time and at some point your voice will tell you, 'I'm not doing it today'. All you can do is rest – real rest, not on your phone, no talking, really relaxing." 🎵

Louise's second album *Beautiful* is out now. Please visit louiseclaremarshall.org.uk

Have you registered for your MU benefits?

While membership of the MU offers a wide range of free services, there are a number of benefits that you need to register or apply for.

MU website

To fully access our website – theMU.org – you will need to register on your first visit using your membership number.

Contract advice – before you sign

Receive professional advice on the terms and implications of any complex agreements via our Contract Advisory Service. Contact your Regional Office to find out more.

Instrument and equipment insurance

For £2,000 worth of free musical instrument and equipment cover. Register by calling Hencilla Canworth on **020 8686 5050**.

Partnership advice

If all the members of your group are already MU members, or

decide to join, we can offer free partnership advice and an agreement. Contact your Regional Office for more information.

Motoring service

The MU Family Motoring and Accident Aftercare Scheme provides 24/7 cover. Members must enter discount code MU24 to obtain free membership of the scheme. Register now via telephone or the web. mu.assistprotect.co.uk/TMAJoinFree.cfm

Musician's Hearing Services

A range of hearing related services for MU members. For an appointment, call MHS on **020 7486 1053** or visit musicianshearingservices.co.uk

Help Musicians UK

Charity offering practical, positive support to emerging, professional

and retired musicians, whatever the genre. helpmusicians.org.uk

Medical assistance

The British Association for Performing Arts Medicine delivers specialist health support to musicians. Visit bapam.org.uk

Music Minds Matter

A comprehensive mental health support service providing advice, information, resources, and professional and clinical services for musicians in need of help. musicmindsmatter.org.uk

Music Support

A charity for individuals in the UK music industry suffering from mental, emotional and behavioural health disorders. musicsupport.org

For full details of all the benefits of MU membership see *Members Handbook*.

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To join, contact the relevant MU Official.

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performed on the recording; or we do know the names of the musicians but we have been unable to trace them or their next of kin. If you can assist the Musicians' Union with line-up information or contact details, visit theMU.org/Home/Advice/Recording-Broadcasting/Royalties. Here, you will be able to find more information on the types of royalty income we collect, as well as lists of musicians and recording line-ups we are currently trying to trace.

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