

# The Musician

Journal of the Musicians' Union  
Winter 2020  
[theMU.org](http://theMU.org)

## UK ARTISTS

Tour Dates 2020/21

Aug 2020	Glasgow	CANCELLED
Sep 2020	Leeds	CANCELLED
Oct 2020	Manchester	CANCELLED
Nov 2020	Birmingham	CANCELLED
Dec 2020	London	CANCELLED
Jan 2021	Brighton	TBC
Feb 2021	Cardiff	TBC
Mar 2021	Belfast	TBC

From lockdown to live return – how the MU is  
supporting members through COVID-19

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Musicians'  
Union



# Fighting For Our Members

How your Union is working hard to get a fair financial deal for all musicians in the current pandemic, and preparing for life in the post-lockdown world



Horace Trubridge,  
General Secretary

**There is no point in trying to sugar coat it, 2020 has been a bloody awful year for our profession. COVID-19 has been every musician's annus horribilis, and the early part of 2021 is not looking much better. Your officials, staff and the MU Executive Committee have had to deal almost exclusively with trying to minimise the damage that the pandemic has wrought on members' working lives, while also battering on the doors of Number 10 and the Chancellor's office to try to get this government to understand how our industry works and provide realistic universal financial support for the workforce – not just the institutions and buildings supported through the Cultural Recovery Fund.**

In order to maximise the extremely limited work opportunities available to members we have had to enter into interim agreements with many of the employers and engagers that we have collective bargaining agreements with, and that has been a tortuous and demoralising process. Like so many of you, we are anxious not to allow an erosion of the hard-fought-for terms and conditions in our CBAs on a permanent basis, and in trying to achieve that balance we have had to walk a paper thin tightrope.

Hearing the harrowing stories of the suffering that some of our members are enduring brings the impact of the pandemic and this government's lack of support for some sectors of the work force home to us in a truly personal way. We are doing everything we can to provide advice and support to members who are not just trying to cope with the overwhelming financial loss, but also the inevitable detrimental effect on their health and wellbeing too, and we will continue to explore ways in which we can help you, the members, get through these dark days and remain in the profession.

## Remarkable Ingenuity

All this makes the stories of the creativity of musicians striving to continue to work all the more remarkable. Whether it's pop-up gigs, drive-ins, online teaching or pay-per-view streamed performances, musicians show time and time again that the skills they have learnt as musicians enable them to be creative in business as well. Monetising online performances is tricky. Nevertheless, as we begin to scale the foothills of this new way of working I see initiatives springing up everywhere that should give us all hope.



**TO HEAR MORE FROM HORACE,  
VISIT THEM.U.ORG**

While making money to pay the bills remains the absolute priority, we all know that's not why we became musicians in the first place. We became musicians because we wanted to perform and entertain audiences, and so many of you have been telling me that it's what you miss most of all. We will continue to push the Chancellor to introduce a two-for-one ticket scheme to enable socially distanced live performances to take place when we come out of the current lockdown. Much like the scheme that Rishi Sunak introduced to help the restaurant trade in the Summer, a 'Seat Out To Help Out' scheme for the live music industry would enable socially distanced

**“We are doing everything we can to provide advice and support to members”**

gigs, musical theatre and other performances to take place and not lose money, thereby providing much needed work for musicians. As I and my colleagues are saying to politicians and civil servants every day, musicians just want to be able to work again, but they need investment to survive.

## Working Together

Finally, I cling to the hope that this time next year, we will all be able to look back on what the profession has been through and give thanks for our collective strength, unity, resilience and ingenuity. Musicians are still joining the MU in impressive numbers as they recognise the importance of standing together and fighting for our world beating industry. You can play your part in supporting the MU's campaigns by writing to your MP and making our collective voice heard. More than anything, hang on in there and stay safe.

Very best wishes  
**Horace Trubridge**

# Contents

Winter 2020

4

30

"To be in those studios with some of the best session musicians in the world, I find that to be an honour"

**Fiona Brice**



## Frontline

- 6 Members invited to join the call for new fast access fund
- 7 MU seeks guidance on Brexit for musicians

## Reports

- 3 MU General Secretary
- 10 Deputy General Secretary
- 20 The Let Music Live protests in London and Birmingham
- 22 Assessing the achievements of Black History Month
- 26 Tips on maintaining wellbeing during the winter months
- 34 Acclaimed jazz musician Arun Ghosh on clarinet care
- 36 How to promote your music using the latest online tools
- 48 MU Delegate Conference

## Feature

- 12 How the MU has supported members in the Covid crisis

## Advice

- 40 The pros and cons of signing a music publishing deal
- 44 Sources of financial support

## Your Voice

- 9 Interacting with MU members and supporters on Twitter

## Profile

- 30 Fiona Brice: composer, arranger and violinist

## Reviews

- 46 New albums, EPs and downloads from members

22

Examining the experience of Black musicians since the rise of the BLM movement

## Union Notices

- 2 Key contacts for the Musicians' Union
- 50 MU Executive Committee election results
- 51 Member benefits

Photo: Ntando Brown

## MU Contributors



### Andrew Stewart

Andrew writes for *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *Classical Music* and *BBC Music Magazine*, among others. He is also Director of Southwark Voices. **p26**



### Katie Nicholls

Katie is a freelance journalist and editor whose features and reviews have appeared in titles such as *Mojo*, *The Guardian* and *Kerrang!* **p30**



### Rahel Aklilu

Rahel is a writer based in London with a background in law, writing mostly around music and culture for publications including *gal-dem* and *The Independent*. **p22**



### 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. **p36**



### 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 Hacksaw. **p46**



### Neil Churchman

Neil is an experienced journalist in broadcasting and print. A former BBC national newsroom assistant editor, he now writes on music and the media. **p34**



### Neil Crossley

A journalist and editor who has written for *The Independent*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian* and *The Financial Times*. Neil also fronts the band Furlined. **p20**



### Henry Yates

Henry is a freelance writer from Gloucestershire who has written for titles as diverse as *Classic Rock*, *Total Guitar*, *NME* and *Record Collector*. **p40 & 44**



**BREXIT AND YOU** The MU is fighting to protect musicians' right to travel when working in the EU post-Brexit. We want to hear from you about how Brexit has affected your working plans for 2020. [#WorkingInTheEU bit.ly/2AzdUAV](https://www.themu.org.uk/working-in-the-eu)

# frontline

Winter 2020

The MU in action, working on behalf of professional musicians

## MU Calls On The Treasury To Invest In Musicians And Plug The Gaps

MU members are invited to join the call for additional support for musicians through the Covid-19 pandemic. Under the title 'Invest In Musicians', the new campaign aims to activate members and supporters to build a sense of engagement and reframe the debate about the future of the UK music industry.

MU research shows that 38% of musicians fall through gaps in government support. This is a highly skilled workforce and musicians' jobs are viable – some are just temporarily on hold. While the financial commitment by the government to the infrastructure of our industry must be acknowledged, many musicians are not in a position to ride out the Covid-19 outbreak. By focusing on skills retention and genuine investment in people, and not just places, the government has the opportunity to deliver a thriving cultural environment in the future.

The MU is therefore calling for musicians to have more access to funding to ensure that when the music industry opens back up, they are in a position to get back to work. 'Invest In Musicians' aims to elevate the status of musicians as a dynamic, enterprising workforce in the eyes of decision makers.

The Union is delivering a campaign toolkit for members and supporters to tell their stories, show their solidarity, and sway the



opinion of the decision makers. The assets allow individuals to celebrate their talent and experience while underlining their career fragility during lockdown and illustrating their value to our cultural landscape.

Horace Trubridge, MU General Secretary says: "The Union has been lobbying government and highlighting the financial challenges facing our members since day one of lockdown. This campaign is the next stage in ensuring our members' needs are set squarely in front of those in power."

Members will find a poster enclosed with their copy of *The Musician* for use at home, at work, or at events in line with lockdown guidance. Materials to get involved online can be found at [theMU.org/InvestInMusicians](https://www.themu.org.uk/InvestInMusicians)

**"This campaign is the next stage in ensuring our members' needs are set squarely in front of those in power"**

**Horace Trubridge**

## Term Of Office For General Secretary

As reported in the summer 2020 issue of *The Musician*, an extension was granted by the Union's Executive Committee to the term of office of current General Secretary, Horace Trubridge. This extension was approved to run through to his planned retirement in January 2025. However, at the Executive meeting on 11 November, Horace requested that the letter extending his term be rescinded and that an election for the position of General Secretary be called in the autumn of 2021.

"When I became MU General Secretary, I vowed that I would grow the Union's membership to the point where the Union could be self-sufficient and not have to rely on the diminishing licensing income," he said. "The Union was on course at the beginning of this year to achieving that in time for my retirement. The pandemic has set this 'project' back significantly and I have been concerned for some time now that we will not have enough time to reach the target by January 2025. I asked the EC to rescind the letter extending my current term, so that I can stand again for a full term at the beginning of 2022 and they have agreed."

Details of the election process will be published in *The Musician* and on the MU website in due course.

## New MU Website

The MU's new website is set for launch in December and members are encouraged to visit the facility regularly to benefit from its comprehensive features, news and advice. Members are also reminded of the valuable Musicians' Union Tax Savings Guide, which can now be found solely on our site. In addition, the latest terms and conditions of the MU insurance schemes, as administered by our preferred broker Hencilla Canworth, are located online on the MU website. Please note that it is essential you are up to date with your MU subscriptions to enjoy these (or any other) benefit of Union membership.



The government has offered few assurances to touring musicians post-Brexit

Photo: Image Source / Alamy Stock Photo

## MU Seeks Government Guidance On Brexit

With the Brexit negotiations running out of time and the transition period, during which rules remain the same, set to end in December, the MU has been pressing the government to issue comprehensive guidance for musicians wishing to tour in the EU from January 2021. We have asked numerous questions of ministers in parliament via MPs such as Alison McGovern and Stephen Doughty. The response, regardless of the specific question, has always been along the same lines:

"On 1 September 2020, the government launched a comprehensive communications campaign to help the UK prepare for the end of the transition period," said minister for digital and culture, Caroline Dinenage. "This includes guidance on customs and mobility

procedures important to professionals in the live music industry, including freelance musicians and touring professionals. My department will continue to engage with the creative industries to understand further the specific issues they may face."

The MU has pushed the government to offer more than this, as the current advice is woefully inadequate. It does, however, offer some signposting that members may find useful so please see here for the referenced guidance – [gov.uk/transition](https://www.gov.uk/transition)

More useful is this online guide, which clarifies some of the requirements in different EU countries. [vivalavisa.co.uk/articles/brexit-and-beyond-what-lies-ahead-for-touring-in-the-uk-and-eu](https://www.vivalavisa.co.uk/articles/brexit-and-beyond-what-lies-ahead-for-touring-in-the-uk-and-eu)

## Industry Stats

86,148

People who have signed the Musicians' Passport petition to date – and it's rising fast.

£5.8bn

The amount contributed to the economy by the UK music industry in 2019, up 11% from 2018.

197,168

Full-time UK music industry jobs in 2019, all now at risk from the government lockdown restrictions.

For the latest news on how the Musicians' Union is helping you visit [theMU.org](https://www.theMU.org)



**ASK US FIRST** Check through our list of promoters before agreeing to accept an engagement at [tinyurl.com/askusfirst](https://tinyurl.com/askusfirst)

## ABRSM Agreement

The MU met with the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) to discuss our diversity concerns, and they have agreed with some of our demands, including: Introducing a minimum of 20 new compositions or arrangements from composers from underrepresented backgrounds every year; Making sure that 20% of all syllabus content comes from composers who are Black, Brown, and Indigenous People of Colour (BBPOC); Transforming the organisation itself through a Diversity and Inclusion Group to lead change across everything from staff training to governance and examination panels.

For more info visit: [tinyurl.com/tabrsm](https://tinyurl.com/tabrsm)

## Musicians' Hearing

The Musicians' Hearing Health Scheme, which offers hearing check-ups, expert advice and custom earplugs at a discounted rate to MU members, has reopened selected clinics across the UK. This service is now booking hearing appointments for scheme-registered musicians at selected clinics across the UK, subject to change in accordance with latest government advice.

For more information on what the scheme can offer, visit: [hearformusicians.org.uk](https://hearformusicians.org.uk)



Naomi's work on the Safe Space service was highlighted

Photo: Jonathan Stewart © Musicians' Union

## Naomi Pohl Selected For Industry Honour

MU Deputy General Secretary, Naomi Pohl, has been selected for *Music Week's* Women in Music Roll of Honour, which celebrates the achievements of female executives. There are 24 names on this year's list, drawn from all sectors of the music industry.

Naomi was nominated for all her work at the Musicians' Union – including the Fix Streaming campaign – but the main work covered in her nomination is the Safe Space scheme, which was created to provide a safe space for all musicians to share instances of sexism, sexual harassment and sexual abuse in the industry. "My biggest sense of achievement has to be from leading the MU's Safe Space service," said Naomi.

## MU To Relocate The London HQ

The MU plans to move from its existing London headquarters in the Oval in 2021. The move is made with a view to relocating to a more flexible and appropriate office space in the London area. The offices at 60–62 Clapham Road will therefore shortly be available to rent.

Horace Trubridge, MU General Secretary, says: "The Union has undergone significant modernisation and it is vital that we reflect contemporary working methods and introduce administrative cost savings wherever possible. Value for members remains at the heart of our work, a philosophy that has never been more relevant than in the light of the current economic circumstances."

## Music For All Online

The charity Music for All – which offers financial support and donated instruments to music makers with limited access to musical instruments and lessons – has recently launched a new website. Music for All promotes and highlights the well-established physical, educational and health benefits of making music – a particularly relevant benefit during the current pandemic. Please visit the charity's new website at: [musicforall.org.uk](https://musicforall.org.uk)

## Dates For The Diary

### 21-22 Jan

**What:** International Conference on Music Education and Teaching Methods  
**Where:** Online  
**Info:** [tinyurl.com/ICMETM](https://tinyurl.com/ICMETM)

### 25-28 Jan

**What:** NY:LON Connect 2021 (global online music summit in London and New York with debate and networking)  
**Where:** Online  
**Info:** [nylonconnect.com](https://nylonconnect.com)

### 25-28 Jan

**What:** AmericanaFest UK (showcase, events, panels and the annual UK Americana Awards)  
**Where:** Online  
**Info:** [theamauk.org](https://theamauk.org)

### 3-5 Feb

**What:** London Music Conference 2021 (panels, talks, workshops, club nights, and showcases)  
**Where:** Various venues  
**Info:** [tinyurl.com/lonmconf](https://tinyurl.com/lonmconf)

### Spring 21

**What:** MU Music Teachers' Conference (Members are welcome to email the MU with any suggestions)  
**Where:** Online  
**Info:** [teachers@theMU.org](mailto:teachers@theMU.org)



## Your Voice

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

### Excluded In The UK

So we head to a second lockdown. I can't wait to hear about all the money I STILL won't receive from the government even though I have paid my taxes and NI etc since 2005. CAN'T WAIT.

**Alice Fearn** @alice\_fearn

### Class Action

Today I shall mostly be waiting for The MU to advise whether I have to lockdown and resume online lessons – after spending my half term 'holiday' rearranging my studio for face to face lessons. Starting the term feeling this dejected is not good.

**Liz Mitchell** @saxylizbeth

### Fix Streaming

Campaigning works! The DCMS is opening up an enquiry to look into streaming. Hats off to the Ivors Academy and The MU's Fix Streaming campaign.

**Hannah V** @HannahV

### Everyone matters

For all those who've been told your industry is unviable, your unique talent isn't good enough and you should retrain and get a better job, this is for you. We see you and your incredible value. You are important to us all.

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan**  
@DrRosena

Contact your MP to  
increase awareness of the  
issues with the industry



Photo: Guillem Lopez / Alamy Stock Photo

### Save Artists

Proud to be at Parliament Square this morning for #WeMakeEvents campaign, raising awareness of the desperate situation of the UK arts, and protesting at our government's response. We are not a hobby. We contribute billions to the economy. Support the arts. Save artists.

**Ashley Beauchamp**  
@ashbeauchamp

### Sad State

It's a sad state of affairs, isn't it, when your only regular gig these days is a protest in Parliament Square.

**Sophie Gledhill**  
@SophieGledhill

### Mail Your MP

Musicians and their families are suffering huge financial hardship as a result of the poor provision of the government. Please email your MP and help raise the profile of this campaign.

**Karena** @karenasoprano

### British Life

So, anyone studying for UK Citizenship is taught that 'Since the 1960s British pop music has made one of the most important cultural contributions to life in the UK' yet now seemingly abandon it!

**Robin Rimbaud – Scanner**  
@robinrimbaud

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# A Government Inquiry Into Streaming Economics

The lockdown has only underlined how pitifully small the musician's share of streaming revenue has always been. And at a time when every penny is precious, Naomi Pohl examines what the MU is doing to change all this



**In mid-October, the UK government's Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee launched an inquiry into the economic impact of music streaming on artists, record labels and the sustainability of the wider music industry. While this may seem peculiar timing given the government's focus on getting the country through the Covid-19 pandemic, there is a legitimate reason for it in the context of the UK music industry**

Kevin Brennan MP, member of the CMS Select Committee says: "The pandemic and lack of any earnings from playing live has brought into sharper focus the dwindling pittance many musicians make from recorded music, whilst record profits are simultaneously being generated by the huge corporations that dominate the industry. As an MU member it seemed to me that our Select Committee should take this crisis and turn it into an opportunity to shine a light on the economics of streaming and why it is that the creators of recorded music are not better rewarded."

In our joint campaign with The Ivors Academy to #FixStreaming and #KeepMusicAlive, we have argued for a government review because the closure of the live industry has highlighted the woefully low royalties generated for musicians by music streaming. Simultaneously, the #BrokenRecord campaign has involved artists in calling for reform of streaming economics via Twitter. Clearly our combined efforts have not gone unnoticed.

To illustrate the issue, a survey of members of the MU and The Ivors Academy on streaming income in November 2020 (with 320 respondents) returned these results:

- More than 80% of respondents had earned less than £200 from streaming in 2019
- 63% of respondents had earned less than £50 from streaming in 2019
- 82% of respondents had earned less than £50 from their most streamed track in 2019
- Over 90% of respondents said less than 5% of their earnings came from streaming

## **Damning Statistics**

By way of comparison, labels are reporting record profits. The IFPI's Global Music Report 2019 showed that the recorded music market grew by 9.7% worldwide in 2018, the fourth consecutive year of growth. Streaming revenue grew by 34% and accounted for almost half (47%) of global revenue, driven by a 32.9% increase in paid subscription streaming. Growth in streaming more than offset a 10.1% decline in physical revenue and a 21.2% decline in download revenue. So, why isn't this streaming bonanza reflected in the earnings of musicians?

We see the key issues as follows:

- Streaming royalties for performers aren't subject to collective management: this means no guaranteed income stream, unlike public performance and broadcast
- Bad deals: many artists are trapped in record deals which offer a low royalty rate on streaming and/or where their advances remain unrecouped, potentially for decades
- Bad data: if songs and tracks aren't registered with full lists of writers and performers then royalties won't be paid out accurately

**"Growth in streaming more than offset a decline in physical revenue. So, why isn't this streaming bonanza reflected in the earnings of musicians?"**

KT Tunstall is one of many artists who have criticised the current model of music streaming

Photo: MusicLive / Alamy Stock Photo



- A few major players dominating the marketplace and holding all the cards in negotiation: the major labels control the major publishers and may own shares in the main streaming platforms. They also have a significant control over playlists and algorithms due to their market dominance. Oh, and the licensing deals are covered by NDAs so we can't see who pays what to who and why. There's definitely some conflicts of interest at play, and a government inquiry may be the only way to shed some light.

#### Revenue Division

At present streaming revenue is divided roughly as follows: 30% to the streaming platform; 55% to the label (which should pay a royalty to artists, however this may be as low as 10% if the artist has not 'recouped' their advance); 15% to the music publisher and songwriter (The songwriter will usually receive 80% and the publisher will retain 20%).

The Union's written submission to the inquiry was submitted in mid-November and focused on the following key solutions:

1. Equitable, appropriate and proportionate remuneration for performers on streaming. We would like to see unwaivable streaming royalties for performers paid via a collecting society such as PPL. This would benefit featured artists who have not yet recouped their label advances and also non-featured (session and orchestral) musicians who currently receive no streaming royalties.
2. The European Copyright Directive. Due to Brexit, we will not get the principles of the Directive transposed automatically into UK law. We lobbied hard for the Copyright Directive when it was being discussed at EU level, and in particular for the articles covering fair remuneration of creators and performers, transparency, contract adjustment and rights revocation. Introducing these principles into UK law would help improve treatment of creators and performers by the record industry in particular.
3. Accurate payment of royalties. We would like to see music publishers and record labels held to the same standards of due diligence as collecting societies. Due

diligence refers to the requirement for an organisation collecting royalties to do all they can to locate and pay individuals to whom those royalties are due. While collective management organisations such as PPL and PRS for Music are held to high standards of due diligence, labels and publishers are not. We would also like to see data standards across the music industry significantly improved upon to ensure that royalties are paid out accurately.

The issues we have outlined here are likely to appear in the submissions of many creator and performer representative groups and, we hope, in the evidence submitted by individual musicians. While priorities may vary depending on a creator or performer's main area of work, the general themes of unfair contracts, low royalties, bad data and a lack of transparency will no doubt be highlighted across the board. There are oral evidence sessions taking place before and after Christmas and we look forward to seeing the Select Committee's full recommendations in the New Year. [mu](#)



# We're *in this* Together

How the MU has supported its members through the biggest threat to musicians' livelihoods for almost a century

No UK musician contemplating the devastating potential of Brexit back in January 2020 could have ever predicted that things were about to get a whole lot worse. The first signs came in early February with a trickle of cancellations by major artists in Asia, Europe and the US. But by early March, musicians across genres and disciplines were pulling whole tours as the true impact of the new Covid-19 virus dawned.

No-one was exempt from the fallout. From pub bands and function outfits through to A-list stars, gigs and tours were cancelled, album releases shelved, PR campaigns wound down, studio sessions axed and teaching sessions cancelled. Almost overnight, tens of thousands of musicians found themselves in limbo and facing extreme financial hardship.

## Assessing The Impact

"A disaster of gargantuan proportions" is how MU General Secretary Horace Trubridge summed up the impact. "The scale is astronomical," he said. "This is without doubt the darkest hour for the music profession. The last time we had something as catastrophic as this was in the

mid-to late-1920s when the orchestras were all sacked from the cinemas because of the talkies. Even then live work existed and the studios were still open. The problem we have now is there's absolutely no live work and the studios are closed as well."

## MU Hardship Fund

Most musicians were facing a precarious financial future. The MU moved swiftly to assess the scale of the problem and to offer help and support to its 32,000 members, the bulk of whom are self-employed freelance players. In March, the MU set up a £1m Coronavirus Hardship Fund, offering grants of up to £200 per member for members who were experiencing extreme financial hardship due to loss of work. In April alone, the MU paid out over £700,000 to its members.

"We hope this fund goes some way to providing a small amount of relief to our members" said Horace, "but we urgently need the government to provide clarity on what wider support will be available, and we call on the record industry to play its part, too."

For those members experiencing a sudden loss of income, the grants proved a lifeline.

"Utterly grateful to be receiving a hardship grant from The MU," tweeted member Amelia Rose. "This now means I can pay rent this month and the relief is unmeasurable. To everyone who's offered both moral and financial support through all of this, I cannot thank you enough." →

"This is without doubt the darkest hour for the music profession"

Horace Trubridge

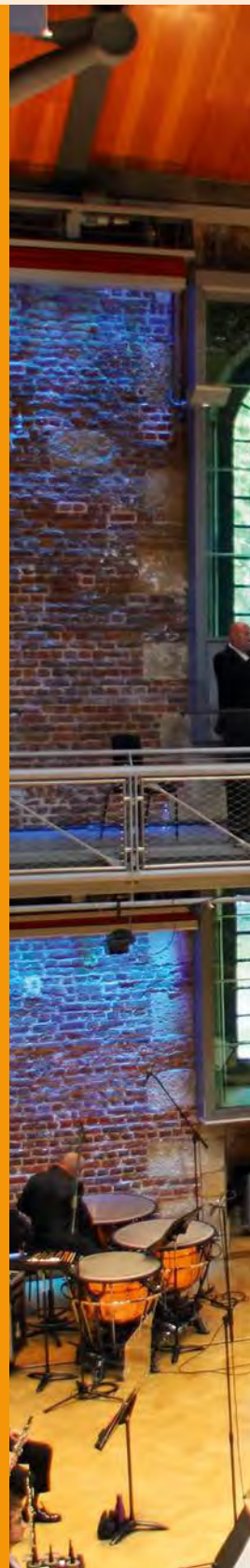


Photo: David Jackson



The socially distanced  
LSO performing at St  
Luke's in July 2020





Lucy May Walker was equally appreciative. "Massive thank you to the MU for providing me with £200 through the Coronavirus Hardship Fund," she tweeted. "It's not a lot, but it's the most I've been granted as a self-employed musician with no work. So grateful!"

#### Other Sources Of Funding

Top-up payments of £100 were subsequently made in June to almost 3,800 MU members who had previously received £200 from the MU Coronavirus Hardship Fund. Particular thanks were given to PPL for their contributions to the Fund totalling £200,000.

The MU has also directed members towards the hardship funds set up by Help Musicians, PRS for Music, the Association of Independent Music (AIM) and the Young Classical Artists Trust (YCAT). Many of these organisations also provided a valuable financial lifeline for members in dire financial need due to the complete loss of work.

"Am so thankful right now for The MU and Help Musicians UK for supporting me during this difficult time after my tours were cancelled," tweeted Hannah White. "These hardship funds are a lifeline to me and my family."

MU Live and Music Writers Official Kelly Wood established a fundraising eBid auction in April, to which author Sir Philip Pullman, rock band Garbage, and broadcaster and pianist Jay Rayner donated handmade craft, music prints and books. The Union's official online Crowdfunder also raised over £80,000, money which has made a valuable contribution to the MU Coronavirus Hardship Fund.

#### MU Offers Subscriptions Holiday

In a further attempt to ease the financial burden on members, the MU announced on 24 May that it would be offering a fixed three-month holiday on membership subscription fees to members paying the full or partnership subs rate. Any member could benefit from the scheme and there was no obligation to repay the balance at a later date, with all the usual MU benefits and services remaining available to members. In the first two days of the Subscriptions Holiday scheme, the MU received 674 applications and processed 215 of these on the first day, saving the members involved £9,500 in total.

Photo: Thomas Dibbs

Bristol artist Lade Nade, who took part in the second of the MU's Summer of Live events

As the second lockdown loomed in October 2020, the MU offered an additional three-month subscription holiday and have now extended the period that members can apply for this until the end of March 2021.

#### MU Emails And Website – A Sense Of Support

The MU's support for members has extended to far more than just financial help. Throughout the pandemic, the MU sent out comprehensive emails to inform, advise, empower and support members throughout the crisis. Under the banner 'We're All In This Together', the emails provided the latest news and advice for musicians during the crisis.

Each email carried links to the online MU Coronavirus Advice Hub where musicians could monitor MU updates, keep in touch with relevant government announcements, and comply with all guidance provided. The Hub consisted of a wealth of information and guidance including dedicated areas focusing on: Financial support for musicians; Attending recording sessions; Government measures for the music industry; Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) grants; Domestic abuse support; Taking action to protect musicians; Music teaching, theatre work and orchestral work during the outbreak; Contracts and earnings; Insurance; and staying connected and up to date. Response from members suggests these communications have been a valuable source

Siân Monaghan rapidly moved her teaching business online, setting up a new business in lockdown

## MU Summer Of Live Events

In a drive to raise more money for the MU Coronavirus Hardship Fund, the MU launched two events under the title Summer Of Live. The first online fundraising event was hosted from Manchester by radio presenter, producer and DJ Shell Zenner, and featured interviews and live performances from four distinctly different artists: rapper and poet, KinKai; r'n'b singer-songwriter and producer, Prima; singer, songwriter Jack Curley; as well as singer-songwriter and Guildhall graduate, Eliza Shaddad.

MU General Secretary Horace Trubridge said Summer Of Live was "a fantastic initiative", and one that features hugely talented performers. "At a time when we are desperately missing live music, it is great to see and hear performers of this calibre doing what they do best, and all for a very good cause," he said.

The second event, showcasing top-class British folk, spanned Sheffield, Devon, New Orleans and Montreal, and included artists such as Lady Nade, Chloe Foy, John Smith and Greg Russell, who also hosted the event.



Photo: Joseph Branston. © Musicians' Union

## “The MU are doing such an amazing job of taking care of its members”

Kerri Watt

eligibility for government support. Indeed, 38% of respondents reported that they do not qualify for the government's furlough or SEISS schemes for employed or self-employed workers respectively, and even those who did qualify said they would struggle to survive financially in the interim period before payments were made.

### Gaps In Government Support

The MU's research identified key gaps in the government's support for self-employed workers facing financial hardship as a result of the impact of Covid-19: Those who are part self-employed (i.e. less than 50% of their total annual income); Those who are self-employed for less than a year; Those who run as a limited company; Those with annual profits of over £50,000. “We risk facing a devastating impact on the music industry,” said Horace. “We are calling on our government to take action by reassessing its SEISS package and considering how else it can help a sector that is so vital to our national community.”

### MU Highlights Hardship

The third impact survey, published in September, made for equally stark reading, and its findings received widespread coverage in the mainstream media. It showed that 87% of musicians across all disciplines were experiencing severe financial hardship as most had little or no work since February 2020. The survey also concluded that a third of British musicians were considering leaving the profession due to the impact of the pandemic.

“We know from the Union's recent research just how many musicians are struggling financially and at real risk of leaving music for good,” said Horace. “We appreciate all the government has done to support our members through the furlough and self- ➔

of support throughout the crisis. “I feel supported and not alone,” tweeted MU member Roxana Vilks. “If you are a musician #joinaunion. Also loving the daily emails keeping us informed.” The regular communications from the MU were also highlighted by Kerri Watt. “Gotta say The MU are doing such an amazing job of taking care of its members – daily updates/advice/help/funding,” she tweeted. “Thank you. It is so appreciated.”

One of the most notable features of the pandemic has been the strong sense of mutual support among musicians, a point highlighted by double bassist Kate Addis. “Thank you for helping us, MU,” she tweeted. “It's good to see how much musicians have supported each other over the last weeks. Makes me part of a much bigger family.”

### MU Impact Surveys

Before the venues had even shut their doors in the last week of March, the MU had already undertaken an impact survey to assess the extent of the hardship. Published on 23 March,

the first survey found that UK musicians had already lost an estimated £13.9m in earnings. The survey also reported that 90% of the 4,100 survey respondents said their income had been affected by the pandemic.

The MU went on to commission two more surveys, in April and September. The evidence gathered by all three surveys has proved invaluable for the MU in its ongoing work in lobbying government and demonstrating the need for more focused financial support.

The three impact surveys received widespread national and regional media coverage, in broadsheets such as *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian*, trade publications such as *Music Week*, *Record Of The Day* and *Billboard*, as well as in broadcast media such as the BBC and Sky News.

Despite chancellor Rishi Sunak's claim that the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) would cover 95% of the self-employed, this was not reflected by the evidence gathered in the MU's initial surveys. In fact, it was soon clear that many freelance musicians were falling through the cracks in terms of



## Case Study: Theatre

In spring 2020, UK Theatre and the Society of London Theatre (SOLT) took the decision to close venues across the UK. The MU responded by issuing advice to its members on notice pay and, in the West End, the possibility of redundancy payments for musicians on long-running productions.

Naomi Pohl, Deputy General Secretary of the MU, said: "We have over three hundred musicians working in London's West End who are facing the prospect of weeks or months without paid work as a result of this decision. Hundreds more are engaged on touring productions."

In May, the results of our survey of theatre musicians anticipated the increasing financial hardship that their industry would face. With 53% of theatre musicians ineligible for the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme and 83% of musicians unaware of a restart date for the production on which they are working, the future began to look increasingly bleak. In fact, over three in four theatre musicians (77%) reported that they were likely to be in financial hardship before September.

Matthew West, West End percussionist and Chair of the MU Theatre Section, said: "I've been a musician all my life and have worked in a thriving British theatre industry for many years. On Monday 16 March all that stopped. I cannot work. There is no work. Not for any theatre musician anywhere. We don't know when we can work again or what will greet us when we do. After devoting your entire life to this craft, the mental repercussions are incredibly challenging."



Theatre musicians such as Matthew West have had no work since March

Photo: Joby Sessions. © Musicians' Union

employment income support schemes so far, but they must not abandon musicians now."

### Musicians Left Out

While a £1.57bn Culture Recovery Package announced by the government in July was welcomed by the sector – and the first tranche of £257m in state funding was shared out among 1,300 venues and arts organisations across the UK in October – much of this funding is earmarked for venues and arts organisations and is not expected to directly reach freelance musicians.

Horace said the funding has done "nothing for the workforce". You need creators to create great art, he said, "but you need extremely skilled and talented musicians to deliver that creativity, and those are the people who have been left out of the equation. Those world-leading musicians who have spent all their lives perfecting what they do, there is no lifeline for them whatsoever. There is a lack of understanding of our profession, even within the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and no understanding within the Treasury."

As the UK entered the second lockdown in November, the government extended the furlough scheme from 40% of trading profits

to 80% for November. As SEISS is calculated over three months, the total grant will increase from 40% to 55% of trading profits for November to January and the maximum grant will increase to £5,160. This clearly does not achieve parity with employed people on furlough. As *The Musician* went to press, the MU continued to lobby the government and the Treasury consistently and hard on that point, and continued to argue that the many musicians who have been ineligible for this scheme must now be included.

### The MU's Lobbying Work

Lobbying lies at the core of the MU's work on behalf of its members. In the eight months since the outbreak of the pandemic, the MU has worked relentlessly behind the scenes to meet with government and the shadow cabinet to put the case for more focused and inclusive financial support. Online meetings were promptly arranged with the newly elected leader of the Labour Party, Kier Starmer, and shadow Ministers, Jo Stevens and Tracey Brabin.

UK organisations in the creative sector learned years ago that the best way of arguing



## "We know just how many musicians are struggling financially"

Horace Trubridge

the case for the arts is to show evidence of its financial worth to the Treasury. The music industry contributes £5.2bn to the economy and this is powerful leverage when negotiating with the government.

### Meetings With Ministers

In the early days of lockdown, Horace took part in a roundtable call with ministers from the DCMS, in which he argued strongly for measures to help newly self-employed musicians, musicians whose self-employed work is less than 50% of their total, for those running a limited company, and those with 'profits' of over £50,000. The MU was also in contact with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, as well as the Treasury, and gave evidence to the DCMS Select Committee inquiry into the effect of Covid-19 on the creative industries. Horace's evidence to the Committee, regarding the poor return on streaming for musicians, has helped lead to a full-blown DCMS Select Committee Inquiry into the 'Economics of Streaming.' Furthermore, he pushed for the wind and brass research to be conducted in the UK, the evidence from which led to a relaxation of the social distancing needed in studios. Plus, working with UK

Music, the sector was able to persuade ministers that recorded music could continue to be played in pubs and bars, ensuring income for musicians through PRS and PPL.

By May, it was blatantly clear that the government response to the Covid-19 pandemic – in terms of its effect on musicians – remained woefully inadequate, despite the headline announcements and figures. This, coupled with the delay to the expected return of indoor live music and the postponement of the pilot schemes that the MU was due to be involved in, was a real disappointment.

The MU called the government out on its failure to help musicians to survive this period of income loss and demanded the Secretary of State for Culture, Oliver Dowden, properly engage with the music industry to solve inequities such as such as the 38% of MU members ineligible for either of the government schemes.

Sadly, the government has too often appeared reluctant to engage with the music industry, although the shadow secretary of state for culture, Jo Stevens, has had regular meetings with the MU and raised a number of urgent questions in the House of Commons. On one such occasion more than 30 MPs spoke in parliament asking for gaps in SEISS to be plugged. The MU continues to press for this on a daily basis and sincerely thanks all members who are helping. Members who would like to help are urged to visit the Campaigns page on the MU website for information on how to get involved in our lobbying work.

### Making Venues Safe

The creation of Covid-safe venues is obviously key to helping musicians resume work. With this in mind Horace has attended several DCMS Venues Steering Group meetings to explore options for a safe return to performance for not only the musicians, technicians and venue staff, but the audiences who are paying to watch them, too.

During lockdown the Union provided comprehensive support to studios, orchestra managers, venues and producers involved in the

engagement of our members through risk assessment advice, health & safety guidance, variation agreements and temporary streaming rates. All with the aim of allowing employers and engagers to operate and continue to engage members in work.

However, the challenges remain immense. Unless mitigating measures such as screens and masks can be implemented then most of the options for live performance are economically unviable. Horace reports that we are currently at Stage Four of the government's road map to bring live performance back safely, with Stage Five still some way off. Throughout the autumn, the MU called for a '2 for 1' style scheme, which could offer a discount or subsidy on tickets for live events, funded by the government. This could help to encourage audiences back to theatres and gigs, and also to book for festivals. Plus, it could enable some shows to get up and running under social distancing.

### The Way Forward

The Musicians' Union continues to lobby hard and is working relentlessly to support its members through this current crisis. The Union is preparing a campaign that will argue for government investment in musicians now, so that they can keep making music and return to work as soon as is practically possible.

"In Germany, the total package for the arts is worth £46.3bn, with the government also promising financial support to micro businesses of up to five employees," said Horace. "Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland have all announced funds and aid packages for the sector. We are calling on our government to take action by reassessing its support packages and considering how else it can help a sector that is so vital to our national community."

***Writing to your MP remains one of the best ways to make sure your voice is heard in decision-making, and the MU encourages members to do this. For more info, go to: [theMU.org/take-action-pandemic](https://theMU.org/take-action-pandemic)***

Singer-songwriter Abi Moore has been streaming her live performances from home



Photo: Alex Blades

We're In This Together

# Three Nations

How MU Regional Offices in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales worked to deal with the impact of the pandemic on their members

## Scotland

In April 2020, MU Regional Organiser Caroline Sewell attended the Cross-Party Group on Music at the Scottish Parliament and met with the SFEU and Scottish government officials to discuss the effect of the Covid-19 crisis on MU members. The MU continued to meet regularly during the summer with Equity, BECTU, NUJ, the Scottish Artists' Union and the Writers' Guild to form a joint approach in raising matters with Scottish government advisors, with whom the MU had arranged to meet on a bi-weekly basis. Caroline also made a submission on behalf of the MU to the Scottish government Culture, Tourism Europe And Economic Affairs Committee on the impact of Covid-19 on the sector.

In August, with schools returning in Scotland, the MU team dealt with a huge number of enquiries in relation to peripatetic teachers who did not feel their work had been adequately covered by risk assessments. Caroline continued to meet regularly with Scottish government advisors and MSPs, including Claire Baker MSP and Cabinet Secretary Fiona Hyslop. The MU continued to call for urgent support for freelancers and closer scrutiny of those organisations and institutions in receipt of public money that were making redundancies. The Scottish government subsequently announced the Grassroots Music Venues Stabilisation Fund, a £2.2m fund for venues of under 600 in capacity, with grants available of £5k-£50k, which was in addition to the £97m the Scottish government received for culture and heritage as a result of the UK government's £1.57bn emergency relief fund.

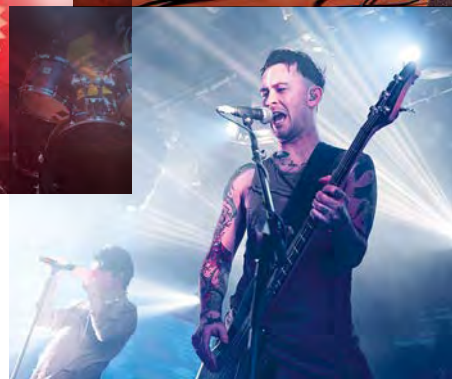
New restrictions were implemented in Scotland on 9 October, which then extended to 1 November. The measures applied to hospitality venues, particularly across the sector in the central belt of the country where bars and restaurants had been closed completely. At the same time, face-to-face private teaching was being permitted but not encouraged, and so the MU was still advising teachers to exercise a cautionary approach and continue to teach online where possible. A £5m hardship fund for individuals was launched and administered through Creative Scotland with the eligibility criteria announced on 22 October. In mid-November, the MU worked with the MSPs Tom Arthur and Claire Baker on a motion for a debate in the Scottish Parliament on the impact of Covid-19 on musicians and the wider music sector.

## Northern Ireland

During the summer, the MU was engaged in regular meetings with the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland. The NI government subsequently announced the Individuals Emergency Resilience Programme for those working in the creative economy, including freelance musicians, with priority

being given to those who have fallen through the gaps of other funding sources. In the autumn, there was some positive news when the Department for Communities minister Carál Ní Chuilín announced that £29m in emergency funding had been confirmed for the arts, culture and heritage sector. This was from the initial £29m secured by the Department for Communities following a bid through the UK arts emergency support package. This brought welcome relief and £3m was allocated to go straight to creative freelancers who had applied for the ACNI Individuals Emergency Resilience Programme, which had been hugely oversubscribed after it was initially launched in August.

MU Regional Organiser, Caroline Sewell, said: "This will come as a relief for many musicians, artists and workers in the creative sector. We



Photos Andy Catlin; Sean Harkin / Alamy Stock Photo





Photo: Joseph Branston. © Musicians' Union

Catrin Finch and Seckou Keita at Cardiff's Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (above). Giant Drag perform at Edinburgh's iconic Sneaky Pete's (far left). Gary Numan played Belfast Limelight Club (left)

are pleased that the government has listened to the industry and has responded to the need for sector specific support, which also recognises the urgency of the matter. We await further detail on the remaining £26m allocated to the sector and look forward to continuing our discussions with the Department for Communities in the months ahead."

In October, Northern Ireland entered into a four-week lockdown. This came on top of a ban on live music in all hospitality venues imposed by the Executive. The MU responded to the ban with an open letter, to which we received no response. Meanwhile, schools were also closed with the extension of the half-term break and re-opened on 2 November. The MU's lobbying work has continued, with bi-weekly meetings taking place with the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland and other creative unions.


### Wales

Since the start of the first lockdown the MU has been working in partnership with the other creative unions, Wales TUC, and businesses to support members and the wider creative industries in Wales. The Union's lobbying and engagement with

Welsh government and the sector has focused on funding and support, as well as restarting work.

Initial support in April from the Welsh government and the Arts Council of Wales (including funding for individuals) has been followed by a specific Cultural Recovery Fund (CRF), administered by Welsh government and the Arts Council. This was initially based on £53m of funding, but with an additional £10.7m of investment in November added after lobbying by the creative unions this is now worth £63.7m – more than the £59m of extra funding received by the Welsh government from the UK government as a result of investment in the CRF in England.

A real success for the creative unions' lobbying was the inclusion of a Freelancer Fund in the CRF. This was initially worth £7m distributed over two phases, but is now £10.5m in total, with the additional funding added in November, which will be distributed in a third phase. The Arts Council made decisions on its awards before the end of October, and awards from Welsh government's share of the funding should have been finalised by the end of November. The CRF includes a Cultural Contract for organisations, while the Freelancer Fund is linked to the idea of a Freelancer Pledge being developed by a working group including the Union.

The Welsh government has taken a cautious approach to easing restrictions, particularly in relation to culture and live events. Thanks to regular, ongoing engagement with Welsh government officials and ministers, the Union has been able to raise members' concerns and push for changes and clarifications on the regulations and guidance, as well as issue specific advice on work in Wales, and answer questions from members. There has been gradual progress, including on private teaching and teaching in schools, the use of recording and rehearsal studios, and the use of venues for broadcasts without an audience present. Discussions are continuing to try and make progress on restarting live events and performances with audiences, which is likely to be through further test events initially, so that more members can return to work. 

## Selected Media Coverage

The MU has been featured and quoted regularly in the media since lockdown came into force, and below is a sample of this activity. Following February's media launch publicising the results of our latest members' survey, a total of over 100 pieces were generated. These included coverage by:

The Guardian	
(audience reach)	3,053,000
The Daily Telegraph	24,886,000
BBC Breakfast	7,000,000
(approx)	
The Times	5,326,380
NME	5,569,320
DJ Mag	1,022,850
Dazed	849,600
Classic FM	505,080
Hot Press	294,540
The Stage	252,810
Music Week	178,140

July 2020: The production guidance we released in July, in partnership with the BPI, AIM and the MPG, received widespread industry coverage, including via: UK Music / Ivors Academy / MPG / Making Music / Arts Council / Music Ally / Music Week / Record of the Day / Music News

May 2020: Horace Trubridge and MU teacher/member Sam Dunkley were interviewed live on air on Sky News highlighting how the government schemes, although well-meant, were not supporting all musicians.

March 2020: Our initial survey, consisting of feedback from 4,100 of the MU's members, generated 65 items of national and regional coverage over the subsequent 24 hour period. Examples included Mail Online / The Guardian / Yahoo News / Belfast Telegraph / Jazz FM / Classic FM



# Let Music Live

The Let Music Live protests in London and Birmingham highlighted the financial plight of freelance musicians across the UK

Report by Neil Crossley

**At midday on 6 October, 400 freelance orchestral musicians from across the industry assembled in Parliament Square, Westminster, for a socially distanced performance and protest called Let Music Live. The aim of the event, and its simultaneous performance in Birmingham's Centenary Square, was to raise awareness of the need for targeted support for freelance musicians and all those who work in the arts and entertainment sector.**

Let Music Live prompted widespread media coverage and highlighted the financial plight of self-employed musicians during the Covid-19 pandemic. For the musicians involved, it also reinforced the emotive power of music and the impact of live performance.

"The Parliament Square performance reminded us that, at its essence, music is about human connection," said Jessie Murphy, the freelance violinist who came up with the idea for the event. "It felt amazing. It was a physical sensation as the conductor raised his baton. The sensation was overwhelming. It was not just that we were so starved of human connection for six months, but it was the adrenaline rush of performing again."

## Ready To Work

Murphy created Let Music Live to show that she and her freelance colleagues "are here and ready to work". Like so many in her sector, she has had all her work cancelled during the Covid-19 pandemic, including festivals with Sophie Ellis-Bextor. "Personally, I have performed once since March, for a birthday party in a garden with eight people attending," she wrote in *The Big Issue*. "I loved every moment but every single other date I had this year has been cancelled."

## Wave Of Support

It took only six days to arrange the Let Music Live events, thanks largely to Murphy's determination and the wave of support she received from freelance colleagues. Her first step was to put a post on Facebook outlining the idea and asking 'Anyone else in?'. Within hours, 2,000 musicians had offered to lend their support.

The event was organised in tandem with #WeMakeEvents and supported by the Musicians' Union, the Incorporated Society of Musicians, and the Musicians' Answering Service. Among those performing were violinist Tasmin Little, cellist Raphael Wallfisch and clarinetist Emma Johnson. The lawn of Parliament Square was laid out as a grid to ensure social distancing of two metres between players.

"Tuesday was about professionalism in the organisation of an event planned only six days in advance which has kept us up in the early hours and got us up in the early morning with a renewed sense of purpose," said Murphy.

**"Their discipline and the sound brought tears to my eyes"**

Nicola Benedetti

"We want to show that our profession is viable, and valuable. Freelancing can be misunderstood, we play in the O2 one day, a small wedding the next, and a film recording session the day after," she continued. "Each one of us is a small business that contributes both to the economy and the wellbeing of the country."

## Rousing Performance

The 400-strong ensemble, conducted by David Hill and Joy Lisney, played a 90 second segment of *Mars, The Bringer Of War* from Holst's *The Planets* – just 90 seconds, or 20%, of the work – symbolising the fact that eligible freelancers could only claim a maximum of 20% of their income from the government. The



All photos: Jonathan Stewart. © Musicians' Union



400 freelance musicians gathered in Parliament Square for a socially distanced performance to highlight the financial plight of self-employed musicians during the Covid-19 crisis



ensemble then held a two-minute silence, to draw focus to the 45% of freelance musicians not covered by the government's SEISS grant.

For the crowd assembled to watch the 400 socially distanced musicians, the impact of the rousing 90-second performance and the silence that followed it was profound. "Unimaginably moving," posted violinist Nicola Benedetti on Facebook. "400 freelancers gathered today in Parliament Square, to state their case. (Safely). Their discipline and the sound created brought tears to my eyes... Work with us. Work with them." It was a view echoed by Gita Hartley, who was one of the 400. "There was a moment of calm before we launched into *Mars, The Bringer Of War* by Holst, 400 musicians in solidarity," she tweeted. "I hope the government hears us..."

#### Viable And Valuable

For Jessie Murphy and the hundreds of freelance musicians performing at Parliament Square and Birmingham's Centenary Square on 6 October, Let Music Live was an empowering moment, a chance to be visible and raise awareness of the dire financial predicament facing freelance musicians. It also provided an opportunity to showcase

## The Aim Of Let Music Live

Let Music Live calls on the government:

- To recognise that freelance musicians are an economic asset. It is essential they invest in freelancers so that they can continue to support the intricate network of businesses that rely on arts and events for their footfall.
- For sector-specific support to reopen, including a subsidised concert ticket scheme while social distancing restrictions remain, and government-backed insurance for live events and theatre performances.
- For targeted support for those skilled workforces forced to remain closed by Covid-19 restrictions, so that freelance musicians are still there to bring music to everyone when this is over.

their profound musical talent and served as a timely reminder of the value of music on all our lives.

"Whether you are playing in small gigs or to audiences of thousands, this is the best part of life, of being human – it makes life worth living," wrote Murphy. "It felt like coming home, even though we were 400 musicians, most of whom had never played together before. This is the essence of our years of training, sometimes for decades — to trust that we are able to pick up anything and deliver on the spot. Like in sport, our skills are honed from early childhood, through National Youth Orchestras to conservatoires. It's a training that calls for as much determination sustained over 20 years to get to the top as it does with elite sportspeople... We are viable, valuable and, above all, ready to work." **mu**



# The Long Walk To Lasting Change

With Black History Month following a year of heightened awareness of institutional bias, we look at how the Black experience in music is set to change after 2020

Report by Rahel Aklilu

**This year has been tumultuous, challenging and unexpected to say the least. The social and economic effects of the pandemic have entirely shifted, and in some instances, decimated elements of the music industry. With the live industry foreseeing over 170,000 jobs lost by Christmas, and constrictions on gatherings and gigs, there has never been a more precarious time to be a musician.**

However, it has also been a year of reckoning, most glaringly on the subject of race. The virality of George Floyd's killing at the hands of a police officer in Minneapolis brought the #BlackLivesMatter movement to the forefront of global conversation. No career field or crevice has been left untouched as society collectively looks inwards to truly inclusive and diverse workplace environments. As music mirrors society, an industry that has from its inception exploited and profited from Black talent throughout history has had to take a long, hard look at itself. As well as

correcting injustices committed against Black musicians of the past, space had to be made for Black musicians of today to freely voice their opinions, ideas and concerns, and pave the way for future Black musicians to hone their talent and be treated fairly.

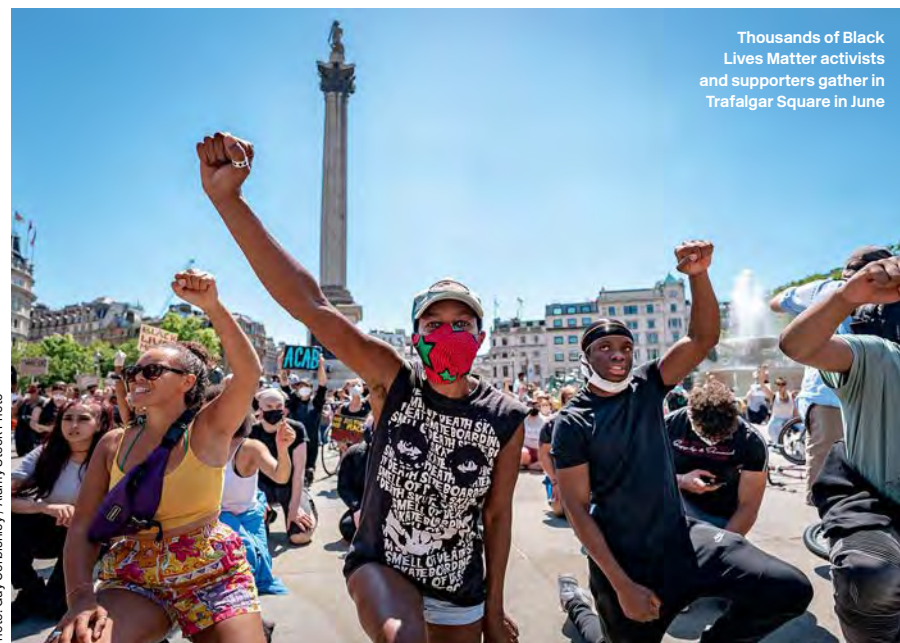
## Renewed Purpose

During Black History Month 2020 (henceforth referred to as BHM), corporations and creatives alike had the opportunity to put their money where their mouth is and navigate celebration of a month that centres on Black people's experiences, both individual and structural. The renewed purpose after a truly impactful last couple of months has brought to light the lack of education around Black history and culture, as commodified and appropriated as it has been. Initiatives such as the Black Curriculum promise long-term impact, teaching Black British history and its contribution to modern society today in schools. In order to truly allow Black people to take the lead in conversations about Black culture and experiences – as opposed to participating in a month long box ticking exercise or minimising their voices – companies must address inequalities and working environments from the bottom-up.

John Shortell, the MU's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Official, could not agree more. "After the horrific murder of George Floyd, many promises were made and there was a flurry

**"There is more conversation than there has ever been"**

**John Shortell**



Thousands of Black Lives Matter activists and supporters gather in Trafalgar Square in June

Photo: Guy Corbisley / Alamy Stock Photo

Photo: © Mark Allan





## Role Model

Classical music, which has been perceived as male, pale and stale for so long, must open up and be dynamic. Where the intersection of racism and classism will exclude Black people and people of colour, there must be a concerted effort for inclusion and accessibility by tackling the stigmas, stereotypes and financial barriers. The Chineke! Foundation – whose motto is ‘championing change and celebrating diversity in classical music’ – does just that. The British foundation’s flagship ensemble, the Chineke! Orchestra is the first professional orchestra in Europe to be made up of majority black, Asian and ethnically diverse musicians. Established in 2015 and including a Junior Orchestra for players aged 11-22 with a mentorship network that nurtures young talent, the foundation is the brainchild of double bass player Chi-Chi Nwanoku OBE and exactly what other areas in music should look to emulate for true and meaningful diversity.

of activity – for example the black squares on Instagram that were posted in solidarity,” he notes, of the unanimous condemnation on social media following several instances of police brutality against Black people during the pandemic, including but not limited to, the death of Breonna Taylor, Jacob Blake and Ahmaud Arbery. John stresses the importance of sustainable, long-term solutions. “If you, as an individual or an organisation, are only addressing the issue of racism and anti-blackness during one month, you’re not really an ally,” he notes, although he is optimistic “that there is more conversation than there has ever been – but more importantly, money”.

### Adequate Funding

Indeed, accessibility and diversity cannot be achieved or sustained without adequate funding that ensures people are getting

paid and can focus on their career without juggling part-time gigs or zero-hour contracts as so many musicians do. The MU’s ‘Work Not Play’ initiative can particularly impact Black musicians who are more likely to feel obliged to perform for free in order to ‘build their career’ amidst instances of Imposter syndrome.

Imposter syndrome refers to a collection of feelings of inadequacy that persist despite evident success. ‘Imposters’ suffer from chronic self-doubt and a sense of intellectual fraudulence that override any feelings of success or external proof of their competence. Any minority in any environment will have experienced this, and working for free is arguably a symptom of feeling unappreciated or unsupported within a profession. Negotiation workshops, such as those offered by the MU, give musicians the tools to empower themselves and ensure they are fairly paid, amidst a precarious time in the profession.

Referring to the wider music industry, John agrees that there has to be structural change from major labels. The ‘gatekeepers’ at the top, he says, can impact the entire industry and their decisions trickle down to the welfare of MU members as part of the wider ecosystem. “It would be irresponsible not to adopt a holistic view in order to create real and impactful change,” he notes.

In a year that has seen Universal Music UK unveil its ‘Taskforce for Meaningful Change’ and Abbey Road Studios launch its Abbey Road Scholarship programme for Black students, it is hoped that the boardroom will become more diverse – allowing for career progression that keeps Black people in the industry, and part of the decision-making process by keeping them there. ➔



# "In order for there to be real change, these structures must collapse"

Leon Bosch

This holistic view is reflected in the MU's own response to the conversation about race, which has included consulting the Black Members' Network and having conversations about quotas on committees to ensure wider representation of all members. The MU's response also encompasses anti-racism training for the wider membership, including a webinar hosted at the end of October that touched on some uncomfortable but vital topics, such as white privilege, unconscious bias and microaggressions.

## Change Of Focus

One area in particular that the MU has addressed is education, having lobbied the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) to diversify their syllabi in an open letter on behalf of 70 organisations, academics, musicians and music teachers. The letter calls for 'a music syllabus that reflects the diversity of music teachers and the students they teach' as well as a 'commitment to commissioning a minimum of 50% of all new works by composers from BBIAPOC communities by the end of 2021'. Since the letter, the ABRSM has developed a Diversity and Inclusion Plan that aims to 'transform opportunities for women composers, composers from developing countries and young musicians from disadvantaged backgrounds' through commissioning new compositions and arrangements as well as making sure that 50% of all syllabus update commissions, and 20% of all syllabus content, including new commissions, arrangements, and existing works, come from composers who are Black, Brown, Indigenous and People of Colour (BBIPOC).

## Lesson From History

Addressing marginalisation at the very beginning of a child's journey into music is another instance of what John calls the "constant pressure" to ensure real change is enacted. Early intervention is something that Leon Bosch, one of the letter's signatories and a conductor, double bass virtuoso and Professor at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, also advocates.

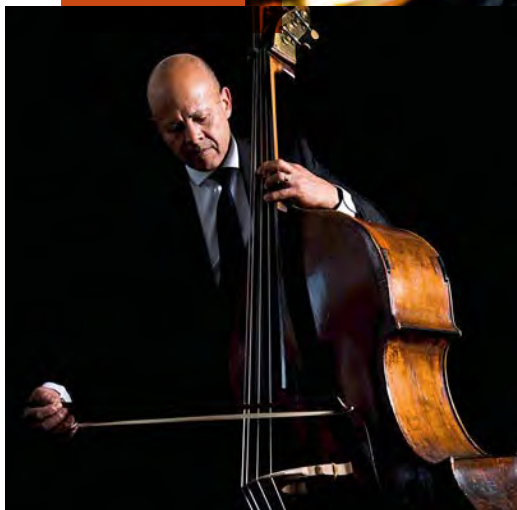
Born during the South African apartheid and arrested for his anti-apartheid activism in the mid 1970s, his illustrious career includes an almost 20 year stint as principal double bass at the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields after accidentally falling into musical studies at university. With ambitions to be a lawyer and defend those who couldn't defend themselves, Leon was denied a chance to study law by the apartheid system that required 'coloured' people to apply for permits to study at university. After being accepted to study music, Leon auditioned as a cellist at the University of Cape Town. Coming from the townships and faced with a majority white cohort that had years of tutelage and musical education over him, he was subject to imposter syndrome, ridicule and social exclusion. Continuing his studies at the Royal Northern College of Music at Manchester, the racism and prejudice he experienced pushed

Leon Bosch (below) has led the way for musicians like those in The Chineke! Orchestra (right) to follow

Photo: © Ntando Brown



Photo: Juno Snowden / Art Direction Adam Hypki



## The MU's View

In July, MU General Secretary Horace Trubridge wrote a letter to the prime minister in support of the National Education Union's five recommendations for urgent action to tackle racism. In the letter – written on behalf of the 32,000 members of the MU – Horace highlights the structural issues of racism that have led to disparities in deaths related to Covid-19, with Black and Ethnic Minorities being disproportionately affected. He also goes on to emphasise that "no area of life is untouched by racism", with the music industry being no exception.

"Racism permeates every aspect of society including the music industry. From the demonisation and heightened surveillance of music of Black origin, to the under representation of Black composers in music education syllabi, no area of life is untouched by racism. The Musicians' Union will continue to challenge systematic racism and demand action that leads to radical change in the music industry and beyond."



Djenaba Davis-Eyo was almost lost to classical music after being discouraged by the elitism and lack of diversity in the orchestral world



Photo: Luani Vaz

him to prove everybody wrong. To this day, he recounts instances queuing for a coffee at Trinity, where a fellow professor who has never met him will instantaneously question his place and subject him to stereotypes.

Now on the other side of the table as a professor, Leon points to the 'structural pillars' that sustain and prop classical music while also excluding Black people through inaccessibility and expense. "In order for there to be real change, these structures must collapse," he notes, adding that the real issue lies at the intersection of class and race. The main barrier, Leon notes, lies in the

vast expense of pursuing an education in music. "Cosmetic change will not do anything, there needs to be a support system set up for disadvantaged students from public funds, such as the local authority symphony orchestras of the 80s."

#### Unlearn Bias


Jennie Lee's 1965 white paper: *A Policy For The Arts* echoes Leon's sentiments and aspires towards equality of access to arts irrespective of background, as well as the embedding of the arts into the education system. Where institutions must unlearn their unconscious bias to be 'objective' as Leon puts it, they must also recognise potential in auditionees who may not have received the best training

but are talented nonetheless. Fifty-five years on from Lee's white paper, the creative industry is on its knees, with subjects such as Art and Music being slowly but surely phased out. Playing instruments, let alone playing classical music, is becoming more and more of a privilege than a skill.

Young black classical musicians feel the same. Amirah De Bourg from north London, a violinist for over a decade who has also taught herself the viola, points to the feeling of alienation due to the lack of Black faces after joining her school's string quartet or a local chamber orchestra. "Performing in end-of-term recitals after lessons at school with my best friend who is Ghanaian, is something that I took for granted," she says. "The lack of diversity at chamber orchestra level prevented me from forming any sort of community." However, weaving her personal interest of dream pop, ambient and folk music into her work alongside experimental Black artists such as London-based singer Joviale or Mancunian grime producer PK Brako has made playing the violin less daunting and more pleasurable.

#### Inspirational Characters

Djenaba Davis-Eyo, who has been playing the violin since the age of six and recently taught herself double bass, recalls "being obsessed with watching orchestras as a child", only to "end up hating it, after being discouraged by the lack of diversity and the racism and elitism". After taking a break for a couple of years, Djenaba was inspired by Black string musicians such as Kelsey Lu, a singer and cellist from LA, who were playing in non-classical music. Hopeful for the future, she points to the Kanneh-Mason family's success as well as that of the Chineke! Orchestra as signs that things are changing and classical music is being opened up for talented Black people to enjoy fruitful careers playing the instruments they love.

Ultimately, equal access to paid work, anti-racism education, and a willingness to make space is what Black musicians hope BHM has achieved. As the social media focus wanes, the onus lies on those in positions of privilege and power to finally hold themselves accountable following promises to vaguely 'do better' in the summer of 2020. 

# Taking Care Of Body And Mind

Focusing on methods and strategies to keep our physical and emotional wellbeing on track during the winter and the second wave of coronavirus

Report by Andrew Stewart

**Words about wellbeing, some wiser than others, have filled acres of newsprint in recent weeks. While the bullet-point lists of how to survive winter in the time of Covid-19 often rest on proven psychotherapeutic interventions, it would be an unlikely miracle if their advice worked for everyone. For some it might be the ideal time to plunge into an eight-week mindfulness course or start a yoga practice. For others, the mounting pressures of everyday life and feelings of insecurity may be too great to cope with, turning up the dial of introspection.**

The MU recognises that the wellbeing of its members has been severely strained, not least by existential threats to their livelihoods. In response to the Covid crisis the MU website offers information on where to find mental health support, guides to better mental health and self-care for young and established musicians, as well as a raft of online sessions designed to reduce stress and promote wellbeing and the state of being healthy and happy. Perhaps the biggest boost to wellbeing, though, will come from musicians themselves sharing their experiences, fears and hopes with colleagues, collectively learning to accept uncertainty – however hard that might be – and finding constructive ways to avoid the bear traps of chronic anxiety and depression.

**“It’s about maintaining your buoyancy through tough times”**

**Maddy Radcliff**

Maddy Radcliff, the MU’s Campaigns and Social Media Official, draws from her own experience of bereavement to illustrate the value of building resilience. “I think it’s about maintaining your buoyancy through tough times,” she says. “Buoyancy was the descriptor I used when my dad passed away not long after he was diagnosed with terminal cancer. My focus here was on being well, it was on being buoyant. I didn’t have to be happy all the time. It was okay to grieve – the whole situation was crap. But I still had to look after myself, my mum and my family. It was about being present and available, which is how I’d define being buoyant.” The MU, she adds, wants to help musicians maintain and boost the natural buoyancy that flows from years of study and work in the profession.

Talking with friends and family helped Maddy approach grief. She observes that many musicians, now prevented from performing and earning, are experiencing a form of grief over losing part of their identity. Those who attempt to hide their feelings or dull them with drink, drugs or other distractions, are likely to undermine their wellbeing. Sharing concerns with a trusted friend, however, can help reduce stress levels and provide perspective on genuine worries about the future.

## **It’s Good To Talk**

Tabea Debus, among the present crop of Young Classical Artists Trust (YCAT) musicians, saw her concert dates cancelled when the pandemic struck. Despite having sufficient teaching work to provide a steady income, the recorder player experienced frustration and doubts about her career prospects. She notes how discussing her

worries with others provided a strong sense of support. “I feel I’ve been practising communicating more, not through playing but by speaking. We musicians often don’t talk about our feelings, but talking to colleagues and friends has been a really healing thing for me. I also talk to my family a lot more about work things now than before.”

The checklist for coping with low mood and anxiety, widely advocated by wellbeing counsellors, emphasises the importance of talking with and listening to friends. It contains other simple yet effective strategies intended to provide a sense of mastery or enjoyment. These include following a daily routine, connecting with the natural world and taking breaks from electronic screens.

Like many of us, Tabea Debus has had to put her plans on hold while the virus lockdown runs its course





© Kaupo Kikkas

## Tabea Debus

"What I've found particularly difficult – and what I suspect many young musicians would find difficult – is how all those plans about where we want to be in a year, two years, five years, the projects we want to do, the countries we want to visit, are all on hold at the moment. I'd been thinking about changing and adapting my career slightly. Of course you can think about that a lot, but you can't take much action to make it happen while there's so much uncertainty."

"I'm somebody who likes planning and organising. If you can't do that, it takes a proper shift of mindset to be okay with it. I've definitely struggled with this but, during lockdown, I began to shift my attitude towards accepting things as they are, not as I want them to be. Maybe I've not fully learned those lessons but I think I'm getting there."

Regular exercise, a healthy diet and being kind to yourself, perhaps the hardest of all things to practise, are also part of the wellbeing toolkit. Anyone looking to learn more about wellbeing will find rich material in the books *Authentic Happiness* and *Flourish* by Martin Seligman, instigator of the positive psychology movement. Jonathan Haidt's *The Happiness Hypothesis* and Richard Layard's *Happiness* offer complementary surveys of how to cultivate wellbeing. These belong to the growing evidence-based literature on the propagation of mental wellbeing as distinct from the treatment of mental illness.

While Tabea Debus had begun to perform again before the second lockdown, she accepted that those concerts may be cancelled at short notice. Living with uncertainty has taught her to be more open to change, less attached to the pursuit of fixed goals. "I've spent a lot more time over the past seven months doing things outside music.

I started yoga at the beginning of lockdown and found it helped me relax and benefits my playing. It's about finding projects that can make you feel more present, more focused, not preoccupied with thoughts. We can talk about the negatives of these times, but it's much more rewarding to find positive things to do and think about."

### Stalled Careers

London-based session drummer and teacher Kell Hallman notes how the pandemic raised his and his friends' awareness of why wellbeing matters. It is, he observes, no secret that the performing arts have been severely affected by the Covid crisis. "But as recent graduates and current students with a lot of ambition it has hit us hard." Hallman's Stagewave project, launched two years ago in company with the saxophonist Nacho →



Young saxophonist Nacho Stax's career was just taking off when the virus hit

© Aaron Munday; Prostock-studio / Alamy Stock Photo



Above: Yoga can have a positive effect on your wellbeing  
Left: Grace Quantock challenges unhelpful government narratives

## John Shortell

John Shortell, MU Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Official. "Much of the work I do around equalities, diversity and inclusion concerns impacts on mental health. We've seen that disabled people – especially disabled women – and Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities have been among the highest casualties from Covid. They're also experiencing some of the worst impacts on mental health and certainly on their wellbeing."

"We need to think about what we can do to support different groups. Things need to be more nuanced within those groups than any generalised approach to wellbeing. Beyond ensuring that people are not discriminated against, we want to help people build their wellbeing, whether that's through online meditation workshops, panel discussion events or tips about looking after your wellbeing. The thing to remember is that even though we're working in isolation, we're not going through this alone. There are many people in the same situation and we can talk to one another and share our experiences. That is really powerful in itself."



© Lauren Porter Art

Stax was gaining momentum when the pandemic arrived. Their guitarist friend Evin Durkin's Empathy project, a not-for-profit community of musicians aiming to better the lives of those who have fallen victim to circumstance, was likewise left in limbo.

"All our plans were cancelled, our careers as working musicians thrown into chaos," Hallman recalls. "Music is our collective passion and calling, and being unable to fulfil that has definitely been tough on our wellbeing." Regular exercise and good eating habits, he adds, have helped build a sense of positivity, as have opportunities to remain productive and creative. "Online collaboration, while it can't fully replace playing together face-to-face, is a welcome alternative. I think talking to others about your state of mind is so important. The knowledge that others are

feeling and experiencing the same things has been very comforting. At the end of the day, we must support each other and keep doing whatever gets us out of bed in the morning.

One of Hallman's friends set a hare running by branding Covid-19 as the instigator of a global psychological pandemic. The idea inspired the drummer and his colleagues to form Music For The Mind, a youth-driven campaign dedicated to the cause of promoting positive psychology and wellbeing. "Not only were the direct impacts of the virus damaging, but the uncertainty, fear and isolation of lockdown were wreaking havoc on people's mental wellbeing," Hallman comments. "We realised that mental health issues were rising rapidly long before the pandemic and wanted to address this, so started planning a series of private events to support The Samaritans, Maytree and Mind. Our main goals are to raise awareness and funds for these charities while creating a network of start-ups, charities,

Kell Hallman had to devise new ways to perform and collaborate




"I think talking to others about your state of mind is so important"

Kell Hallman

over it!' But we do have models that help people live with grief and see how it changes and decreases over time. There's definitely an analogy between grief and what people are experiencing with this pandemic. I think we need to recognise the similarities with grief and begin by reassuring people that it's perfectly natural to feel low after losing much of their work and income."

### Make Time For Yourself

Quantock offers advice about preparing for winter's gloom and the possibility of living without regular social interaction. "The question I ask clients and also myself, going into lockdown again here in Wales, is 'If things get worse, what would you have wished you had prepped?'. The next question is 'Can you do that now?'. For me, the answer will involve some practical things and other things that can lift your mood now to draw on later." Quantock's first practical step this autumn was to visit a local nature reserve, not knowing whether it would be placed off limits under the Welsh government's so-called firebreak.

"I was tired and hurting and had a pile of work to do," she recalls. "But I knew that afterwards, I'd be glad I went, that this would be the memory that feeds you. It's about finding what nourishes you and how you can access it, especially when so many have lost access to the things that nourish them, such as family, cafes, connecting, creating, performing with and for people." Her mood-lifter came courtesy of Channel 4's on-demand service, with help from her established daily meditation and yoga practices. "I've been doing those for years and would not be trying to start them now, at least not as the answer to this pandemic. I've been delighted to re-watch *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* on All 4. It's a good, harmless way to strengthen wellbeing!" 

media companies, journalists and health services that can support each other, help bring attention to this issue and, we hope, help to solve it."

### Crisis Ownership

Psychotherapeutic counsellor Grace Quantock has helped several musicians during her career as a wellness coach. She notes that the present pandemic and the resulting isolation of lockdowns can feel like an attack on the person, on their health and identity, something deeply troubling for musicians unable to perform and earn a living from it. The danger to mental wellbeing increases when individuals take personal ownership of a collective crisis, blaming themselves for cancelled gigs and closed concert venues.

Quantock challenges unhelpful government and media narratives about individual responsibility and calls instead for a collective response to the rising Covid-related crisis in

mental health. She suggests that people need to hear nuanced messages about wellbeing, rooted in compassion, not lectures from stressed cabinet ministers and scientific advisers. The unprecedented viral pandemic, suggests Quantock, has affected millions in ways that compare to the shock experienced when people discover they have a terminal illness or acquired impairment. "There's going to be huge fallout from that, which is more than we can cover here," she observes. "But we can say that the uncertainty surrounding Covid may be experienced similarly to grief or a job loss. And of course many people are experiencing grief and losing their jobs during this pandemic."

Small steps taken steadily are more likely to cultivate wellbeing than quick fixes, however tempting the latter may seem. The task, says Grace Quantock, is to make life's big problems and the pain that so often accompanies them feel manageable. "The pain at the moment is enormous," she reflects. "I'm in the position of having worked with clients for ten years who are experiencing profound pain. Now we're all to some degree experiencing elements of that pain. With grief we don't say, 'Oh, get







# Joining the Dots

Whether working with an orchestra, a solo artist or a rock band, Fiona Brice is most at home when she's bringing two musical worlds together

Profile by Katie Nicholls

Type Fiona Brice's name into YouTube and the results are a kaleidoscope pick and mix. Fiona arranging Mozart for string quartet as the collaborative composer for the London Mozart Players; Fiona playing *West End Girls* with Brian Molko from Placebo or performing on stage with Ed Harcourt; or Fiona featuring on John Grant's stirring track *Glacier* upon which she arranged the strings. It's a snapshot into a varied career that has seen the Northamptonshire-born arranger, composer and violinist play a significant role in bridging the gap between the rock and classical worlds.

During the 1990s at Kings College and the Royal Academy of Music, Fiona was busy finding common ground between the two genres. In the evenings she was out treading the stages of London's indie scene with the band Dream City Film Club. "We were always performing at The Borderline," she tells the MU, "The 12 Bar, Astoria, and what was the one with the really sticky carpet? Oh, yeah, The Bull & Gate."

## Crossing The Divide

"I always grew up with one foot in the classical world and one foot in the rock world," says Fiona. "My influences would be Bartok and Prince. I didn't really

see the genre distinction between them. I'd listen to Blondie, Prince, Transvision Vamp – and because I was learning violin I'd be playing Shostakovich and Bach and to me it was all part of the same pot."

Her natural ease dovetailing classical into rock and pop has resulted in a successful career that includes commissions from the BBC Philharmonic and Royal Northern Sinfonia, tours with Jay Z and Kanye West, collaborations with Anna Calvi and Roy Harper, and long-term working relationships with Placebo and John Grant ("If there are strings and brass on it, it's me").

For Fiona, who is as confident in the rock arena as she is leading the orchestra, it's a seamless marriage, but she recognises that it can be an uncomfortable relationship for both parties. "The core of the classical world is pretty cliquey and can be slow to change, and the rock world is a bit intimidated by classical musicians in a way that they just don't need to be. There's a general sense of misunderstanding between the camps. One of the things I try to do is dispel those myths straight away and bridge the gap so that people realise that they're all coming from the same place."

## An Auspicious Time

Raised in a non-musical family, Fiona began recording her voice as a small child on her mum's dictaphone, picking up the violin, aged seven. "Music was something I always did but no one thought it was a career," she says. "Not an option!" →

"I always grew up with one foot in the classical world and one foot in the rock world"

It was still a revelation to her that arranging was a career when she tumbled into her first commission from Michael Sheehy of Dream City Film Club, who asked her to compose strings for three tracks on *Sweet Blue Genre*. London in the 1990s was an auspicious time to be a musician, remembers Fiona, and a particularly fecund era for creatives. "There was money knocking around," she says. "People had budgets and would say, 'Let's have a string quartet' and 'Let's take a string player on tour' – even for small indie bands. Brian Molko always says that Placebo's success came off the back of the Spice Girls because the label had money and were willing to risk it. Now it's tough."

### A Day In The Life

Fiona resigned from Placebo in 2017 to pursue her own projects after multiple trips around the world. "It was never dull" she says, "And I have hundreds of stories. Not that I can tell you any of them..." She won't be persuaded either and so the conversation turns to her other long-term musical partner, John Grant. "He has such a powerful voice that I'm never going to swamp him. With some singers you worry that you're going to overload the track and they'll never cut through... they can't really take that level of orchestration, but with John, there's no danger of that. His songs are so harmonically interesting they just suit it."

Anyone who enjoyed John Grant's 2014 collaboration with the BBC Philharmonic and the subsequent tour with the Royal Northern Sinfonia will appreciate the finesse with which Fiona's arrangements weave into Grant's compositions. "It was an amazing opportunity to expand on what we'd put on the records," says Fiona, recalling the UK tour with the RNS. "John's really hands-on with the arrangements, so he'd describe what he wanted and I'd write the ideas and send these crappy MP3 demos to him. I know he doesn't listen to them, but it's part of the process that I feel I should share! There are some things he doesn't like or I should avoid, but in general we have quite similar musical tastes and classical backgrounds."

"He's hilarious," she continues. "He's a super intelligent guy. He speaks nine languages. He's made very public his struggles with life and he's vulnerable like all of us, but my

"You feel part of a huge heritage... I feel like I'm part of something bigger"

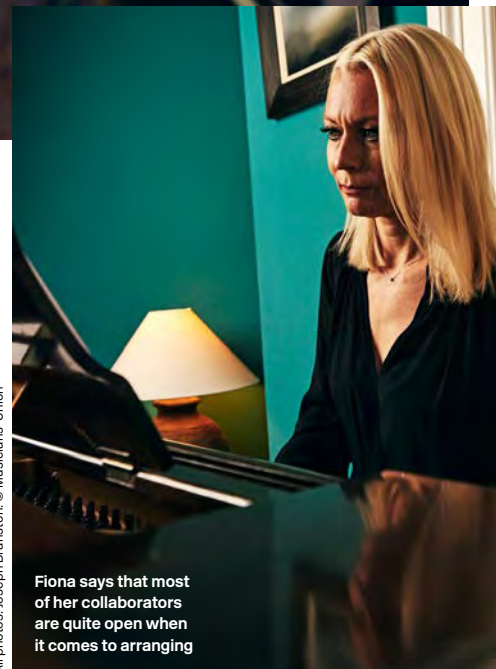
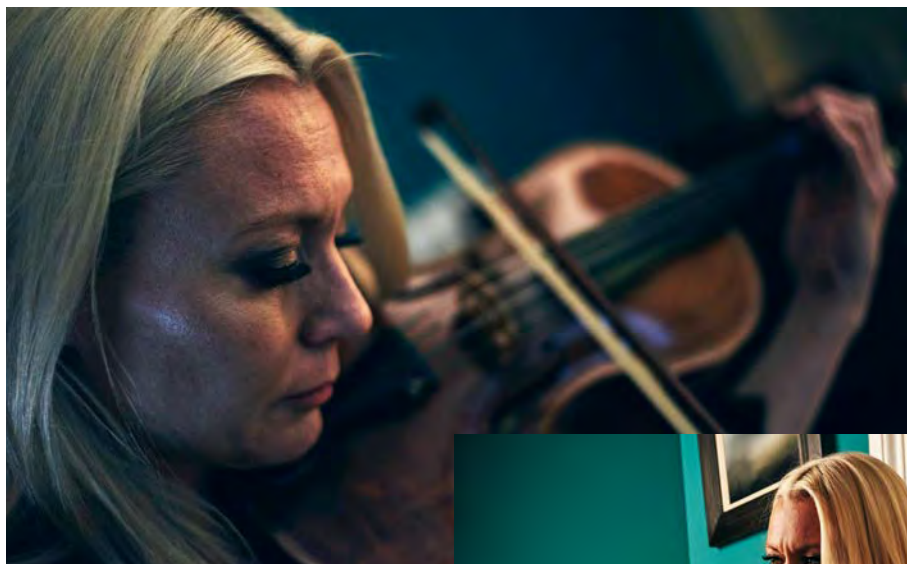
conversations with John are heavily sarcastic and funny, and involve a lot of geeky language jokes and obscure musical references".

Fiona says that most musicians are quite open when it comes to arranging. "I find that they're delighted that they've found someone's who's going to make it happen," she says. "I think it's really intimidating to stand in front of an orchestra, and they tend to be more concerned with the practicality of performance than they are about the intricacies of what the second clarinet is playing."

### Team Player

Her resignation from Placebo, says Fiona, was financially "a bit kamikaze" but was a pivotal moment in her deciding whether to continue on the two-year tour schedules or focus on other projects and her own solo work. Her debut album *Postcards From*, released in 2016, is a collection of ten emotive instrumental tracks ("musical selfies") inspired by the places she has lived and visited.

For a musician who sees herself as a team player, going solo presents its own challenges. "I used to be really confident playing piano on



All photos: Joseph Branstetter, © Musicians' Union

Fiona says that most of her collaborators are quite open when it comes to arranging

stage, and recently I find myself a bit nervous because my own stuff is really quiet and ambient. When you're backing away on a rock track it's one thing, but when you're playing pin-drop music you suddenly become painfully aware of every moment. Kelly Jones (Stereophonics) calls it 'walking the tightrope'. I did this tune with him last year and we were performing a particularly quiet set and there was only four of us on stage and we were all having the same experience... it's terrifying."

In fact, it was her desire to be part of a community that bought her to the violin, a "technically difficult instrument" that she



Equally at home in the classical and popular music worlds, Fiona feels that they are both part of the same whole

33

## Joining The MU

"I've been a member for a long time. I joined and left and joined again. I did that initial thing as a musician working in an indie band thinking, 'Oh, it doesn't understand my world' – but the problem with that was that I hadn't done big enough gigs yet. Once you start contracting other musicians and bringing other people in the studio you realise there's paperwork that needs to be done. It's my first port of call for advice as a fixer, and I'm a registered contractor with the MU so I have a safety net. If there's anything I'm unsure about I can run it past the MU. I think the MU culture is changing fast – and for the better – in understanding the diversity of musicians. I'm a classical violinist but I'm also a session player and a solo artist and an arranger and I work all over the world. And I just like being part of something. Part of the team."


says was her gateway to playing with other people. "That's what made me interested in it. I mean it's physically close to the voice – it's right there. And I can be really expressive on the violin. I'm not the most technically accomplished player by a long shot but I really know how to make it speak my truth."

### Making It Happen

Whether she's in the studio, on the stage or conducting an orchestra, Fiona's sense of musical oneness goes beyond just the musicians that surround her. "I love being in the studio with an orchestra or session musicians," she reveals. "So when we've got past the demo stage and we're in the room making it happen I feel so privileged to be in Air or Abbey Road... to be in those studios with some of the best session musicians in the world, I find that to be an honour. You feel part of a huge heritage... I genuinely feel like I'm part of something bigger."

It's a privilege she likes to share with up and coming musicians as a mentor for Sage Gateshead working on its Summer Sessions

series. "It's a real intense period of creativity," she says, "and I'm hugely inspired by the artists I see coming through there. They're really creative with technology but they don't seem to be scared of the genre divide."

When asking a musician who's so clearly respected in both the classical and rock worlds about what her career highlight is, you'd expect to elicit a certain amount of deliberation. But Fiona is quick to respond. "Doing the John Grant stuff was a highlight and the success was obvious," she says. "People really enjoyed the gig and the atmosphere was electric, and for me those tracks were some of my most successful blend of orchestra and band. But I also did some stuff with Jarvis Cocker and the BBC Proms, which again was just one of those nights. I was a huge Pulp fan when I was younger, but to work with him and hear the orchestrations come alive in the Albert Hall – that was pretty special. I got to write for the organ in the Albert Hall, which is a bespoke instrument. There's nothing like it in the world. I had to go and sit with the organist while he talked me through its more special features. It was a real stand-back moment. It makes you feel like you're part of a bigger picture..." 



# Tools Of The Trade

Clarinetist Arun Ghosh shares tips on how to maintain his instrument

Report by Neil Churchman

**Pioneering British-Asian jazz composer and performer Arun Ghosh is talking about his beloved clarinet, and it's a bit like hearing someone describe a soulmate.**

He was a precociously talented schoolboy musician, living in Bolton some thirty years ago, when he first laid eyes, and hands, on the elegant French-made Buffet R13, with its grenadilla wood body and silver keys. They've been inseparable ever since.

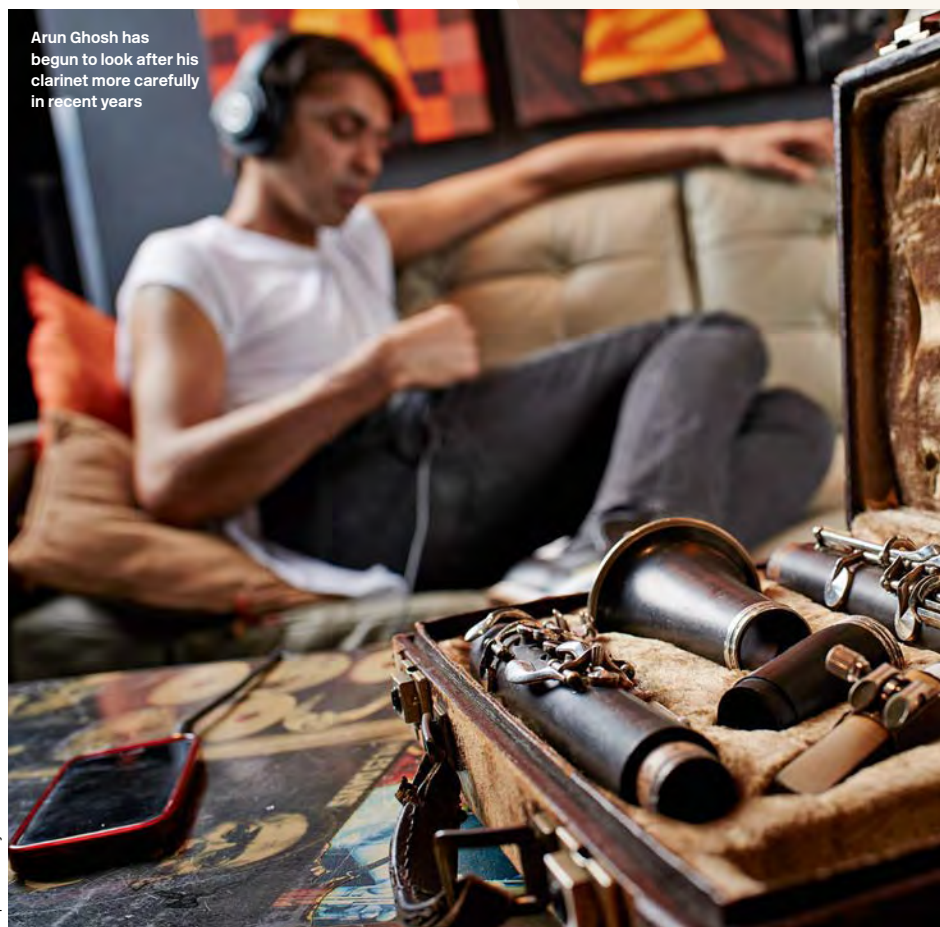
He remembers that first encounter well. "When an instrument is really right you know it," says Arun. "It feels like an extension to your body. It just felt right under my fingers. I have made so many of my life-long friends through it. Significant relationships, and the starting of a family – it all came through people I met through playing the clarinet. It's taken me round the world, and it's supported me."

## **Delicate Instrument**

As in many long partnerships, Arun's feelings for his instrument have matured into ones of deep respect. But only, he admits, after years of neglect. "My clarinet has been through the mill a bit," he confesses. "An instrument like this is really designed for the concert hall, for the conservatoire. You are supposed to let it get to room temperature before you even blow it, for example. Blow it too hard when it is cold and it can lead to cracks.

**"When an instrument is really right you know it. It feels like an extension to your body"**

Arun Ghosh has begun to look after his clarinet more carefully in recent years



All photos: Joby Sessions. © Musicians' Union

"The way I was playing music wasn't quite what the makers of Buffet clarinets had in mind. I was going from the freezing cold of the Manchester night into a steaming hot club, playing in the back room of a psychedelic trance night, having to blow really hard over samba drummers, blasting the instrument as hard as possible. I was also busking, out in the street playing all kinds of different environments that were not a concert hall, and it put the clarinet under all kinds of strain.

Inevitably there were disasters. The R13 fell silent after being knocked over just before he was due on stage to support John McLaughlin at The Barbican. A frantic repair job managed to patch it up, but as Arun recalls, there were still more than a dozen screws left on the table after it had been reassembled, and he had to borrow an instrument to complete the gig. He's embarrassed now, to think of the way he behaved, and how he failed to heed the warnings of other clarinetists. He remembers how one fellow player, Luca Luciano, told him off for not drying his instrument properly. "I knew all of these things, but I just didn't

listen," he says. "After a gig you're on a high, there's a lot of people you want to chat to, and you don't necessarily think about caring for your instrument, but actually these are habits you should get into."

## **New Perspective**

It all changed around three years ago, with a visit to Woodwind & Co in Irlam, Manchester, where the respected repairer Eddie Ashton set him straight about the toll being taken on the instrument by years of hard playing. "He was pretty shocked, and quite upset with me for the state it was in. It had fallen downstairs, it had been knocked over, and the pads weren't in a great state. He said he wouldn't even recommend it to someone learning Grade Two."

Eddie set to work, realigning the keys, replacing the pads and painstakingly restoring the Buffet to its former glory. "When I played it again it just sounded amazing, and I realised



## Full Respect

Arun's advice to fellow woodwind players is simple: treat your instrument with the respect you would give any living thing. "The clarinet is alive because you are breathing air through it. The wood is a material that changes with the heat, the moisture, and the air pressure. And you have to be able to keep it all under control. You should always make sure that after you play you dry all the moisture that has passed through it. Take the different joints apart and dry those, otherwise things like the cork can get damaged, and if it becomes too loose the joints will fall apart.

"Be very careful not to let the keys become overly bent or let too much moisture build up in the pads, in case they expand and don't seal properly. Remember that there are many great people at music shops around the country who do brilliant repairs. Take yours to them now and again."



I had recorded my last album on what was quite a clapped-out instrument," explains Arun. "Now I am far more considerate and careful. I feel a little bad at all the ways I have disrespected it over the years, but I really look after it now."

Arun's first-aid kit includes a spare mouthpiece, a pull-through mop and a brush to clean between keys. There's a small screwdriver set to tighten and loosen keys, and cigarette papers for drying moisture in between the pads. One accessory he would not be without these days is a proper clarinet stand. "I did terrible things standing it up on the floor," he explains. "It's much safer to have it on a stand. I just wish I had taken that side of things more seriously. But my clarinet is still here, and I am looking at it right now. I realise I was lucky with this instrument," he reflects.

"It's secure and stable. It's obviously so well made it has lasted all this time."

### French Tone

Arun is a huge fan of the French clarinet tone, rating it above that of its international rivals. "The R13 is a great instrument," he explains. "French clarinets have a very pure, clear sound, in contrast to the old English Boosey & Hawkes clarinets, or the German instruments, which have very thick, warm tone. I really appreciate the action and the ease of the Buffet, because I like to bend the notes a lot for the Indian music I play in jazz. I need to be able to attack the sound, and I think this clarinet suits that very well."

Arun acknowledges that today's jazz audiences are much more used to a saxophone or trumpet taking the lead. But the clarinet, he insists, has earned a unique place in the line-up. "Immediately when you play the clarinet you are 'other-ed' in a sense," he says. "The music I choose to make uses the clarinet in different novel ways. As clarinetists we need to find that versatility."

Lockdown has seen Arun working on a new album, thinking about the future and musing about the intimacy between all musicians and their favourite instruments. "As you age, you start to think about mortality. Our bodies are changing and we're getting older, there may be a point where I can't play the clarinet any more. I have always played lots of instruments, but the immediacy of playing the clarinet, I really don't want to lose it."

Arun and the R13 have got closer over the years. "I think it has improved with age, because the instrument grows with you. It starts to follow the contours, in a subtle way, of how you use the keys and the way you breathe through the instrument. It becomes more and more a part of you.

"When I have had to borrow various people's clarinets because mine has been a bit messed up, I really miss mine, there's no getting away from it."

**For more information on Arun's work, and to listen to some of the music he has produced go to [arunghosh.bandcamp.com](https://arunghosh.bandcamp.com)** 🎵



# New Methods To Promote Your Music

It's never been more important to find alternative methods of promoting our music. Thankfully, plenty of online tools exist, but getting the best out of them can become a full-time job

Report by Gary Walker

**Much has been written about the great democratisation of music. Recording and releasing your work has never been so affordable. But that's only a fraction of the battle. There's never been more music out there, and few things are more deflating than watching your labour of love fall on deaf ears. With the live music industry in stasis and printed music magazines becoming increasingly rare beasts, how do you cut through the noise and get your music heard in this fragmented digital landscape?**

"You can get the ball rolling with not a lot of spend, rather than wait for a record label to discover you," says Rich Walker, strategic director at 4AD and co-founder of independent label Dalliance. "Record companies are attracted to self-starters who can connect the visuals and music. If you've got a social media audience, radio plays and streams it makes it easier for you to be spotted, and with ground already covered, says you're less of a gamble."

## Choose Your Method

There may be innumerable tools to pique the interest of those labels, but it's unlikely you'll have a bottomless pot of money, or time. So should you be focusing on social media advertising, creating a mailing list,

**"You can get the ball rolling with not a lot of spend"**

**Rich Walker**

merchandise, hiring a radio plugger or PR guru, paying middle-man sites to pitch your songs to blogs and playlists, starting a Patreon offering, or shooting a stunning music video? "It depends on your strengths and what you're trying to achieve," says Walker, but often the answer is all of the above.

By far the biggest dog in this fight is Spotify. With 320 million monthly users and 144 million paid subscribers, the site controls around 35% of the global streaming market according to a 2019 study by Counterpoint Research. However, with a stream paying approximately

0.28p, you'd need 3,114 plays to make a single hour's pay at the minimum wage of £8.72. Add in the fact that a staggering 40,000 tracks are uploaded every day and it begins to seem a daunting task that's led the United Musicians and Allied Workers Unions to call for a 'minimum wage' of at least one cent per stream in the US.

The golden ticket for many bands is the streaming giant's editorial playlists. Using the Spotify For Artists feature, you can pitch your track to Spotify's editors, while the independent Daily Playlists site allows you to target individual curators. The results can be game-changing.

Bristol band Lespectre saw success with their single *Obliquely Serenely* after crowdfunding a vinyl release of their debut album through Kickstarter. "Our first single had 1,000 plays on Spotify," says the band's multi-instrumentalist producer Tom Hackwell. "With the second, we concentrated on creating a consistent aesthetic, asked a journalist friend to write an engaging pitch, and used Daily Playlists to target playlists where we seemed a good fit. We got picked up by an editorial playlist with three million followers, and within three weeks the track had been streamed 100,000 times."

So what makes a good pitch? "Editors love to learn about context and community," say Spotify's guidelines. "Give us the who, what,

**Getting onto a Spotify playlist can increase your profile immeasurably, but the fees that they pay for each play of your song are still pitifully low**

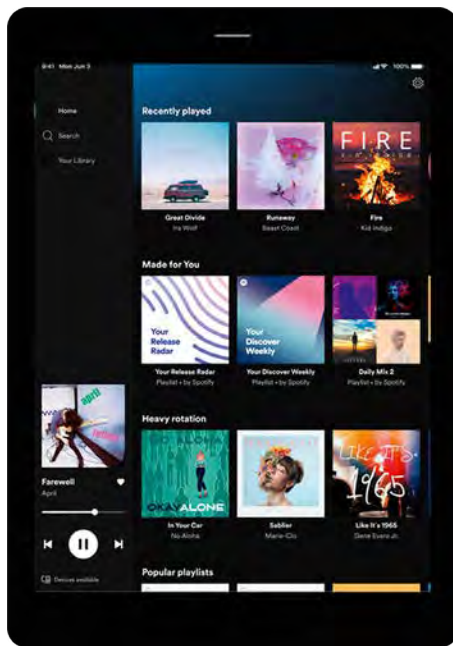


Photo: © 2020 Spotify AB



Photo: © 2020 Spotify AB

Laura Bettinson is wary of the value of Spotify plays, and favours a more direct engagement with her fans

why, when, where and how of your song. It's also helpful to include any press, music video plans, release schedules and promotions, as well as social media accounts linked in your artist profile."

### New Platforms

Spotify's allure has seen a number of third-party sites spring up, bridging the gap between artists and the thousands of playlists and blogs feeding its ever-watchful algorithms. The founders of those sites recognised that while PR tools such as PromoJukebox and Mailchimp allow bands to mass mail a press release and stream to reviewers, those reviewers are drowning in a sea of unsolicited music.

Jason Grishkoff, founder of the Indie Shuffle blog, set up SubmitHub in 2015. The site helps musicians reach music blogs, YouTube channels, Spotify playlisters and Instagram

influencers. Artists can buy credits to pitch their song to curators, and in turn those curators must listen to a minimum of 20 seconds – and if they choose not to feature the song, explain why. In the first five years, the site has shared 1,154,000 songs. The approval rate for Premium submissions is around 17%.

"It's a really efficient communication tool, it's way cheaper than hiring a publicist, but given the amount of other artists competing against you, it's an uphill battle," admitted Grishkoff in a recent Q&A.

Similarly, Musosoup is "a press generation engine for bands and artists, helping them get reviews, interviews, live sessions and →

Photo: Sentic



## Go Fund Me

"How would you spend £1,000 on promoting your band?"

Independent music publisher Sentic has a rolling blog post on its site posing this question to a range of industry professionals, and the answers are well worth a read.

Sentic operates a fund for artists, which can be used for promotion as well as recording and touring costs. The Sentic Academy Fund supports 12 artists a year, with applications opening quarterly. Artist services manager James Cherry says: "We want to enable artists to make music their full-time career and, with the right plan, this funding can be a stepping stone towards that."

Sentic's Simon Pursehouse suggests that creating a clear visual identity is where his money would go: "As much as this might make your teeth grind, if you have two artists making music of a similar quality, I, and everyone else, will be drawn towards the one with the better looking press shot, logo, music video, etc."

Find out more at [senticmusic.com](https://senticmusic.com)





Aly Gillani,  
label and artist  
representative  
at Bandcamp

Photo: © Bandcamp

## Get The Best Out Of Bandcamp

Bandcamp has gained a reputation as the virtuous online music platform, but how do you reach its vast community of music fans? "Our artist guide ([bandcamp.com/guide](https://bandcamp.com/guide)) has a number of great tips for maximising your presence," says label and artist representative Aly Gillani. "A couple of tactics really stand out for me. Firstly, personalise your page to suit your style and add as much information as possible. Then, sell merch – physical product now accounts for half of our revenue on Bandcamp. You can also use our vinyl service if you want to create a vinyl record."

There's also Bandcamp's editorial arm, the Daily. "It exists to shine a light on the expansive world of music on the site," says Gillani. "We cover as much music as possible, from monthly genre columns to scene reports, album reviews, interviews and more. The key is to send us your music early and let us know why it's going to be interesting to write about. Our audience loves stories, so if you have an interesting tale behind your music, we'd love to hear it."

## "Having a presence on Bandcamp makes you part of that thriving community that is growing all the time"

Aly Gillani

more". The site charges the sum of £30 for a 45-day listing. Chris Sharpe, who founded the platform, says its mission statement is "to turn the PR world upside down, on its head".

Producer, DJ and vocalist Laura Bettinson, aka lau.ra, gets around 700,000 monthly Spotify streams, due in part to the success of the song *Fever Boy*, which has 1.8 million plays. Yet she remains sceptical about the lasting value of those numbers.

"I haven't ever relied on Spotify. The money I get from those 700,000 listeners won't be enough to live off, so I've always seen streaming as a bonus string to my business. The most important thing has always been the engagement with my fans. I'd rather have 100 super-engaged fans who are willing to spend money on the things I want to do, than millions of faceless listeners on Spotify."

### The Good Guys

If it's a more engaged audience you're after, the answer may lie either in investing in social media advertising, finding your tribe on Reddit, or focusing on 'the good guys' of online music sales, Bandcamp. The site's users spend \$17m per month, with 80-85% going direct to artists. Crucially, Bandcamp enables you to access your fans' data, and encourages them to follow you. It also has an artist app, which enables direct messaging to those fans, and sophisticated recommendation tools.

"We have built the site into a music discovery platform and fan community where for every two sales you generate, we'll drive a third," says label and artist representative Aly Gillani. "Having a presence on Bandcamp makes you part of that thriving community that is growing all the time."

The Covid lockdown saw the launch of Bandcamp Fridays, where the site waives its revenue share for all sales. Fans have responded by paying \$100 million direct to artists. There's also a vinyl pressing service, and Bandcamp Daily offers the opportunity to pitch editorial features about your band. The

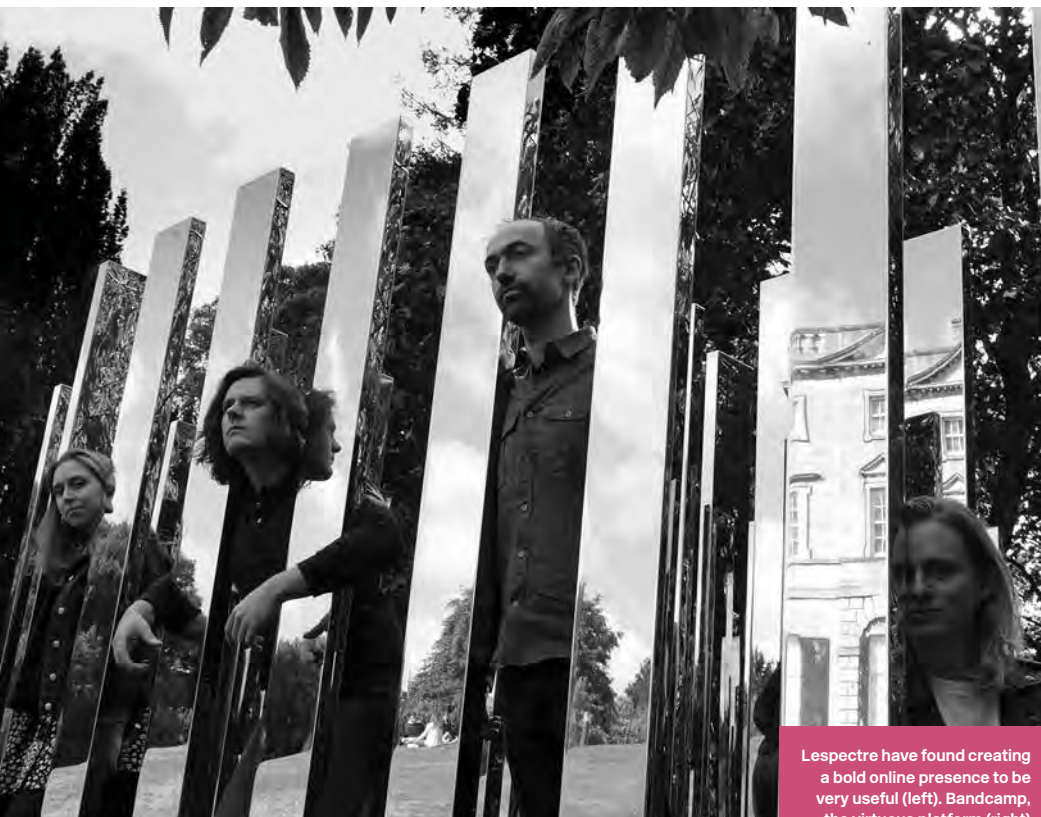
site is fast becoming a virtuous one-stop shop for independent acts.

"Bandcamp fans are a special subset of your overall fanbase," says Gillani. "In an era when they could listen to your music for nothing, they've chosen to pay. If you can develop that group of fans, it's a really solid foundation for a healthy and long-lasting career."

"I really like the business model," says Walker. "It's very democratic, and if you start to build something and are consistent, it gives you continued access to your audience. With Spotify, if you put out a track and get good traction, it changes your mindset for the next track. There's a case of 'what will the editors think?'. Bandcamp allows you to be a little more creative and spontaneous."

Other artists favour Patreon, a subscription-based rewards site used by over 200,000 creators, that enables bands to offer exclusive access to music and merchandise, and engage directly with paying members. Social media, too, can be effective in building a more engaged following. Although increasingly you'll need to pay to reach those followers through sponsored posts. Get your targeting wrong and, as Walker puts it, "It might be as fruitful to go down to the bottom of the garden and burn the money". Having grown a sizeable audience through the site, Bettinson, who also produces a podcast and offers merchandise and brand collaborations on Instagram, decided enough was enough when Facebook's business model changed.

"When I launched lau.ra, I purposefully didn't make a Facebook page. I spent so long as FEMME building a following, but it was crushing the amount of time and energy you put in only for Facebook to clamp down on organic reach. It's deflating when you



Lespectre have found creating a bold online presence to be very useful (left). Bandcamp, the virtuous platform (right)



Photo: Doug Evans

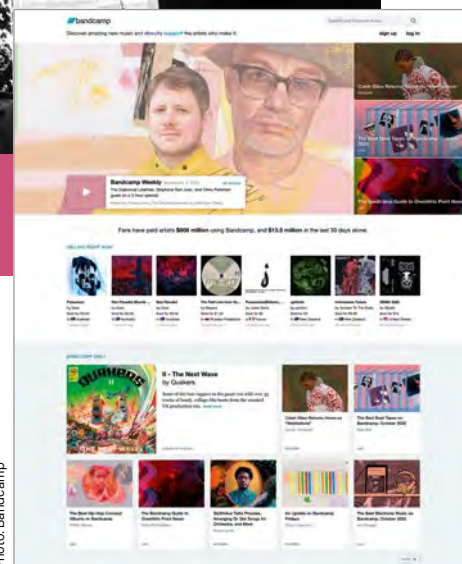


Photo: Bandcamp

put something out and it reaches 100 of 60,000 followers. I want to reach my fans and give them news, I don't want it to be an advert constantly. For me, Instagram has been great, in terms of collaborating with fashion and lifestyle brands. It's been a fairly sizeable chunk of my income."

### On My Radio

With Spotify, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube playing such major roles, not to mention the vertiginous rise of TikTok, is there still value in chasing radio plays? While a plugger may be prohibitively expensive, Bettinson recommends using BBC Introducing's online Uploader platform, which enables bands to put their tracks in front of the show's producers, with the chance of being fed up the chain from local stations to 6 Music or Radio 1.

"I'd never really focused on radio, but Nemone on 6 Music got hold of one of my singles and single-handedly made it a success. Since then, the BBC have been super-supportive of everything I've put out. I uploaded a couple of tracks and Jaguar at

BBC Dance started playing them, and now other people at Radio 1 are playing them. It's all come from BBC Uploader, they do amazing work for new artists."

Online music promotion has become a hugely lucrative industry, with the question for bands being where should you deploy your resources? The answer is, there is no universal answer. The established principles of knowing your audience, having a tireless work ethic, being lucky and leaning on friends with useful skills remain important. It may even be worth enlisting a marketing professional who'll draw you up a promotional strategy. Mike Burgess, aka Sound With Mike, will have a free 'virtual coffee' with you and generally charges around £150 for a broad six-month plan.

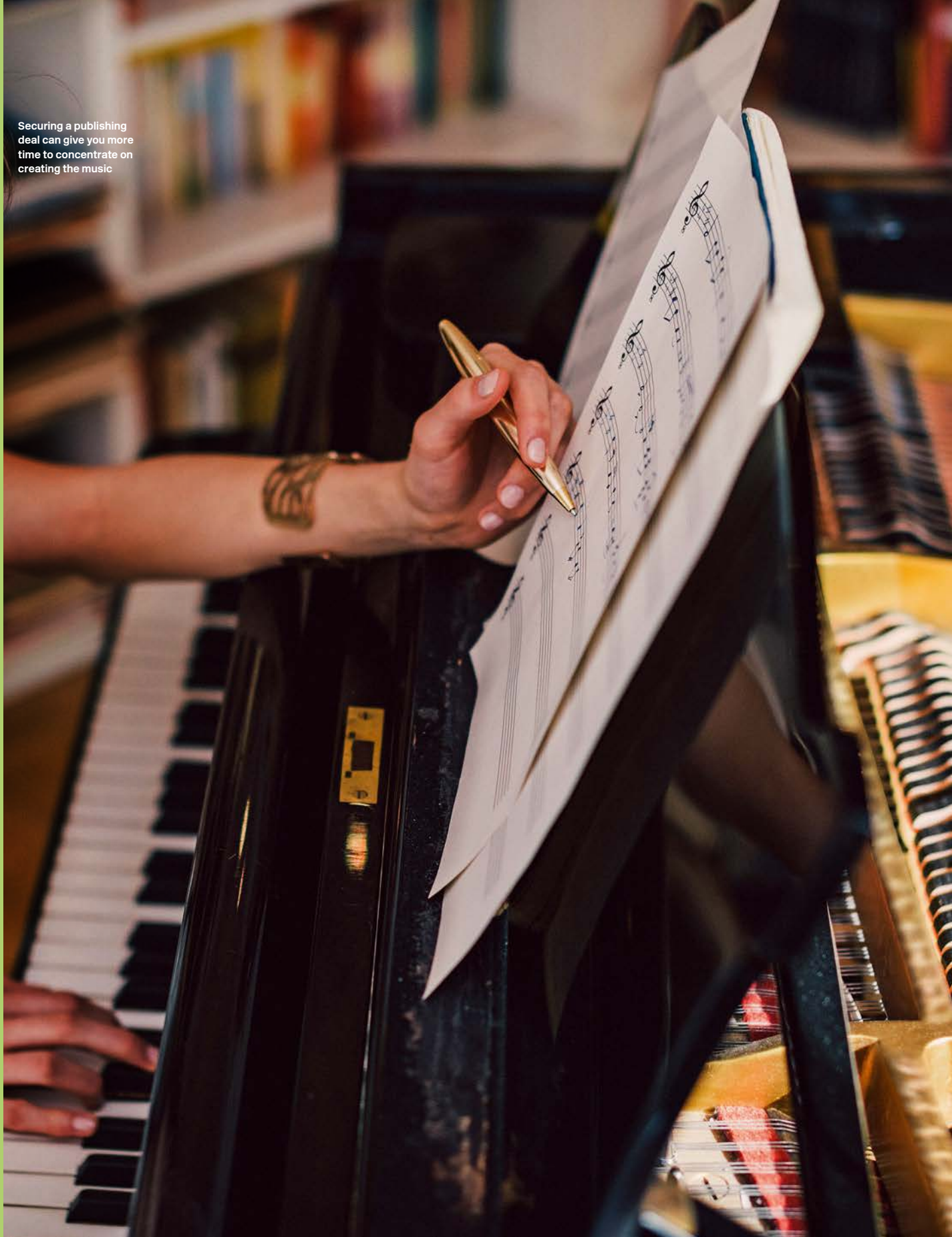
"For me it's about being authentic," says Bettinson. "It's a full-time job, keeping talking and joining in other conversations." Says Walker: "It's a mix of it all, rolling your sleeves up and working hard. Luck happens in lots of different ways. Once the momentum is there, people start getting in touch, and that's why you've got to think medium to long-term. If you still want to be doing this in five or six years, don't go spending money on the short-term.

The crucial thing is control. Bands can control the narrative from an early stage now and choose the direction they want to go in.

"With Dalliance, we try to make things a two-way street for our artists. We listen to what they want to do, try not to interfere with their creative processes, and a lot don't need huge spends, as they're already making great records and videos. They're artists who are the full package and can do all these things. That makes it easy for us to say, 'Come and work with us.'" **WU**



Securing a publishing deal can give you more time to concentrate on creating the music



# MAKING THE MOST OF: PUBLISHING

With Covid shutting down income streams, it's never been more important to make your original music work harder. With expert advice from songwriters and industry insiders, Henry Yates investigates how you could benefit from a publishing deal, how to secure one – and the common pitfalls to avoid

**For most writers, the first song you pen is a pure flash of innocent creativity, untouched by commercial ambitions. But unwittingly or not, by writing that first song, you have also just created your first copyright. And at some point, along the long and knotted road of the career songwriter with your credits mounting up, a dilemma will arise. Do you need a music publisher?**

Either way, it's worth understanding the role of this sector. Fundamentally, publishers look after your original songs – the compositional content, as opposed to the recording – and ensure you receive the royalties when they are performed, reproduced or synced to a visual medium such as film or TV. "Pretty much whenever you hear a song, the person who wrote it should receive a royalty," says Simon Purchase of Sentric Music. "And the basic rule is: the more people who hear it, the more money the songwriter is owed."

## Pros And Cons Of A Publisher

But a music publisher is far more than a royalty-chaser. In theory, a good publisher will proactively push your music, whether that's a word in the ear of a Channel 4 music supervisor, seeking out tour supports, helping you hook up with a songwriting team, or pitching your songs to the stars who'll fire them up the charts. "A great publisher can be so valuable in terms of taking a holistic approach to an artist's career," says Pip Newby, former Atlantic Records A&R and founder of the Friends Vs Music label.

Even so, talking to a cross-section of musicians sparks polarised opinions. One group will insist that a publishing deal is an essential rung on the ladder to commercial success, putting a musician's songs in the fast lane. The counter-argument is to retain your publishing at all costs, or risk joining the cautionary-tale artists who handed over exclusive rights to their catalogue, only for an unscrupulous or incompetent publisher to sit on their songs ad infinitum.

## The Reality Of Self-Publishing

Most parties, however, agree that a musician can get started without a deal. For a motivated independent artist with good organisational skills, argues the acclaimed singer-songwriter Anna Neale, DIY might be the best short-term option. "I held out and stayed solo almost 20 years, before signing at the start of lockdown with the independent publisher May Music Limited. I'd been offered deals by big publishers in the past and just never saw any benefit. If you're working your way up, establishing a fanbase and writing connections, know how to enter your songs into PRS and check your statements – then there really is no need for a publisher. But there does come a tipping point."

"Self-publishing is a viable option if you're already established or an independent artist," says Mike Macdermid, a highly rated singer-songwriter with credits on several Top 10 hits in Asia. "As an indie, if you're selling your own music and dealing with your own gigs, then self-publishing makes sense, as you'll keep control and retain all the income. It's a case-by-case decision though, and for me, as a songwriter writing for other artists, the right

**"A great publisher can be so valuable in terms of taking a holistic approach"**

**Pip Newby**

publisher gives me the best connections to artists who are looking for songs."

## The Right Time To Approach A Publisher

The mistake most musicians make is approaching one of the established publishers before they have a credible career. For a new artist, with a slim catalogue, low streams and a light footprint on the live scene, there is a mutual lack of benefit. Traditional publishers won't be interested in the commission on your negligible income, while paying up to 30% for their services isn't viable. "If you've only got two tracks on Spotify," explains Neale, "then, actually, you're better holding onto that income yourself, because you can register your own tracks on PRS and collect money from Spotify using DSP services. And if you really struggle with the business side, then there are services like Songtrust, who'll mop up any potential royalties for you."

## How To Prepare Your Pitch

So where is that tipping point? "When you start dealing with international territories on your own, it becomes difficult to manage the administration in terms of receiving



# "Take time to see who else is on their roster and what releases they have had. Trust your instinct"

Anna Neale



## HOOKING UP

Is collaboration the key to a publishing deal?

Scan the credits of any chart hit and you'll find the solo composer has been overtaken by the songwriting committee. If you can master the art of writing with others, says Simon Purchasehouse of Sentric Music, you'll be more attractive to modern publishers. "Ultimately, I just want our songwriters to write the best songs they possibly can, and nine times out of ten that's going to happen if they're open to writing with other people. I understand that creating art is precious, and the idea of writing with others for the first time might feel uncomfortable, but take the leap of faith and do it as early as possible in your career. The more you do it, the better the results will be over time."

Pip Newby agrees: "The advice I always give to people, whether they're at school, or music college, or whatever, is to start writing songs with other artists. To find new artists they can attach themselves to and develop alongside. What I always recommend is for new writers to be their own A&R scouts. Find artists and say, 'Can we try writing together?' Especially if you produce as well. If you've got a studio set-up, you can say, 'Come in and let's put down some tracks'. And then that can be your route through."

the royalties and making sure everything is registered properly," advises Neale. "I write for radio and theatre, I work with international artists – and have some international exposure myself – and it got to a point where the sheer volume of admin got too much."

As with managers and agents, the imbalance of supply and demand means publishers can afford to be choosy about which musicians they sign. "There are certain things that make you more appealing to a publisher," continues Neale. "Being a performing artist is a particular bonus in the current climate. Having your own studio or some way of recording yourself. Being a producer and an engineer. A lot of the bigger publishers rely on data, so they'll look at everything: the streams and YouTube hits you've got."

## Choosing Your Publisher And Deal

Still, musicians shouldn't be too eager to sign with the first publisher to return their call. It's vital to poll colleagues and get an overview of the sector before drilling into the strengths and shortcomings of individual publishers. "You want a publisher who's equally excited about your music," says Macdermid. "Their job is to sell your music and you as a songwriter/artist. Don't rush in, just because someone shows interest. Take time to see who else is on their roster and what releases they have had. Trust your instinct."

Likewise, before making an approach the musician should be aware there isn't just one type of publishing deal. "The exclusive songwriter agreement: that's the one that everyone views as the 'I've made it' publishing deal," explains Neale. "That's when you're tied to a publisher for two or three years, and you're almost like their staff writer. You'll get an advance, and you'll have to show them that you're a viable business to invest in." In the online era, however, there are more hands-off deals and plenty of less exclusive publishers ready to offer them. "You don't have to hope for a deal anymore, you can just go and get one," says Purchasehouse. "There's absolutely no reason why every songwriter around

Photo: Tony Clarkson / Alamy Stock Photo



Gerry Cinnamon (top) uses the independent rights management company Kobalt, while singer-songwriter Anna Neale (right) signed with a publisher in early 2020

the world shouldn't sign up to a publishing administrative service like Sentric. Collecting publishing income around the world is time-consuming, complicated and, above all, boring as hell. That's not how you want to spend your time as a songwriter."

## Study The Small Print

If a publisher invites you to meet, ask pertinent questions about past success and tactics taken with comparable artists. If a contract is presented, don't just scan and sign: individual deals are drawn up based on the publisher's projection of your value, with surprisingly fluid terms. "It's always good to be wary of the minimum commitment clause," says Neale. "That designates how many songs you need to write within the term of your contract, so you need to work out whether you could realistically fulfil that."

"There are non-exclusive and exclusive deals," adds Macdermid. "Non-exclusive allows you to continue to pitch your songs elsewhere and to other publishers, usually with some conditions, and exclusive means you're tied to that



Photo: Philin Photography

publisher. It's important to understand what percentage you're giving up: this can vary wildly depending on the territory and deal."

"Retention period is another thing to be aware of," picks up Neale. "With an exclusive songwriter agreement, you assign all your copyright to the publisher and at the end of the term, you have a retention period: that means the publisher has the right to exploit this catalogue for 15 years. If you can get the publisher to then revert the copyright back to you at the end of the retention period, that's really good. But be aware that, particularly when you sign your first deal, they'll want to retain the copyright in perpetuity."

#### The Costs Of A Bad Contract

By requesting clarification and amendments to the contract's less favourable clauses, you might also dodge the nightmare scenario where a publisher takes on your songs, only to shelve them and leave you in limbo. "If you've got an agreement in the contract before you sign it, saying that the publisher agrees to exploit the catalogue or create opportunities for you, then you can argue to get out of the deal if they don't," says Neale. "If the publisher

has no proof they've done anything, then you could potentially get yourself out of that contract. But a lot of people just sign, and I've heard many horror stories from friends whose publishers gave them an absolutely pathetic advance and never did anything but hold onto those songs for evermore."

Ultimately, with the small-print making the difference between a career springboard and a set of creative handcuffs, it's vital to study every inch of your contract – and that's another area where MU membership is invaluable. "While we understand that musicians can be keen to enter publishing deals, especially if they've been pursuing one for a while, we encourage members to send any publishing contracts to us prior to signing," says MU Live & Writers Official, Kelly Wood. "This gives us the opportunity to offer advice on the terms – which may be negotiable – and also have it checked by a specialist solicitor through our Contract Advisory Service." **MU**

## Top 5 Tips

### How to find the right publisher for you

1

#### Do your homework

Read up on the nuts and bolts of music publishing, then liaise with your peers on the best and worst publishers they've worked with and start to draw up a wishlist.

2

#### Collaboration

Positioning yourself as the next Dylan might not do you favours in the modern industry. Being able to write with others when required makes you a more viable prospect for publishers.

3

#### Time your approach

For most musicians, the smartest tactic is to wait until you reach the tipping point when the admin is threatening your creative output, then look into a deal.

4

#### Play the long-game

You could sign a traditional deal with a lower advance early on with a publisher who helps to develop you, or you could hold off and build your catalogue.

5

#### Understand the different deals

If you are ready to commit, then look into an exclusive songwriter agreement. If you want to retain control, then an administration deal could be the thing.

**TOP TIP**

#### CHECK EVERYTHING FIRST

Don't sign any contract without first closely combing the clauses and flagging up anything you don't understand or accept.



# WHERE TO FIND... FINANCIAL SUPPORT

There is money out there to be claimed by our members, so here's a rundown of the financial support schemes that are still live or returning soon...

If there is a positive to be taken from the Covid-19 pandemic, it's the sheer resourcefulness of the UK's musicians. In glorious defiance of this once-in-a-century crisis, artists have pivoted with skill and ingenuity, keeping income streams alive with everything from web concerts to remote music tuition. But as the statistics in this issue's cover story on p12 make clear, the profession is still in need of desperate help.

With venues still shut, streaming income still negligible, and a recent MU survey revealing that 38% of freelance musicians have fallen through the cracks of Rishi Sunak's Self-Employment Support Scheme (SEISS), it's vital for musicians to be just as proactive when it comes to the pursuit of financial support.

As a working musician you should have no hesitation or shame when it comes to applying for financial aid. After all, this money has been expressly provided to support the workers of a vital industry that contributed £5.2 billion to the UK economy in 2018 – and has been hit harder than almost any other. While some of the best-known musicians' support schemes have closed for applications – at least for now – here are 13 ongoing avenues offering the financial support that could arm you for the fightback ahead.

## **MU Coronavirus Hardship Fund**

Set up when the crisis took hold, the Union's £1 million fund can be accessed by eligible MU members suffering extreme financial hardship through loss of work. While we acknowledge that the maximum individual grant of £200 cannot offer long term support, our aim is to help the largest possible number of musicians with a sum that allows, for instance, a vital household bill to be paid. For eligibility criteria and to apply, visit [theMU.org/hardshipfund](https://theMU.org/hardshipfund)

## **Creative Scotland Hardship Fund for Creative Freelancers**

With the culture secretary recently adding a further £3 million to the pot – bringing the fund's total to £8 million – applications reopened in November for any freelancer working in Scotland, seriously impacted by the cancellation of work and able to demonstrate they were already making an income before lockdown began in March. To make your application, visit [tinyurl.com/crscfund](https://tinyurl.com/crscfund)

If you are currently unable to work in music, there are many funds that can help you

## **Association of Independent Music (AIM) Covid Support Fund**

Created by AIM board members with the goal of distributing £1 million to 1,000 individual creatives, this fund was put on hold in November as the first cycle of claims were processed – but with £300,000 of additional funding recently announced, applications should reopen soon. With a maximum grant of £1,000 available per two-month period, it's well worth bookmarking. [tinyurl.com/aimukfund](https://tinyurl.com/aimukfund)

## **Help Musicians UK Coronavirus Hardship Fund**

Since the pandemic hit, Help Musicians' £11 million fund has been a lifeline for over 3,800 musicians, and the charity recently announced on Twitter that the scheme will be extended until March. Keep an eye on all the social channels for application developments, and also visit [helpmusicians.org.uk](https://helpmusicians.org.uk) to discover additional help that can be provided.

## **Oppenheim-John Downes Memorial Trust**

The Trust offers small grants to British-born creatives over the age of thirty to help with pressing financial difficulties. Applications can be made at any time throughout the year, and



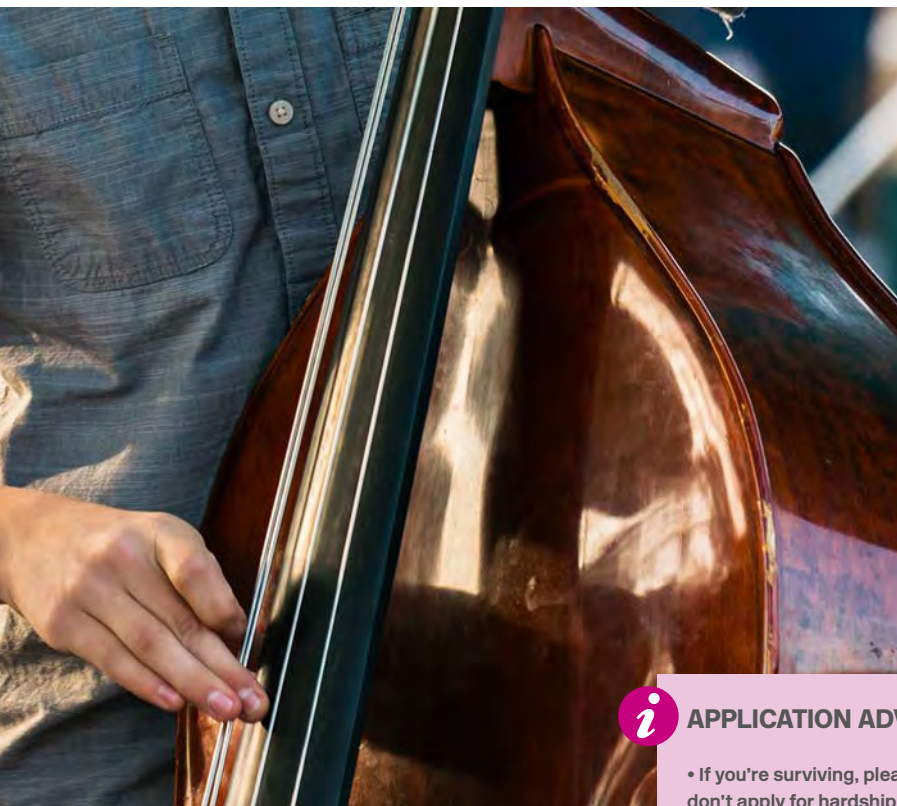


Photo: © Keoni Cabral / EyeEm / Getty Images

it may help your chances of success if you haven't previously benefitted from another financial award. For more details, see [oppenheimdownestrust.org](https://www.oppenheimdownestrust.org)

#### **Business Wales Cultural Recovery Fund**

The Welsh government has put forward a generous rescue package, with eligible individuals invited to apply for a £2,500 grant. As this issue went to press, the fund was suspended to allow officials to assess the first cycle of applications, but you'll be the first to hear when it reopens by regularly visiting [businesswales.gov.wales/coronavirus-advice](https://businesswales.gov.wales/coronavirus-advice)

#### **The Van Morrison Lockdown Financial Hardship Fund**

The Belfast bandleader's emergency fund offers one-off grants of £500 to successful applicants. Following a hugely popular first phase, organisers are currently lobbying hard for more support, and promise to open a second cycle of applications in early 2021. Keep your eye on Van's social channels and check back regularly at [vanmorrison.com](https://www.vanmorrison.com)

#### **PRS Members Fund Winter Heating Scheme**

If you're a PRS member, you could be eligible for a contribution towards your heating bill. Contact the fund on 020 3741 4067 or email [fund@prsformusic.com](mailto:fund@prsformusic.com)



### APPLICATION ADVICE

- If you're surviving, please don't apply for hardship grants. With thousands of UK musicians out of work – many of them with dependents – there simply isn't enough funding to go around.
- It's worth taking the time to hone your grant application, setting out your career to date, financial commitments, and how you'll use the money. Funding bodies can't help everybody, so it pays to stand out with a passionate but honest application.
- Be clear on the terms of the grant. Are you allowed to apply to multiple funding bodies at the same time, for instance?
- Keep an eye on the web. Additional funds are released all the time, and support schemes that were previously closed can suddenly open back up.
- Stay close to the MU. We'll keep doing everything we can to unlock funding for our members, and by staying active within the MU community, you'll be the first to hear about it.

#### **The Royal Variety Charity Nationwide Grant Scheme**

Supporting entertainers of every kind, the Royal Variety Charity is currently offering special grants to young performers affected by the pandemic. Call 020 8898 8164, email [enquiries@royalvarietycharity.org](mailto:enquiries@royalvarietycharity.org) or apply at [tinyurl.com/rvcgrant](https://tinyurl.com/rvcgrant)

#### **The Incorporated Association of Organists Benevolent Fund**

Founded in 1930, organists and their dependents stand to benefit from this charity, which offers both grants on a continuing basis and emergency one-off assistance, as determined by the trustees. To qualify, applicants must have been a member of an affiliated organists' association for at least two years. For details, call 01225 421154, email [iao.bf@yahoo.com](mailto:iao.bf@yahoo.com) or visit [iao.org.uk](https://iao.org.uk)


#### **The Royal Theatrical Fund**

Supporting musicians who have worked professionally in the theatre industry for over seven years and are incapacitated by illness, The Royal Theatrical Fund offers financial support, alongside assistance with benefits and debt advice. If you've worked in the orchestra pit, visit [trtf.com](https://trtf.com) for more details.

#### **Royal Society of Musicians of Great Britain**

Established in 1738 – when it was named the 'Fund For Decay'd Musicians', and notably included George Frideric Handel on its Declaration Of Trust – the Royal Society Of Musicians has stepped in for centuries with support across the profession, and is currently working hard to offset the financial damage from Covid. To start your application rolling, contact the casework team on [casework@rsmgb.org](mailto:casework@rsmgb.org) or call 020 7629 6137.

#### **Artists Emergency Programme**

Supporting individuals in Northern Ireland with over £1.2 million of funding, the Artists Emergency Programme was temporarily closed in November as the Arts Council moderated the first two rounds of applications, but should be back soon. To apply, you'll need materials including a recent CV and a completed Expression Of Interest form, which should be submitted to [artgrants@artscouncil-ni.org](mailto:artgrants@artscouncil-ni.org) – for details, see [tinyurl.com/acnismeme](https://tinyurl.com/acnismeme) 



# reviews

Reviewer: Roy Delaney

A look at some of the new albums, EPs and downloads released by MU members for 2020, together with links for more information on the featured artists



The Rheingans Sisters have put their own glacial edge onto the traditional sounds of the North

THE RHEINGANS SISTERS

Photo: Elly Lucas

**R**owan and Anna Rheingans grew up in a village in Derbyshire. With a musician for a mother, a violin maker for a father and surrounded by traditional music from an early age, they were always destined to find their way by making their own very particular soundscapes.



Receiver

These songs take historic British folk elements, steeped in a pastoral feel that surely comes from their rural upbringing, and bends them into something entirely more contemporary. Their unique fusion of ideas and styles has seen them become a highly regarded act, resulting in a BBC Radio 2 Folk Award in 2016, among

many other award nominations. On this terrific collection of new songs their gentle melodies hint at dark gothic edges, but still leave you feeling bright and uplifted. The CD also comes with a beautiful booklet that painstakingly talks us through the making of each song.

[rheinganssisters.co.uk](http://rheinganssisters.co.uk)



To submit an album or download track for review, send recordings and PR material to:

*The Musician*,  
60-62 Clapham Rd,  
London SW9 0JJ or  
email [TheMusician@theMU.org](mailto:TheMusician@theMU.org)

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

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

## jazz



**MICK FOSTER**  
Live at The Vortex

Captured live at London's Vortex club, these smooth jazz tunes highlight Mick's singular baritone saxophone stylings, alongside players Dominic Ashworth, Tom Farmer and Tristan Malliot.

[mickfoster.bandcamp.com](http://mickfoster.bandcamp.com)



**MARTIN TROTMAN**  
Let's Begin

The renowned keyboardist, MD and producer has stepped into the spotlight to treat us to some vibrant funk, slow jazz jams and cool R&B. Caleb Quaye, Nik Carter and Belinda Kae all add extra flavour.

[martintrotmanmusic.com](http://martintrotmanmusic.com)



**JT4TET**  
Bluesion!

The London soul jazz quartet featuring Jon Taylor on guitar, Tim Richards on keys, Andy Lafone on bass and Pete Miles on drums ooze out four fine tunes that are as sweet as honey.

[jt4tet.bandcamp.com](http://jt4tet.bandcamp.com)

## collaborations



» **DYBLE LONGDON**  
Between A Breath And A Breath

A beautiful swansong to the late Julie Dyble's career, the one time Fairport member teams up with David Longdon on a gentle collection of contemporary folk. [bigbigtrain.com/dyble-longdon](http://bigbigtrain.com/dyble-longdon)



» **BALUJI SHRIVASTAV**  
Indian Classical Interactions

The popular sitar player brings light into a selection of classical Indian music, alongside musicians including Ignacio Monteverde, Boo Boo Sianturi, Linda Shanson and his own Inner Vision Orchestra. [baluji.com](http://baluji.com)



» **PETE THOMS & MICHO**  
Latin Waves

Delivering the many flavours of Latin American music, this ranges from highly danceable tunes like *Playa Marino* and *Cumbia Cucatah* to the laid back easy listening grooves of *Aruba* and *Caracas By Night*. Lovely stuff. [tinyurl.com/thoms-micho](http://tinyurl.com/thoms-micho)

## classical



» **JACOB HERINGMAN**  
Inviolata

One of the world's most respected lutenists, Jacob intabulates the work of renaissance composers, as well as presenting some of his own work in gentle and compelling arrangements. [heringman.com](http://heringman.com)



» **STEPHEN FARR**  
Organ Works

Critically acclaimed player Farr presents the complete organ works of Scottish composer James MacMillan, all played on the Rieger Organ of St Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh, in this dynamic collection of solo work. [stephenfarr.co.uk](http://stephenfarr.co.uk)



» **BOXWOOD & BRASS**  
Beethoven Transformed Vol. 2

The period wind ensemble return to recording with a second collection of the great composer's work, with excerpts from *Egmont*, *Sonata Pathétique* and *Symphony No.7*. [boxwoodandbrass.co.uk](http://boxwoodandbrass.co.uk)

## singer-songwriter



» **DAVID OKANGBA**  
Social Refugee

An ambitious double-disc debut takes us on an autobiographical journey through David's experience of living on the streets in what he subtitles the 'Soundtrack To My Life'. His warm but fragile voice draws you into the rich pathos of his tempestuous tale. [davidokangba.socialrefugee.com](http://davidokangba.socialrefugee.com)



» **TIM HOLEHOUSE**  
Come

Adding a more folksy edge to his usual bluesy style, Tim weaves deeply personal yarns around his twinkling guitar sound, aided variously by a small string section and some very roomy drums. Laid back and thoughtful songs aplenty. [timholehouse.com](http://timholehouse.com)



» **KATY ROSE BENNETT**  
Where Does It Hurt?

A greatest hits of sorts, featuring eight of the best songs from Katy's back catalogue and two new works. The sparse and delicate title track and the jauntily optimistic opener *One Day* are among the many highlights here. [katyrosebennett.com](http://katyrosebennett.com)

## pop



» **NATASHA AWUKU**  
Flowers

The cool and summery sounds of new British soul betray a bittersweet mood, as Natasha commemorates the passing of her mother, drawing an analogy to the briefness of life. [natasha-awuku.com](http://natasha-awuku.com)



» **KIOKO**  
Queen Of The Dancefloor

This fast-rising Birmingham reggae outfit blend the styles between sweet lovers rock and stompy ragga on this bouncy funtime party classic to be. [primarytalent.com/kioko](http://primarytalent.com/kioko)



» **CALUM BAIRD**  
A View From The Notebooks

The Scottish singer-songwriter delivers a slew of highly bankable folk pop numbers in his strong vocal tones. An EP that is dripping with potential hit songs. [calumbaird.com](http://calumbaird.com)



# Delegate Conference 2021

Members are invited to submit Motions to the Union's policy-making biennial event, being held online for the first time

**In view of the circumstances resulting from the Covid-19 outbreak, the Union's Executive Committee has agreed to hold next year's Biennial Delegate Conference online. The structure and format will remain in keeping with the previous event that proved so successful in 2019. The Conference is currently scheduled for the mornings of Tuesday 20 and Wednesday 21 July 2021.**

Please be aware that while the Union has every intention of fulfilling the schedule and format outlined below, arrangements may be subject to changes due to government announcements.

## Programme

The Delegate Conference will continue to consider the Conference Report, motions and rule changes. It will maintain the traditional and essential format, communication and reporting between the Executive Committee and the membership via the delegates.

Depending on the motions to be considered by Conference, online presentations by Officials might be made on particular issues. Any external speakers will be invited to contribute remotely.

## Conference Report

The Conference Report will build upon the concise document that proved popular at the previous Conference and this will continue to report on activities over the previous two years, but will exclude lengthy detail on (for example) pay rates, which will once again be made available on the MU website.

The structure of the Report will match that of the Executive Committee agenda and be based on the MU's organisational structure.

This approach will once again demonstrate closer links between governance and reporting to members.

Questions from delegates on the various sections will be taken on a section-by-section basis, in line with traditional arrangements. The Report, along with all other Conference documents, will be made available to attendees in digital format as soon as possible prior to the event.

## Conference Motions

The timetable for the submission and moderation of motions is unchanged. Motions will be contained in a separate section within the Report. Each will be allocated to a section and numbered accordingly. Delegates will consider each motion at the conclusion of questions on the section to which it has been allocated.

## Rule Changes

Proposals for Rule changes will be contained in a separate section of the Conference Report. Delegates will consider rule changes sequentially as a separate item on the Conference programme.

## Standing Orders Committee

The activities of the Standing Orders Committee continue unchanged.

## Nominations

Nominations for delegates will be called in Spring 2021 in order to reduce as far as possible the number of delegates who drop out, and to allow potential delegates to view the motions before the nominations process begins.



The 2019 event was split into both Delegate and Members' Conferences. Here, General Secretary Horace Trubridge addresses the Members day

## Submitting Motions For Conference

Members are invited to put forward motions, for consideration by Conference, via their Regional Committee at their Regional meetings to take place online in January 2021. Details of how to attend the January meetings online will be emailed to Regional Committee members in due course.

Each Region is entitled to propose one conference motion for every 750 members in the Region at 31 December 2020. This is subject to a minimum of three and a maximum of fourteen motions per Region. Please note that Retired (Free) members are not eligible to submit motions.

Conference motions must be supported by five fully paid up members of the Region and should address matters of Union policy at a national level.

Motions must be submitted in writing with the names and membership numbers of the supporting members of the Region attached.

The Regional Committee will determine which motions are to be submitted for inclusion on the Conference Agenda.

## MU Members' Conference 2019

24 July, Brighton



Photo: Joanna Dudderidge © Musicians' Union

No member may move or support more than two motions. Motions may be submitted via email. Acknowledgement of receipt will be provided on request.

**Motions should be sent to your Regional Office as set out below. The dates and times of the meetings will be available on the MU website in the New Year.**

### Scotland & Northern Ireland Region

The Acting Regional Organiser, Musicians' Union, 2 Woodside Place, Glasgow G3 7QF, to be received by no later than midday on 15 January 2021.

Email: [barry.dallman@theMU.org](mailto:barry.dallman@theMU.org)

### North of England Region

The Regional Organiser, Musicians' Union, 61 Bloom Street, Manchester M1 3LY, to be received by no later than midday on 15 January 2021.

Email: [matt.wanstall@theMU.org](mailto:matt.wanstall@theMU.org)

### Midlands Region

The Regional Organiser, Musicians' Union, 2 Sovereign Court, Graham Street,

Birmingham B1 3JR, to be received by no later than midday on 15 January 2021.

Email: [stephen.brown@theMU.org](mailto:stephen.brown@theMU.org)

### East & South East England Region

The Regional Organiser, Musicians' Union, 1a Fentiman Road, London SW8 1LD, to be received by no later than midday on 22 January 2021.

Email: [paul.burrows@theMU.org](mailto:paul.burrows@theMU.org)

### Wales & South West England Region

The Regional Organiser, Musicians' Union, Transport House, 1 Cathedral Road, Cardiff CF11 9SD, to be received by no later than midday on 21 January 2021.

Email: [andrew.warnock@theMU.org](mailto:andrew.warnock@theMU.org)

### London Region

The Regional Organiser, Musicians' Union, 33 Palfrey Place, London SW8 1PE, to be received by no later than midday on 19 January 2021. Email: [jamie.pullman@theMU.org](mailto:jamie.pullman@theMU.org)


For full details of submitting a motion to a Regional Committee, please refer to Rule VI in your 2020/2021 MU Members' Handbook.

## Members' Conference

Following the inaugural Members' Conference in 2019, which was warmly welcomed by all those in attendance, the Executive Committee has agreed to a second Members' Conference. This is intended to give all members an opportunity to contribute towards the development of policy and strategy on current and anticipated music industry issues.

This is less formal than the Delegate Conference, with a programme incorporating a range of breakout sessions. Topics will be selected for these sessions, with attendees choosing which to attend. The sessions will be led by National Organisers, alongside Executive Committee members, and will be based around the National Organisers' remits.

Attendees will be invited to select their preferred sessions to attend when joining, although some adjustment might be needed to ensure a reasonable spread across the sessions. The outcome will be a series of reports from each session, which will identify issues and recommend actions for the Executive Committee to address.

The Members' Conference is also likely to be held online, and invitations to apply for places will be distributed in due course. Please be aware that no date has been set for this Conference just yet, and members are encouraged to keep a watchful eye on member emails and the website for details when they are confirmed by the Executive Committee. 

*This information is also available at [theMU.org](http://theMU.org)*

*A large print version of this information is available on request from your Regional Office.*



# Musicians' Union Election Results Independent Scrutineer's Report

This report is issued in accordance with the Trades Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 as amended.

## Executive Committee Elections

### Scotland & Northern Ireland

Result of ballot of members (1 to be elected)

<b>Diljeet Bhachu</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>Elected</b>
Matthew Whiteside	134	
Spoilt ballot papers	4	
Spoilt ballot papers (no vote)	36	
Total ballot papers received	358	14%
Total ballot papers dispatched	2557	

### North of England

(1 to be elected)

**Eileen Spencer** **Elected Unopposed**

In accordance with Section 53 and MU Rules, 'Nothing in this Chapter shall be taken to require a ballot to be held at an uncontested election'. The number of members nominated in the election for the North of England Region does not exceed the number to be elected, and a ballot is therefore not required.

### Midlands

Result of ballot of members (1 to be elected)

Peter Hartley	144	
<b>Millicent Stephenson</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>Elected</b>
Spoilt ballot papers	1	
Total ballot papers received	381	13%
Total ballot papers dispatched	2855	

### East & SE England

Result of ballot of members (2 to be elected)

Julian Field	252	
<b>Xenia Horne</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>Elected</b>
<b>Richard Lightman</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>Elected</b>
Spoilt ballot papers	4	
Total ballot papers received	663	11%
Total ballot papers dispatched	6121	

### Wales & SW England

Result of ballot of members (1 to be elected)

Tracey Kelly	176	
<b>Rachael Parvin</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>Elected</b>
Spoilt ballot papers	2	
Total ballot papers received	433	12%
Total ballot papers dispatched	3492	

### London

Result of ballot of members (4 to be elected)

<b>Stephen Done</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>Elected</b>
Michael Horne	288	
<b>David Lee</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>Elected</b>
Maxim Rowlands	357	
<b>James Topp</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>Elected</b>
<b>Sarah Williams</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>Elected</b>

Spoilt ballot papers (no vote)	19	
Total ballot papers received	953	10%
Total ballot papers dispatched	9191	

I am satisfied that there are no reasonable grounds for believing that there was any contravention of a requirement imposed by or under any enactment in relation to the election.

I am satisfied that the arrangements made with respect to the production, storage, distribution, return or other handling of the voting papers used in the election, and the arrangements for the counting of the votes, included all such security arrangements as were reasonably practicable for the purpose of minimising the risk that any unfairness or malpractice might occur.

I have been able to carry out my functions without such interference as would make it reasonable for any person to call my independence in relation to the union into question.

I have inspected the register of members and no matters were revealed which should be drawn to the attention of the union in order to assist it in securing that the register is accurate and up to date. I was not requested by any member or candidate to inspect or examine a copy of the membership register.

The MU did not appoint an Independent Person under Section 51A of the Act.

**Anne Hock**  
**Managing Director, Popularis Ltd**  
**9 November 2020**

Any member of the Musicians' Union requiring a copy of the Scrutineer's Report should write to Naomi Pohl, Musicians' Union, 60-62 Clapham Road, London SW9 0JJ with such a request enclosing a suitable SAE.

# 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*.

## MU Sections

To join, contact the relevant MU Official.

### Live Performance Section

Dave Webster  
National Organiser  
Live Performance  
60–62 Clapham Road  
London SW9 0JJ  
T 020 7840 5512  
E [live@theMU.org](mailto:live@theMU.org)

### Music Writers' Section

Kelly Wood  
Live & Music Writers' Official  
60–62 Clapham Road  
London SW9 0JJ  
T 020 7582 5566  
E [writers@theMU.org](mailto:writers@theMU.org)

### Orchestra Section

Jo Lavery  
National Organiser  
Orchestras  
60–62 Clapham Road  
London SW9 0JJ  
T 020 7840 5571  
E [orchestral@theMU.org](mailto:orchestral@theMU.org)

### Recording & Broadcasting Section

Geoff Ellerby  
National Organiser  
Recording & Broadcasting  
60–62 Clapham Road  
London SW9 0JJ  
T 020 7840 5555  
E [rb@theMU.org](mailto:rb@theMU.org)

### Education Section

Chris Walters  
National Organiser  
Education, Health & Wellbeing  
60–62 Clapham Road  
London SW9 0JJ  
T 020 7840 5558  
E [teachers@theMU.org](mailto:teachers@theMU.org)

### Theatre Section

Dave Webster  
National Organiser  
Live Performance  
60–62 Clapham Road  
London SW9 0JJ  
T 020 7840 5512  
E [theatre@theMU.org](mailto:theatre@theMU.org)



**Are you due a royalty payment from the Musicians' Union for the use of any of your recordings in television programmes, films or adverts? Are you the next of kin of a musician who used to receive royalties from us?**

The Musicians' Union pays royalties to a growing number of musicians for the secondary exploitation of their recordings. In most cases we know which musicians performed on the recording and already have their contact and payment details, so the royalty income can be distributed straight away. However, there is a certain amount of income we have collected that we cannot distribute as we have not been able to identify who

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.

**[theMU.org/Home/Advice/Recording-Broadcasting/Royalties](https://theMU.org/Home/Advice/Recording-Broadcasting/Royalties)**

