

A man with a beard and short dark hair is singing passionately into a black microphone. He is wearing a blue and white graphic t-shirt with yellow and orange accents, a gold chain, a black watch, and blue wristbands. He is surrounded by a dense array of large, red-lit speakers, creating a vibrant, high-energy background.

The Musician

Journal of the Musicians' Union
Spring 2022
theMU.org

Shao Dow

Cover star: Multi talented rapper and thriving independent artist

ABO Conference

Report from the Association of British Orchestras' annual event

Music Teaching Tips

Advice on boosting your business as a self employed music teacher

contacts

Union HQ

General Secretary
Horace Trubridge

Deputy General Secretary
Naomi Pohl

Assistant General Secretary
Phil Kear

National Organiser
Jo Lavery (*Orchestras*)

National Organiser
Chris Walters
(*Education, Health & Wellbeing*)

National Organiser
Geoff Ellerby (*Recording & Broadcasting*)

National Organiser
Dave Webster (*Live Performance*)

Head of Communications
& Government Relations
Isabelle Gutierrez

Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
John Shortell

Head of Finance
Beverley Dawes

Head of Membership
Wasim Yunus

In-House Solicitor
Dawn Rodger

Orchestras Official
Morris Stemp

PR & Marketing Official
Keith Ames

Campaigns & Social Media Official
Maddy Radcliff

Digital Development Official
Katerina Baranova

Live & Music Writers' Official
Kelly Wood

Sessions Official
Sam Jordan

Recording & Broadcasting Official
Michael Sweeney

Royalties Official
Jessica Craig

Education Official
David Barnard

Regional Offices

London

Regional Organiser: Jamie Pullman
30 Snowsfields, London SE1 3SU
T 020 7840 5504
E london@theMU.org

East & South East England

Regional Organiser: Paul Burrows
30 Snowsfields, London SE1 3SU
T 020 7840 5537
E eastsoutheast@theMU.org

Midlands

Regional Organiser: Stephen Brown
2 Sovereign Court, Graham Street,
Birmingham B1 3JR
T 0121 236 4028
E midlands@theMU.org

Wales & South West England

Regional Organiser: Andy Warnock
Transport House, 1 Cathedral Rd,
Cardiff CF11 9SD
T 029 2045 6585
E cardiff@theMU.org

North of England

Regional Organiser: Matt Wanstall
61 Bloom Street, Manchester M1 3LY
T 0161 236 1764
E manchester@theMU.org

Scotland & Northern Ireland

Regional Organiser: Caroline Sewell
2 Woodside Place, Glasgow G3 7QF
T 0141 341 2960
E glasgow@theMU.org

Union HQ

30 Snowsfields
London SE1 3SU

T 020 7582 5570
E info@theMU.org

w theMU.org
@WeAreTheMU

**Musicians'
Union**



Keep On Keeping On

Looking back on his 32 years of service with the MU, Horace Trubridge assesses what he's achieved in his time as General Secretary and the work there is still to do



Horace Trubridge,
General Secretary

Well, there it goes, 32 years in the blink of an eye. When I first started work for the MU back in 1990, there were no emails, we had PCs but they were black screens with green letters, and the world was a very simple place. Internet Service Providers, or ISPs, had only emerged the year before in Australia and the US, and Apple iTunes, Amazon, Spotify, Twitter, Facebook and all the other big providers were a very distant speck on the horizon. Work back then, however, was not so different from now for MU Officials – battling against bad employers, dishonourable engagers and misguided members was what kept us busy, much as it does now.

Talking of dishonourable engagers, I do hope that the early fruits of the campaigning that we embarked upon when I became GS, namely the Fix Streaming campaign, have not escaped your attention. First Sony and then Warner's announced that they were cancelling all unrecouped debt for artists and bands that had signed record deals prior to the year 2000. This means that many, many musicians will now receive royalties from their record label for the first time (ever?) in many, many years. This is as a direct result of the work that we have been doing to shine a spotlight on the unfairness of record contracts signed in an analogue age. What a fantastic result. A clear indication, if you needed one, of the power of your Union to bring about change for the betterment of musicians.

Fighting For Fair Play

The next phase of the campaign, which is well under way, is to ensure that non-featured artists (session musicians) receive income from the Digital Service Providers (DSPs) when their recorded performances are streamed. It makes sense when you think about it – the labels pay the musician for the session, radio and public premises pay the musician when they broadcast or use their recorded performances to enhance their business... the only people not paying the session musician for the use of their talent is the DSP. That has to change.

Also, for artists who signed deals post 2000, the pandemic has shown that if you take away the live work the artist has no income because they are unrecouped with their label. The phase of the campaign that we are currently working on is to ensure that a basic unrecoupable royalty is paid to the artists by the label from the very first stream. That way

we can hopefully stem the tide of talent leaving the profession simply because they can't afford to stay in.

I suppose out of all the things I promised in my election campaign, bringing fairness to the recorded music industry was the most ambitious, but I believe we have achieved a great deal in a relatively short period of time and when we secure the further steps outlined above, history will show that we brought fundamental change to the recorded music business in favour of the musicians whose talent the industry depends on.

I'm also proud of the other achievements during my time as GS. I promised to revolutionise Conference, demystify and take

"It's been an honour and a privilege to serve you, the membership"

the EC out to the regions, make the MU easier to join, grow the membership and strengthen our commitment to EDI issues. I delivered on all of these things.

See You On The Road

When you read this, you will have a new General Secretary, and I will be in my hand-over period. It's been an honour and a privilege to serve you, the membership, but most of all it's been a blast! I will see you folk at Watford Gap or Fleet services or any of the other gigster way stations over the coming months and years as I continue to play gigs with the band I have been in for 46 years. Till then, stay safe, be lucky and look after those chops.

So long and thanks for all the fish.

Horace Trubridge



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

Contents

Spring 2022

4

30

"I could really get inside a ballad, carry the story, tell the narrative in my language"

Iona Fyfe

Frontline

- 6 MU is deeply disheartened by new higher education reforms
- 7 New MU inclusive recruitment guidance for orchestras

Reports

- 3 MU General Secretary
- 10 Deputy General Secretary
- 16 Pros and cons of releasing your recorded music on vinyl
- 20 The MU's new Composers Against Buyouts campaign
- 22 News and views from the 2022 ABO Conference in Glasgow
- 26 Universal Basic Income: a pipe dream or a workable reality?
- 34 Tax Investigation Insurance
- 51 Tools Of The Trade: drummer and drum teacher John Park

Feature

- 52 Why I Joined The MU. Two members tell their stories

Advice

- 38 How music teachers can boost their businesses
- 42 TikTok: How musicians can make the most of this hugely popular video-sharing app

Your Voice

- 9 Interacting with MU members and supporters on Twitter

Profiles

- 12 Shao Dow: south London rapper and grime artist
- 30 Iona Fyfe: Scots traditional singer and stalwart activist

38

How freelance music teachers can boost business and create fresh income

Union Notices

- 2 Key contacts for the Musicians' Union
- 37 Statutory Notices
- 46 Focusing on the MU's free personal injury claim service
- 48 Tributes
- 53 Comprehensive list of MU member benefits

Photo: JGallone / Getty Images

MU Contributors



Andrew Stewart

Andrew writes for *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *Classical Music* and *BBC Music Magazine*, among many others. He is also Director of Southwark Voices. **p20**



Katie Nicholls

Katie is a freelance journalist and editor whose features and reviews have appeared in titles such as *Mojo*, *The Guardian* and *Kerrang!* **p12 & 51**



Mark Sutherland

Mark is a freelance writer and editor. A *Variety* columnist, he has also edited *Music Week* and written for *Rolling Stone*, *NME* and many more. **p20**



Michael Appouh

Michael is a freelance music and culture journalist. His reviews, features and interviews have appeared in *The Quietus* and *OkayAfrica*. **p12**



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*. **p42**



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. **p26**



Helena Ruinard

Helena is a violinist and teacher, currently working for In Harmony Opera North. She writes for publications such as *Music Teacher* and *Classical Music*. **p38**



Jude Rogers

Jude Rogers is a long-time arts and culture writer for *The Guardian* and *The Observer*. Her first book, *The Sound Of Being Human*, is published in April. **p30**

Photo: Joseph Branstion. © MU

Cover photo: Joseph Branstion. © Musicians' Union 2022. Taken at The Big Chill, Kings Cross, London.



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

frontline

Spring 2022

The MU in action, working on behalf of professional musicians

The Government's Higher Education Reforms Overlook Musicians In England

The MU is deeply disheartened by aspects of the government's latest higher education (HE) reforms announced in February. While most media coverage has focused on changes to student loan repayments, the government's announcement also contained funding information that could threaten the future status and viability of music and arts courses.

In 2021, funding for music and arts university courses was cut back despite a widespread outcry from the MU and the broader cultural sector. The government justified the cuts by claiming that the funding was needed for science subjects "that support the NHS".

Lack Of Funding

Now, a new £900m "strategic priorities" investment will be targeted mainly at the same subjects, which the government sees as "high return". There was no mention of investment in creative or arts subjects.

In a supposed drive to raise standards, the government is consulting on "controlling" student numbers in order to prioritise "high priority subject areas which are important to the economy". Given the government's failure to recognise the economic value of music and the arts, the Musicians' Union is concerned that courses in these subjects could be at risk. The MU is once again

The government reforms are prioritising science subjects over arts and music courses



Photo: FangXian / Getty Images

raising concerns about how these policies are excluding disadvantaged, disabled, and ethnic minority students from higher education arts courses.

Narrowing Access

Chris Walters, MU National Organiser, Education, Health and Wellbeing, said: "We must now redouble our efforts to challenge the government on its total disinterest in much of England's excellent music and arts HE training provision. In addition, minimum qualification requirements for student loans and changes to loan repayments are likely to have a significant adverse effect on both MU members and the professional musicians of the future. Once again we see the government closing the door to wider access rather than opening it."

"Once again we see the government closing the door to wider access rather than opening it"

The government has opened a consultation with a closing date of 6 May and the MU is encouraging members to submit their views. Visit tinyurl.com/themu-he to access the survey. Please note that these reforms and the government consultation apply to England only. The other UK nations set their own education policy.

2022 MU Executive Committee Line-Up

The first meeting of the Union's Executive Committee (EC) for 2022 – which is made up of elected members from the six MU regions and is our principal democratic body – took place in January. The Union is pleased to report that Alex Gascoine was elected to the role of Chair, while Rick Finlay, Andi Hopgood and Eileen Spencer were elected Vice Chairs.

The full line up for the year is: Diljeet Bhachu, Nigel Braithwaite, Steve Done, Sam Dunkley, Rick Finlay, Alex Gascoine, Andy Gleadhill, Andi Hopgood, Xenia Horne, Jacquelyn Hynes, Dave Lee, Richard Lightman, Anna Neale, Rachael Parvin, Robert Scott, Eileen Spencer, Millicent Stephenson, James Topp and Sarah Williams.

Members' Parental Grants Extended

Following a decision at the last MU Delegate Conference, the parental grants for Musicians' Union members are now being offered on a per-child basis in the case of multiple births or adoptions. The application process has also been amended so that it is gender-neutral for parents.

John Shortell, the MU's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Official, welcomed the decision: "It is really important that we offer grants to all MU members on an equal basis regardless of their gender or how they have their children," said John.

"We are also really pleased to offer additional financial support to musicians in the case of a multiple birth or adoptions. It can be difficult for self-employed parents taking time off work and meeting the costs of a new child, or children, so we hope this will go some way to help in those early days of parenthood."

For more info and to apply for a parental grant visit tinyurl.com/parentalgrants

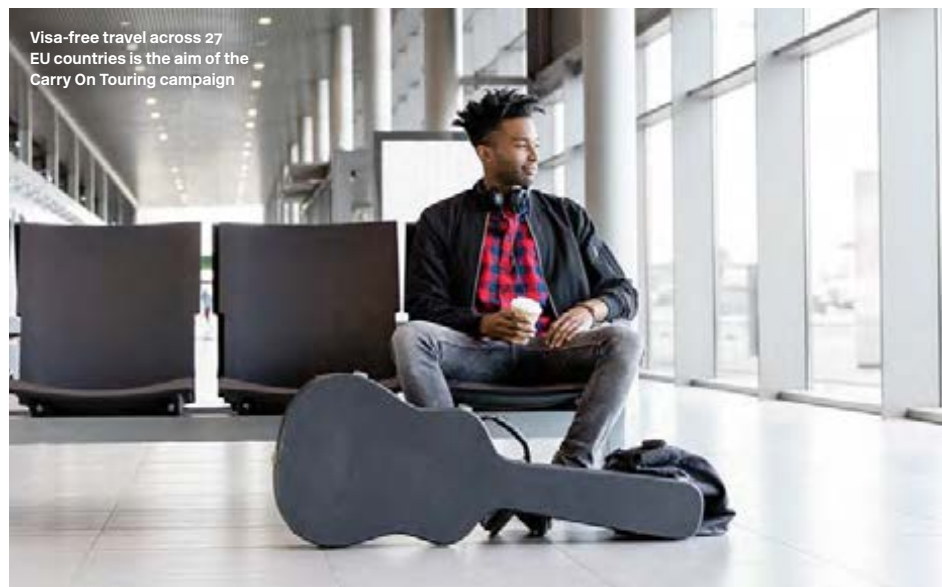


Photo: izusek / Getty Images

Boost For The Carry On Touring Campaign

The MU was delighted by the announcement in February that the Carry On Touring campaign had been nominated for the UK Parliament Petition Campaign of the Year Award. The campaign brings together a coalition of voices from across the touring, cultural and creative industries sectors, campaigning for a realistic solution for UK touring professionals and artists in the EU, following the UK's departure from the EU.

The Carry On Touring Campaign was set up by Tim Brennan, a video engineer with over 30 years' experience in the touring sector, and MU member Ian Smith. Its aim is to negotiate a free cultural work permit to provide visa-free travel across the 27

EU states for music touring professionals, bands, musicians, artists, TV and sports celebrities touring the EU to perform shows and events. The campaign also seeks carnet exception on touring equipment.

An Inclusive Campaign

The MU National Organiser for Live Performance, Dave Webster, who sits on the Carry On Touring advisory board, warmly welcomed the nomination. "This is a great boost for the campaign and a well-deserved accolade for Tim and Ian," said Dave. "Well done to Carry On Touring".

For more information on this campaign, please visit carryontouring.uk

Industry Stats

80%

The percentage of people who said their emotional wellbeing was helped by music during the pandemic.

Source IFPI 2021

32,133

The total Musicians' Union membership in January 2022. The first time for some years that membership has risen above 32,000.

18.4

The number of hours that people spend listening to music each week in the UK.

Source IFPI 2021

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



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

Important Union Information

Check your Membership Record

To benefit fully from MU communications, please ensure that the MU has your latest contact details by checking your membership records online at theMU.org

Members' Diary

Thank you to all members who advised the Union of their wish to continue receiving a Members' Diary. We introduced this approach in keeping with our policy of environmentally-friendly communications. We have retained the details of these members so that we can prepare to send them a copy of the 2023 diary in the autumn.

Submissions For Reviews Pages

Members may notice that there is no reviews section in this edition. This is only a temporary change and every endeavour will be made to include reviews of your work in the Summer edition.

To submit an album for consideration, please send links to your recordings and PR material to: TheMusician@theMU.org. Please also forward your cover artwork and photos (minimum 300dpi resolution) to keith.ames@theMU.org



Photo: Hybrid Images / Getty Images

Recruitment Advice For Orchestras

The MU Equalities team has put together [some new guidance](#) on how orchestras can set up an inclusive recruitment and audition process. This guidance also includes [sample diversity monitoring questions](#), which can be used to design your own diversity monitoring questionnaire.

Many orchestras are working to improve diversity within their organisations. Creating a transparent and fair recruitment process is one of the essential elements to building a more diverse workforce and creating an inclusive workplace.

If you would like any further information or advice, please email equalities@theMU.org

Discount On Music Teacher Organiser

Therapy? drummer Neil Cooper is offering a discount on his Music Tutor's Hero aid for music teachers to MU members.

The online organiser enables self-employed music teachers to deliver interactive lessons for pupils and parents while enhancing their teaching business. Take advantage of the 15% discount offer available to MU members.

Discount code: MU15%OFF. For more information visit musicutorshero.co.uk

New Publications From MU Members

Musical Journeys, Extraordinary Men In Conversation, is a new book by cellist and former EC member Hattie Bennett BEM, which recounts the stories of 18 respected male musicians. This new collection follows Hattie's earlier set of inspiring stories of female musicians, and both are obtainable from hattiebennett@hotmail.com

We also recommend *Pop Music, Education In The UK 1960 – 2020*, by long-standing MU member Norton York. This important publication has been published by RSL Awards Ltd and Hal Leonard Europe Ltd.

Dates For The Diary

19/20 Mar

What: World Against Racism
Where: As part of UN Anti-Racism Day, anti-racist marches will be held in Glasgow, Cardiff, London.
Info: tinyurl.com/2s4798me

22 Mar

What: MU – Employment Status for Musicians. How musicians can define their employment status.
Where: Online
Info: tinyurl.com/muemploy

12 Apr

What: Free Addiction and Recovery Workshop. An engaging session for those in musc/live industry.
Where: Online
Info: tinyurl.com/mpjk8jxj

12-14 Apr

What: MU – Three-day First Aid Course. Skills to become a confident first aider.
Where: Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff
Info: theMU.org.uk/events

18 Apr

What: MU – Guided Meditation. Delivered by Shukri Devi Ishaya for the wellbeing of musicians.
Where: Online
Info: theMU.org.uk/events

Your Voice

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

Where's The Support?

It's all very well supporting hospitality and leisure industries, but often those venues rely on freelancers for entertainment. Those freelancers are still without financial assistance, but are left without gigs and income.

Iona Fyfe @ionafyfe

Left Out Again

Why are musicians always the poor relation in these situations? Our opportunities have been decimated by recent government messaging and venue owners are reducing fees on the night because their bar is empty. We're backed into a corner.

Michelle Luscombe
@ShelleLuscombe

The Long Rebuild

Even when restrictions are lifted it is not a magic switch – people don't go back to pre-Covid usual habits. It is going to take years to rebuild what has been lost on all levels.

Kathryn Rowland
@Kathryn_Rowland

Difficult Times

Tonight I was lucky enough to be working in the West End, but many of my colleagues talked about how tearful they were



Photo: Dan Kitwood / Getty Images

feeling, and how stressful the current precariousness is.

Karen Anstee @kazanstee

Save Music Education

We believe it is the right of all children, regardless of background, ability or disability, to be able to participate in accessible and high-quality music education. Like the MU, we will advocate strongly against any suspension of music in schools.

Nordoff Robbins Music Therapy @nordoffrobbins

Valuable Lessons

After the turbulent 2.5 years for young people, I'm amazed that creative subjects are the first with suggested suspension, despite the arts being more

valuable than ever to help kids process a once in a lifetime event, re-connect with each other and have fun.

Hope Winter @hopemusicuk

NFT Exploitation

Always an honour to support the work of other musicians. Amongst other things today we spoke about the issue of NFT's and especially the appalling way artists are being exploited.

Robin Rimbaud – Scanner
@robinrimbaud

Welcome To The Chair

Very proud to have been elected vice chair of The MU executive committee this morning. And a first, two women VCs. Bring it on 2022!

Andi @AndiHoppy

THE TEAM

Editor Keith Ames (MU)
Consultant editor Neil Crossley
Art director Chris Stenner
Art assistant Joe Burt
Writers Michael Appouh, Neil Churchman, Neil Crossley, Roy Delaney, Helena Ruinard, Katie Nicholls, Jude Rogers, Will Simpson, Clive Somerville, Andrew Stewart, Mark Sutherland, Lois Wilson, Daniel Dylan Wray, Henry Yates

Production editor Roy Delaney
Client and culture director Charlie Scott
Head of marketing projects Chris Blake
Senior account executive Nina Collins
Editorial director Lee Hart
Repro Gary Stuckey
Printed at Precision Colour Printing
See p2 for the contact details of Musicians' Union offices.



All information contained in this journal is for informational purposes only and is, to the best of our knowledge, correct at the time of going to press. This journal is published by Future Publishing Limited on behalf of Musicians' Union. Neither Future Publishing Limited nor Musicians' Union accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies that occur in such information. Readers are advised to contact manufacturers and retailers direct with regard to the price of products/services in the journal. Publication of an advertisement does not imply any form of recommendation. Organisations offering financial services or insurance are governed by their relevant regulatory bodies and problems with such services should be taken up with those bodies. Neither Future Publishing Limited nor Musicians' Union accept any liability for the quality of goods and services offered in advertisements. We do our best to avoid inaccuracies, but if you believe that an error has been made, please contact the editor straight away before taking any other action and the Union will take appropriate steps. If you submit material to this journal, you automatically grant Future Publishing Limited and Musicians' Union a licence to publish your submissions in whole or in part in any edition of this journal that is published worldwide in any format or media throughout the world, and you grant Musicians' Union a licence to publish your submissions in whole or in part in any format or media for the purpose of promoting any products or services referred to in your submissions. Any material you submit is sent at your risk and neither Future Publishing Limited nor Musicians' Union nor their respective employees, agents or subcontractors shall be liable for any loss or damage. © Future Publishing Limited and Musicians' Union 2021. All rights reserved. No part of this journal may be used or reproduced without the written permission of Future Publishing Limited and Musicians' Union.



We are committed to only using magazine paper which is derived from responsibly managed, certified forestry and chlorine-free manufacture. The paper in this magazine was sourced and produced from sustainable managed forests, conforming to strict environmental and socioeconomic standards. The manufacturing paper mill and printer hold full FSC and PEFC certification and accreditation.

facebook.com/musicians.union

Follow us on Twitter @WeAreTheMU

Follow us on Instagram @WeAreTheMU

soundcloud.com/musicians-union

Find us at theMU.org

Email us TheMusician@TheMU.org

Defending The BBC

Naomi Pohl urges members to get behind a campaign to reverse the government's plans to end the BBC licence fee, which could have dire consequences for musicians, music fans and our culture as a whole



In January, the Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries announced that the BBC licence fee would be frozen until 2024 and could be abolished in 2027. For musicians, the entertainment unions and the wider music industry, this was chilling news. The BBC is the biggest employer and engager of musicians in the UK – it issues tens of thousands of contracts annually and its output is unique.

The time has come once again for us to lobby and campaign to maintain the BBC in its current form. Future funding models mooted include a subscription model, part-privatisation or direct government funding. However, while the BBC has increased its commercial activity significantly over the past 20 years, there is so much it does that isn't driven by commercial interest and which could wither on the vine if its funding is less secure.

We've seen this in other areas of the industry. When funding becomes insecure and an organisation has to develop a more commercial model then some of its most culturally valuable work is shelved. An organisation can lose what makes it truly unique. I have seen this happen many times and I know MU members have.

What Has The BBC Done For Us?

Let's just indulge for a moment in the wonder of the BBC – a broadcaster that is envied around the globe. BBC News, Sport, CBBC and CBeebies, the World Service broadcast in over

40 languages, national and local TV and radio, iPlayer, the best live music broadcasting in the UK, the BBC archive, BBC Parliament and BBC Education. It makes accessible content for viewers and listeners with disabilities in a way that no other broadcaster does. There's the BBC Asian Network. Radio in the Welsh language and Gaelic.

For musicians, the fact that the BBC has five orchestras and the BBC Singers makes it entirely unique and irreplaceable. Not to mention Jools Holland, *Strictly Come Dancing*, Radio 1, 2, 3, 6Music, 1Xtra, the Proms, BBC introducing, and its live coverage of Glastonbury.

Campaign For The BBC

So what can we do to campaign? Members may remember the threat to BBC 6 Music and the Asian Network in 2010, which resulted in public protests. The MU was involved in a cross-industry campaign and worked with Equity, the Writers' Guild and BECTU in coordinated action.

There were more than 2,500 complaints within the first week of leaked news about the plans to close the services, there were two major public protests, an early day motion to Parliament and the MU held a lobbying event in conjunction with UK Music and the other unions.

During the BBC's charter renewal process in 2015, the music industry came together once again with the Let It Beeb campaign. When the campaign was launched, the then CEO of UK Music Jo Dipple said: "Music services MUST be maintained. Without these services there would be far reaching cultural and economic implications for the UK. Music plays an integral part in all our lives, both professionally and personally. It is impossible to imagine anyone in this country not connected with music in some way through the BBC. Peel Sessions,

"When funding becomes insecure and an organisation has to develop a more commercial model then some of its most culturally valuable work is shelved"

Left: Maisie Peters performs a surprise set on the BBC Music Introducing stage during Reading Festival 2021. Below: The BBC is an organisation envied around the globe



Photos: Joanna Dudderidge. © MU, Joseph Olpakko / Getty Images, Leon Neal / Getty Images

Top Of The Pops, *The Official Charts*, *Live Lounge*, *Desert Island Discs*, *The Proms*, *Essential Mix*, Glastonbury coverage and *Later... with Jools Holland*, just a few of the ways that the BBC has helped define music in our lifetimes. The BBC's activity impacts on every musician and every music business professional.

"It employs our songwriters, artists and composers to help bring its programmes to life. It uses music as a key narrative tool for iconic shows as diverse as *Doctor Who*, *Match Of The Day*, *Planet Earth* or *EastEnders*. It supports many of the UK's musicians, orchestras and performers and also showcases the power of live music through its coverage of the Proms, Glastonbury, sessions and other live events.


"BBC Introducing has created a platform for grassroots local music to reach the masses, which for many artists can provide a vital first step onto the ladder. It is vital that the BBC continues to give its audience direct choice and access to a unique diversity of music, songs and performances to match their own personal inclination, whether that is pop, rock, jazz, blues, classical, grime or techno."

A key part of the Let It Beeb campaign was the involvement of musicians and music fans who shared their own experiences of the BBC and how it had positively impacted them in their lives and benefitted their work. The time has come to fight for the BBC's future once again and we will need your involvement.

Get Involved

This is a fight to maintain work and opportunities for musicians, to uphold British culture, and to protect the diversity



of the BBC's output, which is unmatched by any commercial service. As Horace Trubridge put it when Dorries made her announcement: "Freezing the licence fee is a drop in the ocean in terms of tackling the cost of the living crisis and will directly harm job opportunities. It might be better for the government to focus on the real problem, which is spiralling home energy bills." 

Read the [Union's response to the Secretary of State's initial announcement](#), and look out for more from the MU on the BBC in the coming months.

Out of the *Shao Dow*

Multi-talented rapper, hip-hop and grime artist Shao Dow is an expert on how to thrive and prosper, so *The Musician* took a trip to South London to discover a few of his secrets

Profile by Michael Appouh and Katie Nicholls

Musician, manga author and “part-time ninja”, Shao Dow is the very definition of an artist who has more than one string to his bow. As an independent artist he also works without the support of a label and takes the reins of all of his promotion, art and social media. His mantra, “If creativity is your business your business needs to be creative” has seen him emerge from lockdown all guns blazing with a new website, new language skills, and working on a soundtrack for an animated series on Channel 4.

Born in south London, Shao Dow (birth name Elliot Haslam) was raised against the background of the emerging UK rap scene, but it was a trip to New York when he was 11 that introduced him to the manga series *Dragon Ball*, triggering a lifelong passion for martial arts. This took him to China where he trained in Shaolin Kung Fu, and where, he says, he started “developing my ability to rap”. He’s since opened for KRS-One, Stormzy and Skepta. You won’t be surprised then, to read that he won the AIM award for Hardest Working Artist in 2017, yet he still finds space to speak out in support of musicians and artists, arguing for better streaming rights at the DCMS Select Committee investigation into streaming and in Parliament in late 2021 in support of grassroots venues. *The Musician* grabbed some time with Shao Dow to find out what motivates this busy artist.

How was it growing up in south-east London at the heart of the growth of the grime scene and UK rap? “Musically, the first pop album I really got into was Ludacris’s *Word of Mouf* (2001). That was me driving around south-east London with speakers in the back of my 1986 Volkswagen Polo, blaring out loud and loving the word play. Then I heard So Solid Crew, who gave legitimacy to rapping in your own accent. A lot of

the UK guys were coming out with American accents and it always sounded a bit mad to me. So Solid Crew really opened my eyes and I liked the whole image. But a major reason I started rapping in the first place was because I didn’t feel like I was hearing anything that represented me or my interests. Then I heard Tech N9ne and that sent me on a different path because it legitimised being independent and what you can do off your own back without a label. I listened to him for the longest time, so getting to feature on his album last year was crazy. He’s been a massive inspiration to me.”

So how did you find your own identity as a rapper and the fusion of rap, anime and martial arts? “I felt that being involved in grime you could speak on certain subjects, and while I always approached it in my own way, I never really lent fully into the nerdier aspects of what I’m all about until I released *Nani* (2020), which is a fusion of English and Japanese. People really gravitated towards it and I thought, ‘This is something that I don’t see anybody else doing’. I like to think of my story in anime or manga terms. I’ve got my own manga series, so fusing this all together makes sense for me. And as soon as I started doing that, the fanbase just started growing.

“When people ask ‘What’s your job?’ And I say ‘I’m a rapper’. They’re like ‘Really!?’ It’s good because I’m doing things differently, but it just goes to show what ➔

“I didn’t feel like I was hearing anything that represented me or my interests”



the stereotype of a rapper is. It's never been that for me, but feeling comfortable with what I am has taken a lot longer. There is, and was, a lot of black people who are into anime and manga, but it wasn't the sort of thing that you openly admitted. There's a lot of fully nerdy black people! I'm at the stage in my life, in my career where I know what I can do. I don't need permission or reassurance."

How important is it for you to have message behind your music?

"I'm all about making something that speaks to somebody. There's a lot of young people like me, no matter the colour of their skin, who feel lost. Being able to say, 'Well, look, this is what I've done, and this is how I've done it, and this is the journey that I've been on' can hopefully save some people a bit of heartache. Whether you hear that in the music or read that in the manga or see it as a result of following the journey I've been on, I would like to hope that there are people who feel inspired by that. I've met fans who have said that my music has helped them through some of the hardest times in their life. And for me, that is more of a reason for me to make music than anything else."

How much has your strong mental attitude contributed to your success?

"The discipline, the determination, the tenacity, all of that, comes from martial arts. And I think that mentality is entirely necessary for the music industry. There's a lot of young people who expect that this is just going to happen overnight. TikTok and the streaming platforms have a lot to answer for... you can have a hot ten seconds and the rest could be trash, you know? But if you've got a TikTok dance out of it, then you're good. More power to people who can do that because some people can't even come up with a hot ten seconds! For me, I'm old school."

As someone who's in control of many aspects of their career, how important do you feel it is for artists to have independence and an understanding of the music industry?

"Well, I never felt like a record label would understand me. I felt like if I signed to a label at the time I was coming up, they would want me to go down either a UK hip-hop or grime direction. I guess a lack of industry support almost forced my hand into thinking, 'Well, I'm just going to do it myself'. So I started travelling around the UK with a bag full of albums, selling them out of my backpack. I got very good at knowing how to promote

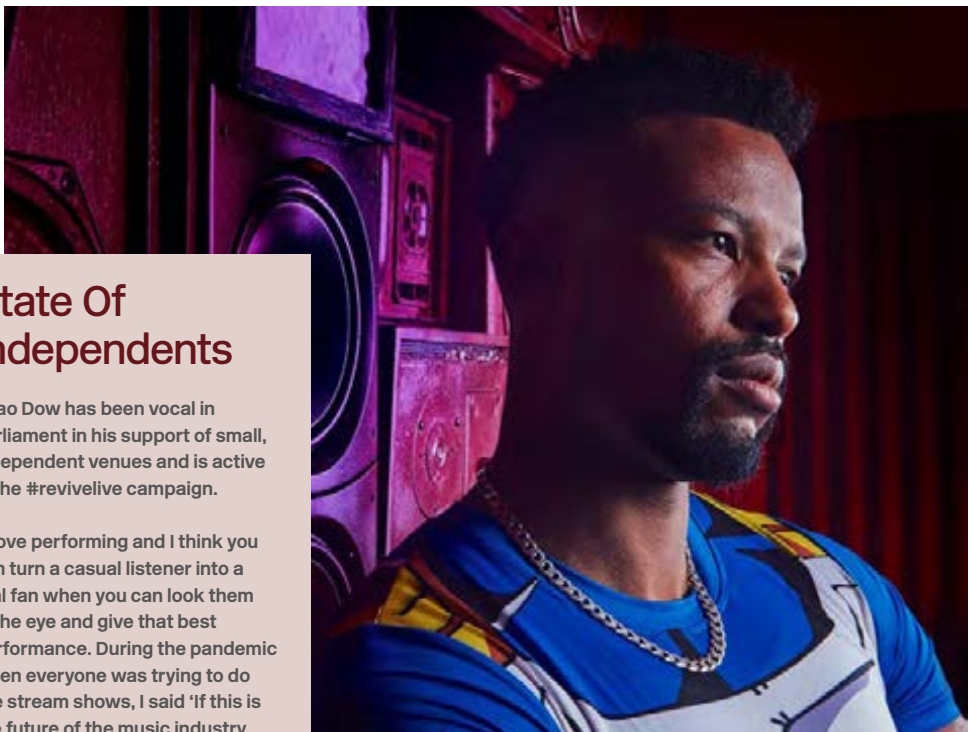
State Of Independents

Shao Dow has been vocal in Parliament in his support of small, independent venues and is active in the #revivethe campaign.

"I love performing and I think you can turn a casual listener into a real fan when you can look them in the eye and give that best performance. During the pandemic when everyone was trying to do live stream shows, I said 'If this is the future of the music industry I'm out!'. I need to hear and feel the crowd. Getting involved with the Music Venue Trust's Revive Live campaign and directly supporting grassroots music venues makes sense for me.

"One thing I said on the Parliamentary panel was that a lot more of these venues need the permission to be 14-plus to introduce young people to music early on. Let them come into these venues, let them learn how to act responsibly in certain scenarios. Let them fall in love with new music. Let them be the first to discover the smaller artists and be a part of that fanbase.

"These venues are so important, not just from a musical aspect, but from a cultural and a community aspect. They need to be protected in the same way that the Royal Opera House is protected. I think there is a lack of respect for certain types of music in this country. In America, it's different because that's the home of hip-hop, but we are the home of grime."



Live music is pivotal to Shao Dow's work, and he will soon be back on stage performing



Photo: Hot Box. Illustrations on previous pages: Tetiana Lazunova / Getty Images, morita kenjiro / Getty Images

"I don't really consider myself to be political. I just give a damn about the industry that facilitates the art that I love"



Shao Dow is one of the artists actively involved in the #fixstreaming campaign

All photos apart from where noted: Joseph Branstetter. © MU. Taken at the Big Chill, London.

my music and how to make money from what I do. I realised you can just circumvent the whole label thing and go directly to the man. And that's been my ethos since. What I do has barely anything to do with being a rapper: building websites, designing artwork, making music videos, SEO, PR, marketing... I think it's necessary in this day and age. I enjoy it."

You've become quite involved with the politics of the music industry...

"I don't really consider myself to be political. I just give a damn about the industry that facilitates the art that I love. I can't operate without the music industry, therefore I have to care. I have to know what's going on with it because it directly affects my ability to not only make music, but to make a living from music. I also really care about the young artists. What do young artists do now? How can they survive? How can they grow? I feel like a lot of the music industry is set up to support and enable everybody except the people making music. But the music industry doesn't exist without the people making music. The amount of music industry events that I've been to where I'm one of the only artists on the panel.

"We need to fix it from the top down in order for it to get better for the grassroots artists. Simple stuff, like how much you get paid from streaming, how much you get paid from shows and selling merchandise. There's a lot of people in the music industry who feel that they're entitled to the fruits of an artist's hard work. They're not there during the 10,000 hours when you're perfecting your craft and putting the blood, sweat and tears into what you do and building that fan base. But they're there when the money's rolling in."

What affect do you think streaming and social media has had on music?

"Due to the transitory nature of platforms like TikTok, it makes music a bit throwaway. I'm showing my age now, but I remember when an album was coming out and you'd be like, 'Oh, I can't wait to hear this album'. It comes out and you listen to it. And then you listen to it again. And again, because you're gonna get your money's worth. I make an album in a particular way with the intention of it being listened to from start to finish. It does make me question whether these streaming services are about music as an experience, or as a means to make money. If you look at the way that the

key content providers are treated, you really have to question: 'Do you love this? And are you about progressing it?'"

What are your plans for 2022?

"I'd like to say that it's back to business now that Covid is over, but to be honest, business never stopped. I just had to find new ways to survive and thrive whilst the apocalypse was raging on outside. It's not been easy, but when has my career trajectory ever been 'easy'? So yes, definitely I'll be performing back on a stage near you soon. I'm due to be performing at Comic Con later this year too. You can also look forward to new episodes of *One Jump Man vs Shaggy Ball Z*, the animated series collaboration between myself and Mashed. I'm working on a new EP as well as Part 2 of *The Way of Shao Manga* AND I'm taking Japanese classes at a university. Oh and I'll also be continuing to stream *Smash Bros* on my Twitch channel, so if you want to get whooped, come join!" 

To find out more about Shao Dow please visit diygang.co.uk

The Pros And Cons Of Vinyl

Releasing your music on vinyl is becoming more popular year on year. But is it worth the long delays at the presses in order to get your records made?

Report by Daniel Dylan Wray

As 2021 came to a close, a now familiar news story began to circulate. Vinyl sales, according to BPI findings, are on the up again – with 2021 sales reaching five million, eight per cent up on 2020, and marking 14 years of consecutive growth. But while this has broadly been treated as positive news over the years, symbolising not so much just a fad resurgence but the continued growth of a treasured physical format, it also came with its own downsides this time around.

Demand for vinyl is so significant that there are huge backlogs at pressing plants, which can't keep up with orders. Some people are suggesting that behemoth major label artists such as Adele (who pressed half a million records) are having a negative knock-on effect on artists and independent labels who are planning their own presses and album campaigns. With ongoing price rises for production and postage costs post-Brexit, this adds further difficulties when navigating pressing records.

So, moving into 2022, with the appetite for vinyl seemingly at an all time high, while the practicalities of the process are at their most challenging, what appeal does vinyl hold for artists currently? "There's something so cool about having a physical version of your

"We had one release that took 11 months to press up"

Chris Tipton

The Musician • Spring 2022



Photo: Joe Singh

Deerhoof: one of the bands signed to the Upset The Rhythm indie label

music," says Charlie Wayne of the [Mercury Music Prize nominated outfit Black Country, New Road](#). "We just got copies of the record for the first time and it's such a cool thing. It's definitely an easy way of seeing all the hard work of everyone involved writ large. With the vinyl, you're not just listening to the music – you get to properly see the artwork, feel the weight of the LP and just get a scope of how many moving parts have gone into making the thing that you're listening to."

Price Rise

Chris Tipton has been running the independent [record label Upset The Rhythm](#) for almost 20 years, releasing artists such as Deerhoof, Future Islands, Trash Kit and Xiu Xiu, and says the last year or so has been

a difficult period. "Since Covid, prices have gone up around 20%," he says. "However, we've been luckier than a lot of labels as we still managed to release nine releases in 2021. But it has been hard – we had one release that took 11 months to press up, which is hard to conceive in terms of frustrating delays, especially for the artist, and the impact on sales when the physical release date is so distant from all the press and radio that ran in support of the album."

Planning the lead time of your album campaign around these delays has become





Karl Shale with a vinyl copy of the *McCartney III* album at the Sounds of Universe record store in Soho, London

Photo: Tolga Akmen / AFP / Getty Images

imperative for artists, so establishing contact and obtaining a confirmed timeline from the pressing plant up front is vital. However, Tipton believes that things are getting back on track. "I think we're through the worst of the pressing delays now," he says. "Lead times have returned to three to four months for us."

The Love Of Vinyl

Despite it being a tricky period, vinyl is still the format that artists, and the labels, want to make. For UTR's artists, it's not necessarily about being an audiophile, but being part of something. "I think it's more about feeling part of a cultural continuity with artists that have gone before them," says Tipton. "Vinyl has long been indelibly linked to underground music, so to have your music legitimised with a tangible, iconic format like vinyl is a very potent source of inspiration for many. I think the drive behind sales is more linked to serious, deeper listening and people wanting to experience the ritual of listening to music as

many generations have done previously: a link through time, an echo of authenticity."

Holly Ross, of the two-piece [psychedelic punk rock outfit The Lovely Eggs](#), has been self-financing and self-releasing records on the band's own label, Egg Records for many years. Similarly for her, producing vinyl independently is connected to the spirit of what the band do. "We're not running a business," she says. "The essence of why I do it, because it's a hell of a lot of hard work, is just the freedom that it allows you," she says. "That you've not got to turn up to anyone's office or you're not being told by a label what to do, whether they like that song, what artwork you can put where. There's no pressure, it's just complete freedom. The hard work is undeniable but, on the other side, ➔

Pressing Info

The standard bit rate to press vinyl is 24 bit/44.1KHz. According to Breed Media, a media manufacturing agency that offers vinyl pressing, the master should be fully edited and as you want it to sound, with all tracks in the correct order and with your desired length of gaps between each track. A catalogue number must be allocated to your vinyl pressing and this number should be unique. It will be applied to the artwork for your label and sleeve so that each part is linked in the final product.

The quality of vinyl audio is directly affected by the distance between the record grooves and therefore the playing time of the record. Exceeding the maximum recommended playing lengths can compromise the audio quality of the record, with bass heavy recordings being particularly problematic. Below are the maximum recommended playing lengths before the sound quality will become impaired.

At 33 rpm:

- 12" – 19 mins per side
- 10" – 14 mins per side

At 45 rpm:

- 7" – 5 mins per side
- 10" – 10 mins per side
- 12" – 15 mins per side

Mastering Tips

If you are releasing on vinyl you should master your tracks specifically for that format as you will achieve a cleaner sound with more dynamic range. The process of mastering for vinyl is different than it is for digital or CD, as Dean Horner of Bowling Green Studio, Sheffield, explains: "I create a vinyl pre-master as it will be the cutting engineer that creates the final master disk. I will generally use very similar EQ and compression settings as for the digital master, as most people require digital masters for streaming, downloads etc.

"For vinyl, the mastering process is getting the music to sound good but also looking out for issues that may cause the cutting engineer problems. The main differences between the digital and the vinyl pre-master are: keeping plenty of headroom in the master, not squashing with a limiter for loudness because the cutting engineer sets the loudness of the cut; checking and correcting phase related issues, checking that sub bass frequencies are not hard panned left or right, and correcting harsh high frequencies in a mix. Out-of-phase sounds and off-centred sub frequencies can cause problems with the cut: for example, making the stylus jump out of the groove. High frequencies, such as 'esses' on a vocal, can distort very easily if not contained."

So what are the key things to listen out for? "If they like the sound of the digital master when comparing to released music that's of a similar sound, then the vinyl pre-master shouldn't sound too dissimilar, apart from the overall volume level. But you can only really tell what your record will sound like by listening to a test pressing. The sound can change dramatically once the record has been cut and pressed. Cutting quality can vary as can pressing quality."



According to figures published by the BPI, the appetite for vinyl is at an all-time high

the gratification and the freedom you feel by releasing your own stuff is amazing."

Many labels and self-releasing artists work with third party companies – The Lovely Eggs use [DMS in Plymouth](#), for example – to liaise with the pressing plants directly themselves (many of which are in Eastern Europe – although a brand new one, [Press on Vinyl](#), has just opened in Middlesbrough). But it still means that deciding how many to print up, what to charge and so on, can be a bit of a guessing game. "We always get it wrong and do too few," says Ross. "We have no confidence in ourselves and every record we've ever made we always wish we'd done more. It's really irritating but because it's your own money you don't want to be stuck with loads of extra copies."

Planning Ahead

Ross uses the size of the venues they play on tour as a bit of a barometer to gauge how many they are likely to sell. However, with

recent backlogs, it has made keeping on top of stock a more tricky thing to navigate. "We sell out of old albums and we try to re-order them and it's seven to eight months before you're going to get stock back in," she says. "Which is really hard because we've run out of one of our records and we've not had it in stock for six months now. So you can be looking at your stock and thinking: 'I've got 200 copies so I'm fine' but then it's like, 'Oh, but that's got to last seven months so I better put another pressing in now'. So it's having to press stuff when you don't need it because you know you'll need it in the future. It is the realm of prediction."

Tipton generally presses 500-1,000 of each release and then, "if press or radio are taking off, we can add more to the pressing closer to the manufacturing date," he says. "We also like to sell out of a pressing and then make a re-press, as that then generates renewed interest in the release, rather than having enough stock knocking around."

But when you're operating at this end of the scale – the micro compared to the macro of



Photos: (Left) Rosie Foster; (Far left) Matt Cardy / Getty Images

Above: The Mercury Music Prize-nominated band Black Country, New Road champion the merits of vinyl
Left: Chris Tipton of Upset The Rhythm

“It’s important to us to release things physically. Digital has always been a supplementary thing”

Holly Ross, The Lovely Eggs

if all our sales were based entirely on digital streams. It’s not really a well-kept secret that streaming doesn’t generate a huge amount of income for the majority of musicians. Actually buying the album on a format like vinyl is a great way to support musicians and I think if you’re able to afford it then it should be supported.”

Ross echoes these sentiments. “If you’re talking about just record sales and we relied on streaming alone we would be absolutely *****,” she says. “It’s important to us to release things physically. Digital and streaming has always been a supplementary thing.”

However, financial motivation is not the essence behind what the band do as an independent duo who self-release. “The position that we’re in is a little bit different to other bands because it’s all about an ideal for us,” she says. “Being independent and releasing our own stuff is massively important to us as an ethos. I know it’s becoming more popular and a lot of people become independent because of a financial necessity, their manager tells them to self-release or whatever, but that’s not about idealism. Just in the same way that McDonald’s churning out vegan burgers is nothing to do with saving the planet or stopping factory farming. Unless you’re doing it for a really good reason, being independent is neither here nor there, but we’re doing it to be totally free. Some things in life are a bit magic and you’ve got to cling onto those feelings and that’s our currency. That’s what we operate on and independence is all part of that. It’s part of the artistic movement, it’s part of the process, and it’s everything. It’s not just about, oh, it’s cheaper. It’s far bigger than that, it’s part of our lives.” 



major label artists – what are we talking about in terms of costs and profits? Well, the kind of profit you will end up with directly as an artist or label depends on whether you use a distributor or sell directly to customers. Tipton pays £3 to £5 per vinyl copy, depending on the size of the press run, then sells the albums for £14 (although that could be halved if selling to a distributor) on the label’s web shop and splits profits 50/50 with artists after recouping the up-front costs associated with getting the release recorded, mastered, manufactured and promoted.

Do It Yourself

So, in short, is it financially viable to produce and sell your own records without a label? Well, it depends on the amount pressed, of course – the more you press the cheaper they are – and whether you’ve incurred a lot of up-front costs during the recording. But, in theory, yes. Based on Tipton’s model of paying £3-5 per unit cost, if you sell records for a very reasonable £15, you’re looking at between £8-12 profit per sale, depending on if you need to factor in postage or other costs.

Even though Black Country, New Road are on a bigger label (Ninja Tune) and their debut album debuted at No. 4 in the charts, the profits involved specifically with that format aren’t a primary motivator for producing it.

“The idea that vinyl is a more profitable format to release on, I don’t know whether that’s a conversation that’s ever been brought to us,” says Wayne. “I think that we should consider ourselves lucky to be making music in a period when physical sales of records still matter, especially in the genre of music that we make. We’d certainly be making significantly lower

Beware The Buyout

Companies commissioning composers are now more likely to ask for a buyout – but is that always the best option?

Report by Mark Sutherland

Anyone commissioning a composer to create music for TV, film, video games or advertising expects the musician to do their best work. But what can composers expect in return? Sadly, all too often the answer seems to be: a lot less than you used to get. Increasingly, broadcasters and other commissioners are looking to push buyout deals. These see the commissioning company pay a one-off fee for the composition and recording, acquiring some or all of the composer's rights and future royalty income along the way.

The MU's Composers Against Buyouts campaign, launched in conjunction with The Ivors Academy last year, has already won widespread support from musicians. So, as the campaign gathers pace and puts errant commissioners on the back foot, it's the perfect time to look at good and bad practice in the sector. "Everyone knows how it works," says Kelly Wood, the MU's Live & Music Writers Official, who is helping drive the campaign. "If you do a good job and deliver what everyone wants, you're likely to get more work out of it. But it's really hard, once you're in the midst of it, not to keep delivering. So if people are asking for more and you've already spent most of the package fee, you're incredibly reliant on royalties."

Code Of Practice

The MU and The Ivors Academy are looking to put bespoke Codes Of Practice in place, starting with commissioners that we have existing relationships with, so that both composers and media know what to expect

"A lot of younger composers don't realise what they're giving up"

Claire Batchelor

from the process. Those documents would cover everything from expectations on rights retention to pitching transparency and diversity. That will particularly help new and inexperienced composers navigate a hugely competitive commissioning landscape. But established composers warn that the royalty system is increasingly under threat.

"A lot of younger composers don't realise what they're giving up," says [Claire Batchelor, an Ivors Academy Senator and composer](#) with a long list of credits for the likes of the BBC, Channel 4 and ITV. "Because they haven't had experience of earning a good amount of money from mechanical royalties, to give them up is nothing. But they don't understand they could be shooting themselves in the foot for their own future income." Batchelor says that royalty payments were crucial in enabling her to become a full-time composer, rather than needing to supplement her income with teaching and live work. Many musicians relied on those regular payments to get them through the coronavirus pandemic, when work dried up overnight.

Squeezed Fees

[Timo Baker, who has worked for everyone from](#) National Geographic and Discovery to film trailers and video game soundtracks, says that, while fees are being squeezed, the royalty system can deliver "life-changing amounts of money" if a project becomes a global hit. "It's only happened to me once or twice," says Baker. "But that's the power of the royalty. It does enable you to roll between projects and take time out for your family and other life stuff. I couldn't survive on fees alone – and that's a pretty damning thing to say 25 years into a career."

Baker attributes the trend for buying out royalty streams to the influx of new, American companies to the UK market, often in co-productions with local media. And, while



Photo: Pictorial Press Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo

Musician, Timo Baker (right) composed music for the trailer of the film *Mud* (above) and numerous other commissions

Discovery was forced to back down from its attempt to impose 'direct source licences', he says he's received contracts attempting to ban the use of musicians who are union members, while others seek to prevent musicians having their own publishing deals.

Some sectors at least have more options available, with Claire Batchelor highlighting the variety of approaches from production music libraries, despite newer entrants pushing the buyout model. "There are so many music libraries out there that if there's one taking all of your rights, maybe push to work for someone else instead," she advises. "If you've got more choice, and you're educated on rights, you can vote with your feet. But," she warns, "It's much more difficult if it's your first big TV commission. The deal might not be perfect, but I don't think anyone would walk away from that."

The recent spate of major rock stars selling their songwriting catalogues has helped normalise the practice, and Kelly Wood stresses that some buyouts can work for composers. "We're not expecting there to be absolutely no buyouts. Because if a buyout is



a good one, the fee is right and people are happy, then that's fine. But the problem is, a lot of fees aren't right, and they're not representative of what might be earned through royalties over the life of a project."

Timo Baker notes that major video game producers often expect a total buyout of rights, but do at least compensate for that with larger fees. But while the rise of streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime has led to a surge in demand for TV music, budgets have yet to follow suit. "Production companies are now saying, 'We've got such-and-such a budget, how many minutes of music can we get for that?'," he says. "They would rather diminish the number of minutes of music than raise the fee – and, because professional pride kicks in, they assume you're going to give them more minutes than you said for the set fee."

Get Educated

Kelly Wood says that such attempts to push contractual boundaries are why education – both for composers and commissioners – is a cornerstone of the Composers Against Buyouts campaign. And the MU stresses the need to always negotiate, rather than accept a commissioner's opening position. "A lot of

people engaging musicians will expect that conversation," Wood says. "But composers don't want to be seen as hard work, and that's part of the problem. You know how competitive it is, and you know there are other people out there who will do the work and undercut realistic rates."

As well as looking at Codes Of Practice and specimen contracts, Kelly doesn't rule out establishing minimum rates for the sector, or even calling for government intervention along the lines of the recent DCMS Committee investigation into the music streaming market. In the meantime, however, campaigners are urging composers to do the right thing by their fellow musicians. "The more educated up-and-coming composers are, the stronger chance we have of retaining our rights," says Claire Batchelor. "As soon as somebody says yes to something, that commissioner thinks, 'We can get away with this'. But if no composer took a bad deal, then there wouldn't be any bad deals around." And that may be simply the best practice of all. **mu**

Best Practice

What To Ask For When Negotiating Deals

Get The Deal In Writing

"It's the MU's motto – but it really does apply, particularly to people who are just starting out. When people are working for known broadcasters, they assume things will be okay and they'll retain rights and they don't question it. But we have a lot of people coming to us trying to put things right retrospectively. Which is why you should start off with the contract, before you've done the work."

Kelly Wood, Musicians' Union

Hang On To Your Mechanical Royalties

"Certainly try to keep some mechanicals if you can, because that really does make a difference. And there should be fairness for the composer in other ways as well – having a set timescale, knowing if your budget includes hiring other musicians or not, and looking after yourself in not just monetary ways, but respecting your time."

Claire Batchelor, composer

Demand Creative Freedom

"Money is important but the thing about being a composer is, you need creative freedom as well. The positive things are generally more about working with a bunch of people that you enjoy being with. There is dialogue between you and the director or series producer, you get feedback and it's greater than the sum of its parts. But that's also where it gets tricky, because people see music as being just a really enjoyable pastime, so it gets denigrated slightly."

Timo Baker, composer

Music For Everyone

The ABO's annual conference in Glasgow addressed issues of inclusion, access and diversity

Report by Andrew Stewart

When the Association of British Orchestras announced that its annual conference would take place in Glasgow, nobody knew whether plans to hold an in-person gathering would pass the Scottish government's pandemic prevention measures. The event, titled Rebound and held from 9-11 February at Glasgow's RSNO Centre, received the green light only three weeks before it began. The spectacle of over three hundred unmasked delegates at the ABO Awards dinner offered a potent symbol of what a rebounding society might look like. It remained for conference to address pressing issues of diversity, inclusion and access within and around professional orchestras – no longer matters for the margins but central to the debate about classical music's future.

The Musicians' Union took part as ABO Conference partners and made expert interventions to the programme's hybrid mix of online and in-person panel sessions. The MU supported one of the most moving of all conference sessions, the Gender Agenda, in which horn player Laetitia Scott and percussionist Beth Higham-Edwards reflected on their experiences of casual sexism and misogyny in the orchestral workplace. They offered practical suggestions on how to tackle the gendering of orchestral instruments and

"Within society one doesn't see black people in leading roles"

Paul Philbert

The Musician • Spring 2022



Photo: John Young

Glasgow's Royal Concert Hall was the setting for the ABO Conference, an event aptly named Rebound

stop girls being nudged away from learning brass and percussion instruments at school.

Higham-Edwards called for orchestras to develop and promote clear policies on workplace harassment and for colleagues to report transgressions to the MU, while Scott noted that the absence of such policies was "an accident waiting to happen". Several orchestras, she added, were working to create protocols designed to protect players from sexual harassment.

Overturning Othering

Paul Philbert, principal timpanist in the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, called for structural racism, sexism and othering to be overturned. He was unable to remember a time when he had not been affected by racism. "When my mother arrived in the UK," he recalled, "there were still signs saying 'No blacks, no Irish, no dogs'. It was always part of our education." The male dominance of orchestral brass and percussion jobs, he added, stems from the same ingrained bias

that prevents more musicians from black and ethnic minority backgrounds from joining the orchestral profession.

"Through lockdown I've become acutely aware of the mechanisms we've inherited – women allocated stereotypical roles, men likewise. And within society one doesn't see black people in leading roles. It's inherited information, and we exist and do our best within that." The murder of George Floyd while the world was at a standstill, he said, exposed the chasm of inequality and racism for all to see. "Society has taught me for a very long time to be ashamed of the colour of my own skin. Until very recently I hadn't considered male privilege. I'd taken it for granted. We all play our part in the social constructs that have allowed this way of being. Every time I've laughed at a racist joke as a means of placating a situation, I have continued to feed



You may need to invest
in some new kit to get
the best results



Classical music needs to
be a living, breathing art
form says Dr Anna Bull

Photo: James Wood

Dr Anna Bull

Lecturer in Education and Social
Justice at the University of York;
former cellist and pianist

"Classical music needs to be a living, breathing art form, one that changes as people come up with new creative ideas. My suggestion to you is to allow the social renewal of classical music to happen alongside the creative renewal. As you envisage how the genre is changing under your stewardship, think about how this might also lead to social changes. For me, this means more openness to – more dialogue with – other genres of music. It means musicians who are more adaptable, who can play across genres, who have creative as well as technical skills.

"There was no golden age for inclusion and mobility in the arts. So let's move beyond the idea that there's nothing we can do because [working-class] musicians aren't coming through the pipeline. Youth Music's report, *The Sound Of The Next Generation*, found that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds were more likely to be engaged in creative music-making activities than the middle-class people in this study. The middle class were more likely to play instruments and be getting music lessons, but they weren't creating music.

"There are brilliant creative young musicians from diverse backgrounds who will do interesting creative projects if they are supported to work with classical music organisations."

the circle. It is our duty to break these circuits, one by one – call out sexism, call out racism, call out othering. This is our duty!"

Eradicating Exclusion

A common theme of hurt and pain emerged from each session concerned with eradicating exclusion. It echoed in the voice of Darren McGarvey, author, musician, social commentator and force of nature, who sounded home truths about working-class culture. He challenged middle-class orchestra and concert hall managers to open their doors to creators of all kinds, regardless of class, race or sex. His experience as a hip-hop artist showed how those doors and the minds behind them were often closed to art forms considered dangerous, violent, of the street.

"We like to think ourselves a little more enlightened here in Scotland," said McGarvey. "We like to think ourselves a little more authentic. But our creative industries are riddled with the same class inequities, disparities and bogtrotties as anywhere else's."

He was welcomed to the middle-class arts party only when *Poverty Wars*, his Orwell Prize-winning attempt at 'understanding the anger of Britain's underclass', scored rave reviews in the broadsheets.

Behind claims of making classical music more open to people from deprived backgrounds, McGarvey avowed, stands the reality of unspoken limits to the desired number of those people. "We need more from those backgrounds... but not too many, because we all need a job and a purpose. That's the tension at the heart of most debates about arts and culture, housing, education, employment – that's the crux of it. The crux of it is there's a quota and, once that quota is filled, working-class people can go **** themselves!"

Audience Response

Before McGarvey's provocation, the ABO Conference opened with a breezy speech from Angus Robertson MSP, the Scottish government's Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture. He spoke of his administration's readiness to work with the performing arts sector to encourage audiences to regain the concert-going habit. His suggestion that it was for cultural organisations to address the fears of reluctant returnees, however, left delegates wondering how much work government

(Right) Darren McGarvey gave an impassioned speech about the role of the working class in classical music

Photo: Martin Shields



Darren McGarvey

Author, musician, creator and social commentator

"Creativity of any sort begins not with a sudden rush of inspiration nor a life-long calling to express oneself. Creativity begins always with permission. This permission may take the form of encouragement from a loved one, such as that I received from my own father, a working musician who, as a single parent, provided for us by entertaining people in bars and social clubs at the weekends.

"I understand there's a war for resources out there. But there's something about the sharp elbows of the middle class. They possess a resilience, a know-how, a savvy, and the social connections to make the case that what they're doing should be funded. It's true in all areas of life.

"It's not just about opportunity and resources. It's about recognising that working class people are not waiting to become middle class. We have a culture which is as rich, and deep, and sophisticated, and moral as what is regarded as middle class. This needs to be elevated the way middle class things are, rather than let's sanitise working class culture so it's palatable and commercial."

was prepared to do to calm nerves frayed by two years of anxiety-inducing public health messages, lockdowns and daily reports of death and illness.

While access and inclusion have often been discussed at ABO Conferences, the debate in Glasgow felt more urgent. It connected with a feeling beyond the orchestral world that society should not return to the pre-pandemic status quo. Sessions on health and wellbeing recognised that Covid had scarred many lives and would remain an existential challenge for years to come. James Ainscough, Chief Executive of Help Musicians, the UK's leading charity of musicians of all genres, outlined the scale of the pandemic's impact on musicians' mental health. He noted how rebound strategies must recognise the needs of low-paid, freelance musicians, hit hard by lockdowns and scaled-back performances.

"There's no simple return to work for freelancers," observed Ainscough. "Careers



Tilly Chester, Sky Arts Musician in Residence with Paraorchestra

Photo: Kirsten McTernan



The RSNO rehearsing in socially distanced times. This year's ABO Conference was held at the RSNO in Glasgow

“One of the key challenges is how we get musicians back into work while continuing to take care of themselves”

Dr Pippa Wheble

The significant psychological and physical challenges of returning to work after months of inactivity were examined in a wide-ranging session devoted to building resilience, a necessary condition for rebound.

String player, singer and British Association of Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM) general practitioner, Dr Pippa Wheble dispensed compassion with a light touch in her presentation. “We’ve seen a huge increase in the number of musicians presenting with mental health problems during the pandemic,” she noted. “One of

the key challenges now is how we get those musicians to transition back into work while continuing to take care of themselves.”

Physical Stresses

Beyond financial stresses and emotional anxieties, musicians are prone to physical injuries caused by returning to work unprepared. “Musicians have very high standards and are very driven,” commented Wheble, “so we’re really at risk of overuse and misuse as we try to regain what we’ve lost over the past two years.” Becoming match fit again, she added, would take time and patience and understanding from orchestra managers. Individuals will also need to learn to balance new commitments made during the pandemic, such as family relationships, teaching or work outside music, with the desire to return to regular performing.

“Are we making an inclusive recovery?”, the apt question posed by UK Disability Arts Alliance co-founder Andrew Miller, shaped a session in which the matter of social equity was brought into sharp relief. Many immunocompromised disabled musicians have no choice but to continue shielding at home while their non-disabled colleagues return to work. “Much of the great inclusive work we’ve been doing risks becoming

undone,” said Miller. “Covid is, in my view, the greatest challenge to cultural access we will see in our lifetimes.”

Fairness And Inclusivity

Claire Mera-Nelson, Director, Music, Arts Council England (ACE), gave a summary of ACE’s recent report on fairness and inclusivity in classical music and its specific findings on disability. “The [limited] available evidence we have suggests that people with disabilities and long-term health conditions are significantly underrepresented in the workforce.” Many who are represented, she added, felt unable to disclose their particular disability to colleagues for fear of limiting their work opportunities. “When artists do disclose issues, most report either not being taken seriously, or they and the issues they are disclosing are ignored.”

Classical music, concluded Mera-Nelson, is arguably the most ableist of all art forms. The pace of change remains glacial. “The under-representation of disabled people in music and music education perpetuates a culture of doing to rather than with. It makes disabled people within the sector invisible and without agency and power.”

The session heard an impassioned plea for equality from Tilly Chester, Sky Arts Musician in Residence with Paraorchestra. She was able to work during the pandemic with Paraorchestra, but has seen slow progress elsewhere in supporting disabled musicians to feel safe at work. “Everyone initially got a small insight into living with disability by not being able to go out and not being able to do the things you would want to do, and yet nothing’s changed,” she observed. “It feels like disabled people have been forgotten and that it’s not as important to get us back: we’ll get everyone else back and then we’ll worry about people who have been shielding for two years.” **mu**

For information and guidance on some of the issues raised during the event, please visit the following MU resources: tinyurl.com/2yy6u77a and tinyurl.com/3k87px5u

have to be rebuilt and, as a result, musicians’ needs have never been more broad or more complex.” Help Musicians has delivered £19.5m in financial hardship support to around 20,000 musicians, plugging holes in the government’s Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS) that left thousands of freelancers without state support. “I see the same large gaps in the Treasury’s response to the current cost-of-living crisis. As ever, it will be those in the most precarious positions who suffer most.”

Mental Health Concerns

Ainscough presented a stark analysis of musicians’ mental health and the distress caused to so many by having their carefully constructed and cherished identities as performers undermined. In recent months, Help Musicians has logged a 201% increase in calls to its Music Minds Matter helpline compared to the same period in 2020. “Currently we’re supporting 485 musicians’ access to therapeutic mental health support compared to just 23 when the pandemic began. We think the number will further rise, and we’re nowhere near reaching the number of musicians who need us.”

A Basic Income For Everybody

The MU's motion backing universal basic income is set to be presented to the TUC in April. Here, *The Musician* assesses the concept, the history, and the feasibility of UBI

Report by Neil Churchman

Imagine there's no poverty among musicians. It isn't hard to do – at least not for the growing number of supporters of a universal basic income, or UBI. Imagine a fixed monthly sum, paid by the state to all, without means-testing, and guaranteeing dignity and financial independence. Imagine freeing musicians to do what they do best without having to worry about the rent, mortgage or food bills.

For dreamers? Maybe. But an increasing number of economists, employment experts, sociologists and trades unionists believe UBI is an idea whose time is fast approaching.

And, in a sign of that gathering momentum, a motion backing UBI was passed last summer by the Musicians' Union, and is due to be presented to the TUC's Young Workers' Conference this spring (2-3 April). The initiative is being led by MU member and clarinettist Sam Murray, who lectures in music business and arts management at Middlesex University. He explained that he was inspired, in part, by looking at the origins of one of the most important recent movements in UK popular music.

"If you go back to bands in the 80s, particularly The Specials and [the 2-Tone scene around Coventry](#), you were seeing musicians having to go on the dole in between each record they



Photo: Joanna Dudderidge



Clarinetist and MU member Sam Murray tabled a UBI motion to the MU Conference that was passed last Summer

made, because there was nothing to support the creativity process. Then I just connected the dots," he says.

"Musicians should be able to pay their bills and support themselves through that process. UBI creates that guaranteed safety net."

The resulting motion, he says, was not only important to him, but also marked a key moment for the MU.

"It was incredible to have the support of the whole Union behind this idea. It was a proud moment to see that we were willing to back a policy that is going to have a wider impact on society and, although we know the benefits for our own sector, we are also willing to call for a mass societal change.

Improving Lives

The MU is one of the first unions to throw its weight behind UBI – another source of pride, says Sam. "It really makes a statement that the MU is willing to play its role within the trade union movement. And we're ready to fight for wider impacts on society that are beyond the remit people usually expect the MU to have."

The plight of those in the creative industries during the coronavirus pandemic has intensified the calls for UBI. Figures suggest around a third of musicians stepped away from the sector during the lockdowns, taking other jobs to make ends meet. It's still not clear how many will return, and the effects on the next generation of British musicians are likely to

be long-lasting. Sam believes a guaranteed income could have limited the damage.

"I was working with a lot of young students who were about to graduate, wanting to go into freelance positions, but they couldn't because there would have been absolutely no support for freelancers in the music industry.

"They were coming out into a terrible market, that was almost decimated for them. They had no opportunity, whereas, if UBI was there, they would have been able to have that support and safety net to go into those roles and develop them," he says.

Visionary Dream

UBI has a long history. Visionary thinkers from Thomas More, five centuries ago in his book *Utopia*, to [Martin Luther King Jr during the US Civil Rights Movement](#), have been suggesting it as a means of eradicating poverty.

Experiments have been staged around the world, with varying degrees of success. One of the most ambitious has been underway in Kenya, where 20,000 villagers have been receiving guaranteed payments since 2016. →

"It was incredible to have the support of the whole Union behind this idea"

Sam Murray

How Could UBI Benefit British Music?

Music is a powerful, and often overlooked, driver of the UK economy. But, like any other big industry, it requires a reliable and regular intake of fresh talent and expertise to maintain itself. That's why the effects of the exodus during the pandemic are worrying so many experts.

Easing the financial pressure by guaranteeing a basic income could pay dividends – creating a bigger space for creativity and allowing more people to consider a job in music, and not just those who have the means to survive the hard times.

Some form of Universal Basic Income would ensure that musicians are paid for every stage of the artistic process; 'starving in a garret' would no longer have to be part of the job. Basic pay would acknowledge and reward the currently under-recognised 'research and development' aspect of the music industry – the creativity, the writing and rehearsing that all lead to the finished product.

"It's about musicians being paid for ALL of the work they do, in a way that enables them to live with dignity and financial independence, and not in fear of what will happen during a crisis," says the MU's Maddy Radcliff. "We need to be able to create art and a broad range of music that everyone can enjoy, and leave a better industry for the next generation of musicians."

The result is that hunger is down, while mental and physical wellbeing have improved.

Research into a scheme adopted in 1974 in Manitoba, suggest it, too, was beneficial. For four years, everyone in the small town of Dauphin was guaranteed a basic income designed to lift them above the poverty line.

Studies showed that school performance improved, hospitalisations fell by more than eight per cent, domestic violence decreased, mental health improved and workers tended to stay in their jobs. "People in Dauphin had not only become richer, but also smarter and healthier," according to historian Rutger Bregman, who is a keen advocate of UBI.

He believes that, if implemented fully, it could end poverty forever, and for a lot less money than many experts expect. In a recent TED talk, he highlighted figures that show raising people out of poverty in the United States would cost around \$175bn a year, compared with the \$500bn estimated annual bill in terms of health care and tackling crime of allowing child poverty to continue unchecked.

Opposing Viewpoints

Practical and political obstacles abound, of course. Among the sceptics is Chris Goulden, deputy director of policy and research at the anti-poverty charity, The Joseph Rowntree

"It makes sense for all the unions representing creative people to make the case for it. I am keen to see what happens"

Toby Lloyd

Foundation. For him, the cons of UBI seriously outweigh the pros. He has argued that the fundamentals – that everyone should get a baseline level of state support, even if they choose not to do anything to try to earn money for themselves, and that taxes would have to increase substantially – would be seen by most politicians as a vote-loser, particularly given the long-standing evidence on public attitudes to welfare.

It's an interesting debate, he concludes, but "rather than continuing to be distracted by it, we should focus on improving the social security system that we have already got – God knows it needs it".

If a truly universal version of UBI is – for the time being – wishful thinking, closed schemes focused on sectors like music and entertainment appear much more likely to

gain traction, particularly in the wake of the pandemic, which hit the industry hard.

In France, there is the Intermittance du Spectacle system, designed to support freelancers in the creative industries during periods when they are out of work. The Irish government is set to introduce a universal basic income pilot for workers in the arts sector, setting aside €25m for a three-year experiment involving around 2,000 people.

Targeted schemes like those could be a springboard to more comprehensive UBI in the future, according to MU Campaigns and Social Media Official, Maddy Radcliff.

"The motion to the TUC Young Workers Conference will highlight that French option as a kind of midway point," she explains, describing the new interest in UBI in post-pandemic Britain as a "glimmer of hope that came out of a very dark time".

"At the beginning of the pandemic there was zero support for freelancers," she recalls. "So when the MU and other organisations leapt into gear, we started talking about options. One of those was UBI. Instead we got [the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme \(SEISS\)](#). It helped over two million people who would have got nothing, but 38% of musicians were excluded. It failed too many people. UBI is a potential solution to that."

Benefit Boost

Looking ahead to the TUC Young Workers' Conference in April, where the motion will come under wider scrutiny, Sam Murray is keeping an open mind about its chances. He expects resistance from some who think the needs of the less well-off would be better met by boosting the current system of benefits.

However, the model Sam is suggesting would preserve much of what already exists, with UBI payments topped up by supplementary benefits to people with a whole range of additional needs.



Political thinkers throughout history have advocated some manner of universal basic income – not least Martin Luther King Jr

Photo: GL Archive / Alamy Stock Photo

Licence To Loaf?

Mention UBI and it's not long before the accusation emerges that it would become a refuge for scroungers. Sean Healy, director of [the thinktank, Social Justice Ireland](#), suggests this won't be the case. "It is very likely that the evaluation will show that most artists in the pilot don't watch TV all day," he explains. "Rather, they will be seen to engage in more artistic activity – they may even generate more market income."

Sam Murray and Maddy Radcliff also believe the idea that UBI is a "licence to loaf" is misguided and based on prejudice. Maddy points to the very low number of people who commit fraud within the current benefit system. "It is used as a tactic to justify cutting the welfare state," she says. "It's a myth that needs to be challenged."

And Sam notes: "One of the problems we have is that people are always quick to assume the worst about others. Most people in the world want to work and to be able to contribute to society."

"The TUC forum will provide an opportunity to test where it sits with other trade unions. We're hoping for a really positive result from that," says Sam. "It's going to be tricky, some are not yet fully on board with it, but we are hoping there are strong movements within the larger unions and the Labour party to support UBI. Most sectors will listen to our story about how the pandemic has exacerbated the need for UBI, and will recognise it within their own unions."

And whatever happens, Sam believes the direction of travel is clear, and the seeds are being sown now for a meaningful conversation around UBI.


"Even if we don't get the motion through this time, there's nothing to stop us from working out where our support lies and being a stronger network to take it forward," he says.

UBI campaigners will be watching the outcome with interest. Toby Lloyd is a co-founder of UBILAB Arts, a creative-industry focused section of the global UBILAB network, through which groups of citizens, researchers and

activists around the world discuss and explore the possibilities of universal basic income. "It makes sense for all the unions representing creative people to make the case for it," he says. "I am incredibly keen to see what happens, and really excited that the Musicians' Union is campaigning for basic income."

Ideal Candidates

The sheer variety of roles within the sector, from writers and performers to studio technicians and the staff who work in arts and music venues, make the industry an ideal test bed for a UBI scheme, he believes.

"You would have a very varied and rich data source. Creative people, especially freelancers, are an excellent model as participants. Basic income would enable people who work in the creative industries to do what they do, but to a better degree." 

Sam Murray was inspired by stories of Coventry bands like The Specials having to sign on between record releases

Voice From The Heartland

Scottish folk singer Iona Fyfe is a strong advocate for her native language and music, and for fighting injustices within the industry

Profile by Jude Rogers

To be a folk singer in a post-Brexit, pandemic-bruised world is a demanding gig, but if anyone is up for the task it's Iona Fyfe. Just turned 24, she's a one-woman whirlwind of activity in many ways. Musically, she's obsessed with the intricate history of traditional songs and introducing them to new audiences in new ways – "although there was never a moment when I went, right, I'm going to be a penniless folk singer," Fyfe laughs over Zoom on a rainy afternoon.

She's also a formidable campaigner. A champion of the Scots language and for musicians to be paid properly playing live, she's also a prominent speaker (and writer in the Scottish press) against misogyny and sexism in the music industry. She's debated with politicians Michael Portillo and broadcasters like Victoria Derbyshire on BBC programmes, utterly holding her own. She also has acute fibromyalgia, a debilitating condition that manifests in regular bouts of physical pain, which makes creative life tough. "But music means everything to me," she says. "And I know it means so much to so many other people, too."

Heritage Of Song


Born in the Aberdeenshire town of Huntly in 1998, Iona was brought up in a family of occasional, hobbyist folk musicians. Her uncle played in a Scottish dance band, and her cousins played fiddles, accordions and traditional drums. One also used to enter poetry competitions, which introduced her to traditional festivals as a very small child. This is where she encountered traditional singing. "You'd hear these harmonies, this music that wasn't scored out, but just sung from the heart. It was so beautiful."

From the age of five she was entering competitions herself, hosted by the Traditional Music and Song Association of Scotland. She wasn't pushed to, she smiles – "my mum and dad used them like babysitting services!" – but it was here that she developed her voice, a beautiful, bell-like soprano, delivering ancient ballads and tales without frippery or fuss. By her teens, she was competing in adult categories alongside some of Scotland's greatest traditional singers like Jimmie Hutchison and Carole Prior, which proved formative. "I was very aware that I was competing against much older people who knew their craft inside out, but they were excited by the idea of a young person taking interest in it. Better still, they would give me songs and encouragement."

Folk Obsession

At school she also dabbled in musical theatre and classical repertoire, but folk was her true love. Coming from north-east Scotland, a heartland of traditional ballads, was fortuitous. She'd often take an eighteen-mile bus trip to the Elphinstone Institute in the University of Aberdeen to pore through their song collections, and got her father to drive to places like the site of the early 15th century Battle of Harlaw when she was learning a ballad about it. "I couldn't get over how amazing that was."

At sixteen, she applied to study traditional music at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland: she graduated with a first-class degree three years later. One of her campaigns is to get folk music included in the grading systems that examination boards apply to classical music. Anything that gives folk "the status it deserves" and helps people progress helps, she explains. ➔



“Music means everything to me, and I know it means so much to so many other people, too”

At 17, Iona released her first digital EP of traditional tracks, the appropriately titled *First Sangs* ("sang" meaning "song" in Scots). A year later, she had put The Iona Fyfe Trio together, adding shruti boxes, bodhrans and border pipes to her renditions of local songs like *Bonny Udney*, about an Aberdeenshire village she knew.

By the time of her 2018 debut album, *Away From My Window*, she had started to experiment further: it arrived as a concept LP inspired by source and revivalist singers, mixing archive clips alongside writing inspired by non-traditional artists like singer-songwriter Michael Marra and Arab Strap's Aidan Moffat. This was a big change for her. "I was twenty by that point – at sixteen I had the head of a sixty-year-old, where the idea of doing too much to a song was wrong. 'Oh, my God, no, you don't do that!' But after a few years, I felt much more free to innovate because I felt like I'd proven myself singing traditional songs 'til the cows came home. I knew I'd proved to myself that I could really get inside a ballad, carry the story, tell the narrative in my language. Now I can try and take folk songs beyond that, to other people."

Expanded Horizons

She's also broadened her repertoire on EPs and one-off releases. In 2019, she stretched her interests beyond Aberdeenshire to the US, recording and performing Appalachian songs with another trio she formed, The Auldners, with mandolin player Callum Morton-Teng and American cellist Ellen Gira. Released the same year, her second album, *Dark Turn Of Mind*, was named after its title track by Gillian Welch, while a year later, she recorded [Bob Dylan's *Girl From The North Country*](#), noting how Dylan had said the song wouldn't have existed without one of the most-sung folk songs of all time, *Barbara Allen*.

She's also enjoyed writing, melding new ideas with traditional songs to political ends. On 2021's *Kenmure*, she took Woody Guthrie's song *Deportee (Plane Wreck at Los Gatos)*, and recontextualised it in the light of the events of May 2020 in Kenmure Street in Glasgow, when the UK Home Office sent a dawn raid to deport two asylum seekers on the last day of Eid. Hundreds of people surrounded the van for hours. "Those people were so dehumanised," Iona says. "Writing that track, using tradition in that way, felt important and relevant." Iona has also amplified her native Scots tongue in different settings. Last summer, she

"People forget that it's not about the big stars with their big vans"

Most of Iona's work dried up after the double whammy of Brexit and the pandemic

covered Taylor Swift's *Love Story* in Scots, and recorded a "cheesy pop song" – her words – called *The Cauld*, to normalise its existence in the genre. More recently, she's covered *In The Bleak Midwinter* in Scots, and translated Richard Thompson's 1972 song [Poor Ditching Boy](#), into the Doric Scots dialect. Thompson had written it after reading Aberdeenshire writer Lewis Grassie Gibbon's coming-of-age novel, *Sunset Song*, so she felt the project was a "natural one".

Language Campaigner

The preservation and promotion of Scots is hugely important to Iona. Spoken by 1.5 million in Scotland, it has variations all over the country, but still doesn't hold the same status in culture or government as other minority languages like Gaelic. In 2020, she helped to found a campaign group for the language, Oor

Vyce, that led to 35 Members of the [Scottish Parliament signing a Scots Pledge](#) to secure protection, funding and promotion of it.

Last year, Iona lobbied Spotify to recognise Scots after not being able to tag her music in the tongue. "They told me instead to select the language closer to it," she says, recalling her rage. In response, she cited the European Charter for minority languages, rallied MSPs to table a motion in Parliament, and met with senior Spotify editor Laura Ohls to discuss it. Soon after, they overturned the decision. Iona's native Scots has also helped foster her connections with Europe. She's always loved how the Eastern Scottish dialects of Scots have strong connections with Danish (the word 'songwriter' is the same in both, she

All photos: Joseph Branstetter. © MU. Taken at Engine Works, Glasgow. Illustration on previous page: Nata Slavetskaya / Getty Images

Iona is an impassioned campaigner for the promotion of her own Scots dialect




points out, with delight). Mainland Europe was also where her career flourished until the pandemic hit. "By the time I was 19 or 20, I was doing four-week tours in countries like Germany and Austria with great audiences with disposable income willing to buy CDs. It's a huge, huge market for folk musicians."

Then came the double-whammy of a pandemic and Brexit. Folk musicians have lost out terribly because of the latter in particular, she says. The paperwork and money concerns to tour abroad now are overwhelming. "People forget that it's not about the big stars with their big vans – it's also about the people doing a little festival in the middle of the French countryside, around a tour, which is their livelihood. It affects everyone. I made so much of my income that way. Something needs to change, and change quickly."

But as UK lockdowns have eased, Fyfe has adored returning to live music. A recent show at Scotland's annual Celtic Connections festival was "a joy", she beams. Being paid to play live is another important subject for her: last October, [she slammed the Scottish Rugby Union](#) for calling for musicians to play for free at their Murrayfield stadium. "I'm sorry, but exposure doesn't pay the rent and neither do free tickets to a rugby game," she wrote in Scottish newspaper the *Press And Journal*.

At the same time, she praised Aberdeen FC, for whom she recorded [The Northern Lights of Old Aberdeen](#) – in May 2021 for a season ticket campaign – a track that entered the UK download top 40, and paid seven people (musicians, an engineer and a publicist) Musicians' Union rates. "Organisations, if you want to work with musicians," she said, "this is how you do it." Her tenacity won out again: the Scottish Rugby Union reversed its decision.

The future looks incredibly bright for Iona. Last year, she became the first singer to win the coveted title of Musician of the Year at the MG ALBA Scots Trad Music Awards. Whatever challenges come her way, you know she will take them on without fear and do her damndest to keep singing. "I just want to go on doing what I love," she says. "And bring everyone along with me." 

For more information on Iona Fyfe please visit: ionafyfe.com

Respect Women

One of Iona's most passionate areas of campaigning is against misogyny and sexism in the music industry. She has faced it constantly since she began performing live at 17. In 2021, she wrote about being propositioned for sex in return for help in securing a festival slot by a musician from a well-known Scottish band.

"Women get desensitised to this behaviour quickly because we receive it all the time," she says today. "It's easy to just shrug it off because that's what it's done to us – but that has to be resisted."

What angered her most in her situation was the other person's abuse of their power. Iona believes young people need to be trained to deal with these situations. "In the three years of my degree preparing to be a performer, this never came up. It's vital that these conversations happen, including in curriculums".

As a Musicians' Union member, Iona is proud to see that the organisation has created a [Music Sector Code of Practice](#) to tackle and prevent bullying, harassment and discrimination. She's also delighted that male artists like Sam Kelly have signed up to it. "That's what we need more of – male allies."

The way women are described as musicians also needs to change radically, she says. Promoters often refer to her as being 'lovely' and 'beautiful', and ignore her first-class musical education and experience, while her male band members are called 'formidable' and 'talented'. "That absolutely has to change," she says, rightly. "We deserve so much more."

MU Members' Tax Investigation Insurance

A vital part of the protection the MU offers working musicians

Introduction

This is a summary only. For definitive information on policy cover, terms and exclusions please refer to the policy wording.

Name of the insurer

This policy is underwritten by Markel International Insurance Co Ltd via Markel Tax and arranged by Hencilla Canworth Ltd.

Eligibility

Members of the Musicians' Union (MU) permanently resident in Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.

NB: You must maintain your subscription payments to the Musicians' Union for cover to remain operative.

Demands and needs

This policy meets the demands and needs of individual members that wish to protect against the financial consequences of a Tax Investigation or VAT investigation.

Policy cover

Except where stated below this policy provides fee reimbursement of up to £125,000 in the event that one of the following HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) investigations or disputes occurs in connection with a member's activities as a musician trading as a sole trader, partnership or Ltd company.

Code of Practice 8 enquiries (with a £5,000 limit of indemnity) and Inheritance Tax enquiries (also with a £5,000 limit of indemnity).

HMRC Enquiries and Disputes

(i) Business Self-Assessment Full Enquiry

A Full Enquiry by HMRC into a members Self-Assessment Return following the issue of a Notice under

- S9A or S12AC of the Taxes Management Act 1970; or
- Paragraph 24(1) Schedule 18 Finance Act 1998 together with a request to examine all of your business books and records.

(ii) Personal Self-Assessment Full Enquiry

A Full Enquiry by HMRC into a members Self-Assessment Return following the issue of a Notice under S9A of the Taxes Management Act 1970 into their non-business tax affairs, for example into rental income and/or interest received. This will be accompanied with a request to examine all of the prime documents.

(iii) Income Tax Self-Assessment Aspect Enquiry

An Enquiry by HMRC which is restricted to one or more specific aspects of a members Self-Assessment Return following the issue of a Notice under S9A or S12AC of the Taxes Management Act 1970.

(iv) Corporation Tax Self-Assessment Aspect Enquiry

An Enquiry by HMRC which is restricted to one or more specific aspects of a members Self-Assessment Return following the issue of a Notice under Paragraph 24(1) Schedule 18 Finance Act 1998.

(v) Employer Compliance Dispute

A Dispute which takes place after HMRC have indicated an expression of dissatisfaction with the Designated Client's PAYE, CIS, and/or NIC affairs following an Employer Compliance visit by HMRC or following an expression of dissatisfaction with a members P11Ds or P9Ds.

(vi) IR35 Dispute

A Dispute which takes place when HMRC challenge the status of a member's contract for services and invokes the IR35 legislation following either

- the issue of a Notice under Paragraph 24(1) Schedule 18 Finance Act 1998; or
- an HMRC Employer Compliance visit; or
- the issue of a 'Check of Employer Records Letter.'

(vii) VAT Dispute

A Dispute which takes place following a VAT control visit where a written decision, assessment or statement of alleged arrears is received from HMRC into a member's Value Added Tax Return; or following the receipt of a notice of VAT default surcharge, misdeclaration or late registration penalty.

(viii) Schedule 36 Pre-Dispute

A written request by HMRC under Sch36 FA2008 to inspect business records, assets or premises, including

- inspections undertaken to ensure compliance with VAT and PAYE regulations
- inspections undertaken in relation to the operation of the Construction Industry Scheme.

In the case of a personal taxpayer, a request for the production of documentation to check their Income Tax position.

(ix) Code of Practice 8 Enquiries

HMRC Enquiries commenced under S9A or 12AC of TMA 1970 or Paragraph 24 (1) Schedule 18 FA 1998 accompanied by and conducted under HMRC's Code of Practice 8 procedures. Provided that at conclusion of the enquiry no material omissions were identified and/or a member was not found guilty of fraud or any fraudulent intent.

(x) National Minimum Wage Pre-Dispute

A written request by HMRC to inspect/check business records, including

- inspections undertaken to ensure compliance with the National Minimum Wage Act
- requests for documents and particulars prior to the issue of an assessment of arrears or notice of underpayment.

(xi) Inheritance Tax Enquiries

Enquiries by HMRC into Inheritance Tax Returns submitted to Capital Taxes Office, including

- matters relating to the periodic and proportionate charges applying to Trusts
- Returns in respect of Estates of Deceased Persons provided the Policyholder holds a Probate License and submitted the IHT Return.

Duration of insurance

The policy runs for 12 months from the 1st January and is annually renewable by the MU.

Territorial limits

Enquiries and Disputes undertaken by into tax returns processed through tax system.

Appointed representative

Markel Tax will appoint one of its ex-HMRC Tax Inspectors or VAT officers to deal with any enquiry or dispute on your behalf. This policy will not pay for your accountant's or tax adviser's fees unless Markel Tax specifically request that your accountant/tax adviser provides information for which a fee will be agreed in advance. Any other fees charged by your accountant/tax adviser will be the member's responsibility.

What is not insured

1. any claim made, brought or commenced outside the Territorial Limits;
2. any claim where the Professional Expenses are capable of being reimbursed under any other policy or certificate;
3. any incident, cause or event occurring prior to or existing at inception of this Policy;

Photo: Ian Pan / EyeEm / Getty Images



Tax investigation insurance will reimburse the professional fees incurred for defending you in the event of a tax enquiry

4. an Enquiry under Public Notice 160 or Section 60 of the VAT Act 1994 or any matters handled by HMRC Specialist Investigations, Fraud Investigation Service, Civil Investigations of Fraud, Counter Avoidance and Criminal Investigations Sections. Also Code of Practice 9 cases and/or the defence of any tax and/or criminal prosecution.

5. any claim made where:

(a) Income Tax or Corporation Tax Self-Assessment Returns are submitted more than 90 days after the statutory time limits, except where HMRC accept that a reasonable excuse existed for the delay; or

(b) a member has not notified chargeability to tax to HMRC within the statutory time limits for doing so; or

(c) a Return is submitted at the final filing date which contains provisional figures in respect of all of the trading income and expenditure;

6. an investigation arising out of a voluntary disclosure made to HMRC in respect of omitted tax, NIC or VAT liabilities which become due as a result of a member's deliberate act or following an HMRC campaign where the Designated Client has made an incorrect Return to HMRC;

7. Professional Expenses incurred before the written acceptance of a claim by Markel Tax;

8. taxes, fines, interest or any other duties or penalties imposed or assessed upon the member by any revenue authority, court or Tribunal;

9. any Dispute arising under the National Minimum Wage Act 1998 or Enquiries from HMRC and/or Department of Work and Pensions into a claim made by a member under the Tax Credits Act 2002;





Members must take all reasonable measures to minimise the likelihood of a claim being made under this policy

Photo: Elizabeth Livermore / Getty Images

10. the cost of preparing and reconciling Returns, accounts, records or any other statutory returns, and the cost of professional valuations to support them. To include the reconciliation of VAT Returns to accounts, Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) Returns and Real Time Information (RTI) payment submissions.

11. Professional Expenses incurred in respect of:

(a) any HMRC Enquiry into a tax planning arrangement where HMRC has allocated a Disclosure of Tax Avoidance Scheme (DoTAS) Number for inclusion on the relevant Self-Assessment Return or where a DoTAS Number would have been issued but for the failure to notify HMRC of the tax planning arrangement; or

(b) any matter relating to bespoke tax planning outside of the normal trade such as film partnerships or film schemes, or planning involving artificially created losses or loan arrangements; or

(c) cases referred to the General Anti-Abuse Rules panel.

Conditions

Reasonable precautions

The member must take all reasonable measures to minimise the likelihood of a claim being made under this Policy and take all reasonable steps to minimise the cost of any claim.

Insurers' consent

Insurers' written consent must be obtained by the Policyholder before incurring Professional Expenses. This consent will be given provided Markel Tax is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for representation and/or there are reasonable prospects of disputing HMRC's decision or allegations.

In Employer Compliance, IR35 or VAT Disputes, unless Schedule 36 Pre-Dispute cover has been taken out, a request for further information following an audit or control visit does not constitute a Dispute; there must be a challenge into the Designated Client's treatment of any tax, NIC or VAT matter.

Claims procedure

A claim must be notified in writing immediately the member becomes aware of any incident, cause or event which has or is likely to give rise to a claim under this Policy. Failure to notify during the period of insurance may lead to the claim being denied.

Initial notification of a claim must be made in writing by first class post, or email, and be received by Markel Tax within the period of insurance by addressing it to:

**Markel Tax, 11 Mitchell Court,
Castle Mound Way, Rugby CV23 0UY**

Tel: 0345 223 2727

Email: deborah.leeman@markel.com

[markel.com](https://www.markel.com) 

Statutory MU Notices

Important news for members...

Members are advised that the following statutory notices are no longer sent to members by post, and are now available from the MU website at [theMU.org](https://www.themu.org)

- **Summary financial statements**
Available in June each year (the latest full Accounts remain available upon request).
- **Executive Committee election results**
Available in November each year, except in the case of a casual vacancy. See MU Rule IV.

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

The following will also be published on the website.

- **Regional Committees**
Calls for nominations and election results. See MU Rule III.
- **Section Committees**
Calls for nominations and election results.

Those members who wish to receive paper copies of these communications should contact their Regional Office.

The publication of the above notices will also be brought to members' attention by email. It is therefore important that members ensure the Union has their latest email address on file.

Please visit and log into our site at [theMU.org](https://www.themu.org) to check your details.

Members are also reminded that the Rules of the Union are available to access at any time on the MU website.



HOW TO CREATE AND SUSTAIN WORK AS A MUSIC TEACHER

The need for self-employed music teachers to boost their businesses and create income is more paramount than ever. Helena Ruinard speaks to teachers with a broad range of experience for their views on how to meet this challenge

Helen Neilson, cello teacher extraordinaire, has recently completed her Suzuki Level 5 teacher training. After more than ten years of study, while working full time as a cello teacher and performer, she is happy to take stock of where she is – and enjoy the committed students who come to [her south London studio](#). She says the pandemic does seem to have slowed down new enquiries to her private practice as families deal with so much uncertainty, although she has been fortunate to have maintained a full studio throughout the pandemic. On the other hand, however, there are plenty of new children coming forward to learn at schools she visits, which supports the notion that it is good to have a few strands to your work.

For violin teacher Rob Norman, the pandemic provided the impetus to move to Berlin where he can continue to teach students gained in the UK remotely, while at the same time settle into a culture that he says values musicians far more than the UK. Brexit has been a factor in his thinking too and he says of the summer of 2020, "I was able to take advantage of everything moving to online delivery. It's almost universally accepted now amongst parents and students that it's an option."

Building A Network

Both these teachers freely admit that they wouldn't be where they are today without having met some key people. Helen Neilson says, "I was lucky enough to come into contact with some influential teachers when I was in my twenties who saw what I was doing and got behind me. I found myself with a job at an eminent London school when I was still in the middle of my Masters." Meanwhile, Rob Norman's experiences in both New York and London were not dissimilar. "I landed a job

"Make the most of your network and ensure you build contacts"

Dr Kerry Boyle

at a well-to-do school in Brooklyn through someone I was in a quartet with. A few years later, back in London, my route to a busy instrumental teaching job in a school was through teaching one of its students privately and then being recommended."

[Dr Kerry Boyle, lecturer at Canterbury](#)

[Christchurch University](#), emphasises the importance of being active in your area. "I do think your teaching practice evolves. The more you do and the more things you expose yourself to as a musician, the more you will grow and the more you will enhance your reputation. Building contacts is key."

Boyle stresses the importance of developing an entrepreneurial approach by getting involved with local schools and music services in a proactive bid to generate students. "Get in touch with all the organisations delivering music within a 20-mile radius and offer to give workshops, demonstrations or free taster sessions," she advises. "Make the most of your network and build contacts. Find out who the main teachers of your instrument in the area are and make them aware of your presence. They may have waiting lists and need to pass students on."

Does she think being in one location is an advantage? "Yes, but I have moved and worked in different areas and that's often part of life. You have to be willing to put yourself out there because in any location it takes a few years to establish yourself, and then things will start to happen naturally."

Portfolio Working

Boyle says there is a level of joy and freedom in working for yourself. She also believes that building a portfolio career is essential when creating a resilient, reliable career through which teachers can diversify and grow. "Most of the undergraduates I teach still don't have a realistic idea of what it is to have a career as a musician", says Boyle. "When I mention that I work for three different institutions and have a private practice it sounds rather precarious to them. They don't understand that a portfolio of work is a viable option, and for many actually the single best way to build a career."

It's a view shared by [singer-songwriter Nick Shaikh](#). "It really helps to have a life outside of teaching. If all you do is one thing it can get stale very quickly. Part of the energy you bring to lessons comes through reconnecting with why you became a musician."

Agencies And Online Platforms

Most musicians will have a presence on social media, as well as listings. Although these are unlikely to deliver enough students to make up a substantial private practice, it's good to consider how and whether to use them. Both Nick Shaikh and Rob Norman mention including Facebook groups in their marketing. Choose carefully and you may find a group whose ethos fits well with what you deliver, for example the Facebook group Clubs →



CHANGES MUSICTEACHERS. CO.UK

Musicteachers.co.uk, which many teaching musicians used to recruit students, sadly closed its free listings service on 24 January 2022. A new version of musicteachers.co.uk is now operating with a paid service, although the MU does not endorse this. Because of the changes, the MU no longer works in partnership with MusicTeachers.co.uk.

The MU's own website already offers a database for members to list their services, and we encourage members to use this. There are many other websites for music teachers that offer services ranging from free or cheap listings to commission-based plans. We advise members to read any website's terms and conditions carefully before signing up. Any charges should fairly reflect the benefits offered, and members are advised to compare the costs of similar services before committing.

Some websites aimed at teachers can be exploitative, with high charges or exaggerated promises of student recruitment. The MU will always challenge these businesses once we are made aware of them. Members can contact the Education Department with any concerns via education@theMU.org

and Classes for Children in Leeds has many ads for what look like high quality classes and tuition, whereas other groups that seem focused on toddler classes or arts and crafts may not be such a good match.

The case for using social media and listings is strong, but for many it may still be trumped by contacts. "I have run adverts on Facebook groups occasionally and have now built up a following of a few hundred on Instagram. But over time it's word of mouth that seems to work for me," says Shaikh. Helen Neilson points to [the British Suzuki Music Association](https://www.britishsuzuki.org) teachers list, and [the London Suzuki Group](https://www.london-suzuki.org) teachers directory as being useful for her, but acknowledges that the parents who access these will likely already have done significant research or be part of musically-aware networks.

Of the traditional-style listings sites Kerry Boyle says, "I was on musicteachers.co.uk but it was never the case that it generated a steady stream of enquiries." And perhaps that is why sites like that and [tutorpages.com](https://www.tutorpages.com) have been taken over and run more like agencies now. Chris Walters, MU National Organiser, Education, Health and Wellbeing, says, "There is nothing inherently wrong with agencies, and some create a very slick interface and customer experience. Just make sure you read through the terms and conditions before signing up to one."

Whether or not this suits what you deliver is worth careful consideration. After spending so much time and money on her training, Helen Neilson does not want to be on a site that packages up lessons at a discount. "I just think it gives off the wrong message. I'm looking for those families and children that are going for the long-term commitment", she says. "In my studio, the parent and child are generally advised to observe around a term of lessons before they begin, depending upon what the child and parent need to be ready to start their learning. It changes the focus of the people who come to you and in order to keep with my ethos of building students from grassroots upwards, and combining individual with group tuition from the start, I generally turn away more than I accept."

Pedagogy

"I think the fact that I have trained as a teacher makes a difference and sets me apart," says Neilson. "Some people are lucky enough to receive training as part of their job, but I would encourage anyone serious about teaching to consider courses like the iPGCE for instrumental group teaching, or the ESTA PGCert. And investigate approaches like Kodaly, Dalcroze or the Colourstrings and Suzuki methods."



Photo: Jose Luis Pelaez Inc / Getty Images

(Left) Kerry Boyle conducts the choir from Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School in Canterbury
(Above) "Kids just want to be doing it," says Nick Shaikh

"When you teach you do it to serve. You are giving to someone else"

Nick Shaikh

Naturally, once you have your students, "you have to make sure your teaching's up to scratch," says Shaikh. "For me, a child-led approach is key. With short attention spans and so much instant gratification, kids just want to be doing it. I tend to start by facilitating this without notation, and then if they want to learn the theory later on it makes so much more sense."

A Holistic Approach

In all of this, it's good to remember that there is no one-size-fits-all solution. "I would say it's good not to limit yourself to one particular type of teaching", says Kerry Boyle. "For example, you can be open to teaching different age groups, in different types of schools; whole classes as well as one to one; and perhaps be prepared to stand in front of groups and give a workshop."

Helen Neilson came to Suzuki teaching almost by accident. "I was delivering whole class lessons to Year 1 and 2 classes with another teacher and she was training in the Suzuki

method. It aligned very naturally with what I was doing already. Having said that, you need an approach that suits the environment, and so I teach in a different way for the state primary school project I'm involved in, and adapt my methodology to suit each individual student, both in school and in private studio environments."

Helen Neilson is constantly aware of the conflict between the hours dedicated to teaching and choices which have to be made between that and her professional orchestral commitments. She is also an active freelancer on double bass with many orchestras, and so she wants the choices she makes to be justified with students and families who are equally committed. These conflicts are sentiments shared by so many in the profession.

"When you teach you do it to serve – you are giving to someone else", says Shaikh, "which is why it is really important that you are also doing something that is personally fulfilling. For me that would be time spent in the studio."

"I'm a huge fan of lifelong learning as an approach", says Boyle, who started out as a trained opera singer. "They say it keeps us young, after all!" Shaikh says, "Part of it is who you are and the sort of energy you give out. When people see you are really engaged in what you are doing they begin to trust you."

'Young at heart' and 'engaged' are great descriptors of many of the best music teachers. The journey is there for us to enjoy too, after all. **mu**

Top 5 Tips

How to boost your teaching business

1

Network

Reach out to organisations and musicians in your area. Offer your services and be open to different ways of working. You never know what may come of pursuing a new direction.

2

Professional Development

Take up CPD opportunities offered free by an employer, or at discounted rates by the MU and other bodies. Training and education offer crucial time to reflect and gain fresh ideas.

3

You, the musician

Remember why you became a musician and seek opportunities to create and perform. This will help you bring fresh energy to your lessons.

4

Portfolio

As a freelancer, it makes sense to teach privately as well as at a school. For many, an important reason to have a portfolio is to reflect one's professional identity and cultivate a breadth of skills.

5

Be business-ready

Be clear, concise and timely in communications with pupils and parents. Remember: people appreciate professionalism and efficiency.

TOP TIP

A BALANCING ACT

Be prepared to prioritise parts of your portfolio career in order to develop a particular area. And don't be afraid to maintain a healthy work-life balance.



Singer, songwriter and rapper Simba had a No.3 UK hit single with *Rover* (feat.DTG), after the song went viral on TikTok

MAKING THE MOST OF TIKTOK

As the video-sharing app rises to the top of the social media food chain and becomes a vital promotional tool that can break a song internationally, Henry Yates asks the musicians gaining traction on TikTok for their advice on going viral – and their warnings for the potential fallout

Three years is a long time in social media. Back in 2019, when the MU was drawing up its latest member survey, MU Campaigns and Social Media Official Maddy Radcliff suggested polling UK musicians on a hot-tipped social video app that had originated in China in 2016. "I remember other people around me saying, 'We've never heard of TikTok'. And when the statistics came back, it was quite funny, because 80% of our members were on Facebook, about 45% on Instagram, 40% on Twitter. And 0% on TikTok. Not a single soul."

It's safe to say a poll taken today would look very different. Since 2020, TikTok has been downloaded globally more than any other social, communication, photo, video or entertainment app. According to App Annie's Mobile Forecast report, the platform is set to surpass 1.5 billion users over the next twelve months. Meanwhile, Instagram's undignified scramble to include a video feature shows how seriously this platform is viewed by rivals.

New Breed

What makes TikTok different to existing platforms? Firstly, its users are young (more than half are under 34). Secondly, the TikTok algorithm working behind the scenes is considered much smarter than rivals, serving ultra-personalised content to each user's tailored For You feed, based on their in-app choices. Bottom line: your goal as a musician is to game the algorithm so that it pushes your video into the For You feeds of interested parties.

Critically, interaction on TikTok goes far beyond likes: a video has the best chance of being a viral hit when other users pass it on. "Engagement looks different on TikTok," says Maddy. "There's much more dialoguing. People can comment on your video, cut it together, greenscreen it, respond to it, add to it. That's the nature of the platform."

Zero To Hero

It's true that big fish like Ed Sheeran topped TikTok's year-end league tables in 2021. But unlike other social platforms, where follower count is everything, TikTok is more of a meritocracy: a video posted by a newcomer is theoretically as likely to be boosted by the all-powerful algorithm if it hits the right marks. "I realised TikTok was a great platform for musicians when smaller artists started having success," says [Dundee singer-songwriter Frances Gein \(@francesgein\)](#). "The idea that a song can be used to create trends and millions of videos spawning from it is a unique selling point."

Unless you're accepted into the Creator Fund, TikTok doesn't generate money for musicians. But according to a study by analytics experts MRC Data, 67% of app users are more likely to seek out songs on streaming platforms after hearing them on TikTok. Success on the platform can also segue into more traditional wins: TikTok says that 70-plus previously unknown artists who blew up on the app in 2020 went on to sign major label deals.

Hits And Misses

First off, a disclaimer. Nobody knows for sure what will catch fire on TikTok (one of the app's biggest success stories, Bella Poarch, took

"Some very unexpected things can go viral on TikTok"

Fleur McGerr

off with a video in which she stared blankly into the camera and nodded robotically over a beat). Fleur McGerr is [a social media manager](#) and has seen how arbitrary the app can be. "Some very unexpected things can go viral on TikTok," she says. "Whereas, as any social media manager knows, things you think are an absolute dead cert can sink without a trace."

In a major-label scenario where money is no object, a musician might pay a TikTok influencer to push their song. For grassroots artists without that option, traction on TikTok takes a little more ingenuity, and the app's most successful exponents employ tried-and-tested methods to give them the best chance of cutting through the competition.

Test The Water

In such a vast marketplace, the first step is to spend time as an observer, familiarising yourself with the app's format and features. Do some research and embed yourself within the communities you hope to engage and see what's trending. "There are so many subcultures on TikTok," says Maddy. "If you just go on the app and watch a few videos, that doesn't mean you see the totality."



“Make use of the app’s filters, stickers and – when appropriate – built-in music to boost engagement”

Adam Rigg



TICKED OFF

TikTok offers huge benefits for musicians and can have a real sense of community despite the global scale. On the flipside, says Frances Gein, with its high stakes and all-too-visible extremes of success and failure, the app is not always a positive space. “It’s easy to get down when using the TikTok app, as often you are seeing other people having successful videos and viral hits. It can make you feel like giving up. As well as that, I think more than other social medias it can have a bad affect on mental health, especially that of teens who have body image issues. I limit myself using TikTok to avoid these feelings, so I can imagine younger people struggling.”

In the worst-case scenario of online abuse, MU Campaigns & Social Media Official Maddy Radcliff reminds TikTok users that the MU offers specialist help. “TikTok has so much potential. But it does come with all the same downsides as the other social media platforms. So I think one thing that’s really important to mention is how to deal with online abuse. We’ve just put together some advice for the MU website on online abuse, which is just about to go live. It signposts lots of resources – as well as the MU’s Safe Space for reporting abuse.” To access the MU advice visit tinyurl.com/MUonlineabuseadvice

Photo: SOPA Images / Getty Images

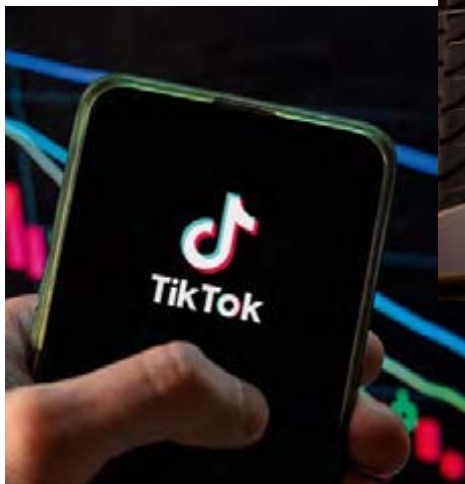


Photo: Helen Boast



Songwriter and vocalist Kelli-Leigh (above) says that the timing of posts on TikTok can sometimes be key. Dua Lipa (right) has gained much traffic both intentionally and unintentionally on the platform

“To really get the most out of TikTok, you do have to spend time on there learning what’s trending, what people are doing, what works and what doesn’t,” agrees McGerr. “There’s also a lot of extremely inane stuff to sift through. It’s a big time drain, like any social network – but worse.”

Little And Often

TikTok’s algorithm is known to reward regular content posters over those who merely dip in. If you’re serious about success on the app, commit to a regular schedule and time your posts for when your intended audience will be active (you can do a deep dive into this by upgrading to a Pro Account, giving access to follower activity data). “They say that posting three times a day is optimal,” explains McGerr. “No one with a job has time for that, surely, but regular posts really work.”

The TikTok algorithm also rewards videos that are watched all the way through, again and again. Obviously, this is far more likely to happen if you can identify the most impactful section of your song and stick to a maximum video duration of 15 seconds. “The main, younger demographic on TikTok

has an attention span of only eight seconds,” points out McGerr. “Slightly older people have a massive 12 seconds. But #learnontiktok videos can make use of the full three-minute limit and still do well.”

Sound And Vision

We’ll leave the specific content of your video down to you (it could literally be anything, from a dance to a lip-sync over your song). But for Gein, there’s a pattern to the videos cutting through on TikTok. “They have to be straight to the point, with constant stimulation. As well as with aesthetically pleasing imagery – hence why TikTok lights have become a popular thing. What doesn’t work? Anything trying to be a YouTube video, too much talking, no personal information for people to contact you. Just posting a song and asking people to check it out won’t get you anywhere.”

TikTok excels at simple content creation. Once familiar with the toolset, a typical user can go from first idea to final cut in ten minutes. But while videos that feel spontaneous and authentic often do better than polished offerings, double-check before posting that you’ve included critical info such as the song details, so listeners can head to your other (paying) channels. “Unlike other platforms,” warns McGerr, “you can’t go back and edit videos on TikTok”.



Photo: Jason Koerner / Getty Images


You'll be rewarded by the algorithm for using TikTok's built-in tools, so do as much content creation within the app as possible. "Make use of the app's filters, stickers and – when appropriate – built-in music to boost engagement," says Adam Rigg of [acclaimed UK blues-rockers The Bad Day](#). "Another thing that seems to work well is posting a short video with text over the video that takes longer to read than the length of the video. This means the video is watched several times and triggers the algorithm to boost the post, so more people see it."

Two-Way Street

Engagement with fellow creators shouldn't be an afterthought. Liking posts and interacting with those who comment on your videos tells the algorithm that you're worth championing. "Do spend time on TikTok following other profiles for ideas and make sure you're interacting with other people," says McGerr. "Not just pushing posts out and leaving it." But the most successful TikTok users go further. While you're obviously here to promote your own music, scratching the back of a fellow artist by creating your own version of their trending song – maybe by using the Duet and Stitch features – will both please the algorithm and pay you back with increased visibility for your own content. "It's a win-win for everyone," says Gein.

The Long Game

As with any social platform, there will be disappointments: videos that stall, listeners who don't convert into followers, even online abuse (see Ticked Off boxout). But even if a post doesn't fly the first time around, don't delete it. The TikTok algorithm doesn't hold a grudge and the failure of older content won't stop it boosting subsequent videos. If you score a hit later, fans can visit your page, discover what you've done before and send that viral, too.

"I've posted content which has bombed, with hardly any views, deleted it and reposted it at another time, and it's done well – so sometimes timing is key," explains the British [songwriter and vocalist, Kelli-Leigh \(@kellileighuk\)](#). "And when my 'did you know I sang' video went viral, all the past content I had made ended up being viewed by thousands of people. Having that content there showed my personality, which helped me garner a bigger following. In short, the content is never wasted, it's just there ready if something catches..." 

Top 5 Tips

How to make the most out of TikTok

1

Do Your Research

TikTok is vast and you need to target the right communities to gain traction. Before you post anything, find the groups you want to engage and learn what makes them tick (and tok).

2

Little And Often

Regularly posting 15-second clips is far more effective than dropping a three-minute video then disappearing for a month. In a perfect world, aim for three posts a day.

3

Edit In The App

TikTok's video editing toolset won't just turn your clip from lackluster to eye-catching. If you use the app's trending effects, the algorithm is more likely to promote your video.

4

Don't Delete Old Posts

Even if content tanks first time around, it's all part of your brand and could catch fire further down the line.

5

Be Social

The TikTok algorithm notices and rewards the users who truly take an interest in other people's content. Dive into the community and you'll find your own posts bubbling up.

TOP
TIP

SPOT THE TRENDS

We cannot stress this enough: trends are king on TikTok. Spot them early, align your content and ride the wave all the way to a viral hit.

Explaining The Process Of A Personal Injury Claim

John Morrison, partner at Morrish Solicitors LLP – a leading legal services provider – examines how MU members and their families can make a free personal injury claim

Morrish Solicitors provide a full range of legal services to MU members and their families at exclusive rates. Their services include Wills & Probate, Property & Conveyancing, Family Law & Divorce, Medical Negligence and a free Personal Injury service.

Introduction

The aim of a personal injury claim is simple. It is to recover compensation for the injury and financial loss suffered. However, the route to get there can involve technicalities and issues that require expert legal advice and guidance.

As a member of the MU, you and your family have access to Morrish Solicitors' FREE personal injury claim service. Their team of personal injury solicitors specialise in Trade Union work and act exclusively for injured individuals rather than employers or insurers. They have vast experience in all types of personal injury claims (including within the music and performing arts industry) and can assist whether or not the injury has occurred at work.

Hopefully, this article provides an insight into the journey of a personal injury claim and answers some of the questions those needing to consider a claim might have. However, it is not a substitute to placing yourself in the hands of a specialist solicitor who has made this journey many times before. Why travel alone when you can have the benefit of an expert guide for free?

Legal costs

As a MU member, you and your family have access to free legal representation. You will pay nothing whether or not the claim is successful and will keep 100% of any damages recovered. Just contact the dedicated helpline number 01132 979 810.

Liability

There is no automatic entitlement to damages for injury. A 3rd party must be liable.

There are certain situations in which there will be strict liability without having to prove fault but most cases require proof of negligence. Negligence means:

- The risk of injury was known or ought to have been foreseen by the 3rd party, and;
- The 3rd party failed to take reasonable care to prevent the injury.

Obtaining specialist legal advice will let you know whether liability is likely to be established and whether a claim is likely to succeed.

Submission of a claim

The legal process is started by the claim being submitted to the 3rd party alleged to be liable.

If the value of the claim is unlikely to exceed £25,000, a Claim Notification Form (CNF) is submitted via the Ministry of Justice "online portal". Depending on the type of accident, the 3rd party or their insurer will have 6 or 8 weeks to confirm whether liability is admitted.

If the value of the claim is likely to exceed £25,000, a Protocol Letter of Claim will be sent. The 3rd party or their insurer will then have 21 days to acknowledge receipt and 3 months thereafter to confirm whether liability is admitted.

Admission of liability

If liability is admitted, it is then just a case of calculating the damages and seeking to agree a settlement (see below for how damages are calculated and settled).

Denial of liability

Under the Personal Injury Pre-Action Protocol, the defendant must give reasons for a denial and provide disclosure of all relevant documents.

If liability remains denied and a settlement is not possible, commencement of court proceedings will need to be considered.

Calculation of compensation for injury

Compensation is for the pain, suffering and loss of amenity (PSLA) caused by the injury.

Justice in UK law is based upon claimants receiving the same amount for the same or similar injury. In the circumstances, it is not a case of making a personal judgement on what is fair (people will have different views on this) but assessing what a Judge is likely to award based upon the medical evidence, compensation guidelines ("Judicial College Guidelines") and reported case law.

This process is also conducive to the parties being able to agree an amount or a bracket of compensation for the injury.

Calculation of financial loss

Basically, this is an accounting process.

A claimant can seek to recover any loss they can prove was caused by the injury.

This means that a claimant should keep a record of any loss or expense suffered and retain proof where possible. Some common examples are the following:

- Lost earnings
- Travel and parking costs attending medical appointments
- Medication and medical equipment
- Private medical treatment

It is also possible to claim for the care and assistance provided by family or friends as a consequence of the injury. This is calculated based upon the amount of time spent.

The above is subject to the test of reasonableness, proportionality and mitigation.

Medical evidence

Independent expert medical evidence is key to any claim.

Your solicitor will instruct the appropriate medical expert to prepare a report. Ultimately, the expert owes a duty to the court to provide an honest and independent opinion.

In cases where symptoms are ongoing or further medical treatment/investigation is required, there may be a delay in obtaining or finalising the medical evidence. This is to enable a clear prognosis.

In high value cases or those involving complexities in terms of causation of injury, the court may grant the defendant permission to obtain their own independent expert medical evidence. In the event of a disagreement between the experts, it will be for the court to determine which expert opinion is preferred.

Interim payments

If liability has been admitted but there is a delay in being able to agree a settlement of damages, it is possible to request an interim payment if you are in financial need or funding is required for things such as medical treatment.

Photo: Phout Kls Kaolamsing / EyeEm / Getty Images



Independent expert
medical evidence is
key to any claim

Settlement

When the evidence allows for an assessment of damages (including any likely future loss), an offer to settle can be made.

If liability has been admitted, it is just a case of the parties being able to agree a sum. However, in the absence of agreement, the court can be asked to assess damages.

If liability is denied, this litigation risk must be factored in. The risk runs both ways. The claimant risks losing on liability and recovering nothing but the defendant risks being found liable and ordered to pay damages and costs. This must be weighed up when making or considering any offer.

A settlement is possible at any point before a case is determined by the court at a trial.

Trial

Once court proceedings are commenced, the court will order case management directions to prepare the case for trial. This is a timetable of directions for both parties to comply with, including the following:

- Disclosure
- Exchange of witness evidence
- Service expert evidence
- Service of a Schedule of Loss and Counter Schedule.

The court can be asked to determine the issue of liability and/or damages depending on what remains in dispute.

Going to trial is a calculated judgement based upon an assessment of the evidence and likelihood of winning but there can be no guarantees. **mu**

For more information, visit morrishsolicitors.com/mu/ or call 033 3344 9600.

tributes



Val Fenton (front) was a gifted musician and a committed activist for the MU

Photo: Musicians' Union

Photo: Musicians' Union

Jack Stoddart

Musician, fixer, beloved MU Assistant General Secretary, and proud family man

Jack Stoddart served as Assistant General Secretary of the Musicians' Union from 1969 to 1991, and focused on live music employment. He negotiated agreements covering work in regional orchestras, regional opera companies, regional theatres, resorts, ballrooms, cruise ships and so on. Jack also handled the reciprocal exchange agreements with the American Federation of Musicians and vetted contracts for members undertaking work abroad.

Born and raised in County Durham, Jack's music career started at the age of around 15 when a band was formed by a group of school friends. By 1942, Jack was playing in two or three dance bands, including Dave and Tommy Heron's Band and the Dave McGee Band. At the

age of 18, he was called up to be a Bevin Boy. He was assigned to one of the local pits in County Durham and worked down the pit for three-and-a-half years.

Jack worked in the Finance Department for Durham County Council, working mainly on teachers' payroll. He was a member of NALGO, joined the MU, and the Labour Party. He became active in local politics and served as a city councillor in Durham City. In the MU, he progressed through Branch Secretary, North District Council, Delegate Conference representative, and was elected to the National Executive Committee. During this time, living in Durham, Jack continued to play with dance bands; playing virtually every Saturday night and certainly every New Year's Eve Dance.

Following his appointment as Assistant General Secretary in 1969, Jack and Mary relocated to Dartford where they lived happily for the rest of their lives.

He was kind and considerate to all, he upheld the best of standards, would strike up a conversation with anyone, and was deeply loved. He left the world a better place because of who he was.

Lee Stoddart

"Kind and considerate, he upheld the best standards, and would strike up a conversation with anyone"

Val Fenton

British jazz stalwart, educator and MU committee member

Val Fenton, our friend, colleague and sometime musical director, has sadly died aged 76. Born in the Welsh mining town of Abertillery, she later moved to London and lectured in further and higher education for a number of years before retiring in the late 90s.

From a young age, Val's musical talents were obvious. She had perfect pitch and easily took to learning the piano – deciding at the age of 11 that she no longer needed lessons! She was very active on the London jazz scene – she studied with Stan Tracey and appeared to be on first name terms with nearly every jazz muso in town. Val could often be found hanging out at Ronnie Scott's and once memorably ended up having an after-party with Dizzy Gillespie back at her house!

Val had played and collaborated with other musicians, but it was not until the late 70s that she became a band leader, forming the jazz-fusion band Vanishing Point. Writing and arranging, organising rehearsals, hustling for gigs, doing the publicity – Val mostly did it all, albeit with a little help from her friends. She later performed with El Son Latino, a Latin band with her then partner

Dick Brett on bass. In many ways this band was the precursor for what was to come next.

Whilst on holiday in Colombia with Dick, they came up with the idea for her next project. Val became Flora 'Rallie' de Gales, and the band Chiva Riva was conceived. They played regularly for the next few years, with regular gigs at the Tufnell Park Tavern, a week's residency at City University, and plenty of other pub, club and college gigs. There were performances at Jazz festivals in Cardiff, Grimsby and Finland.

"Active on the London scene, she appeared to be on first name terms with nearly every jazz muso in town"

After she finished playing she continued to be active in the MU, and was on the London Regional Committee until her illness intervened. Always a committed socialist, she was well known for her willingness to passionately fight for what she believed in, as well as for her sense of humour. Val always had a positive attitude, even after she became ill. She was herself right to the end, her personality undimmed.

Colin Drake, Annie Duarte, Mike Fenton

Norma Waterson MBE

Revered folk singer and one of the true greats of traditional English folk music

Norma Waterson, who has died aged 82, was one of the defining voices of English folk and proud matriarch of its first family. "An extraordinary balance of timidity and fearlessness," as husband Martin Carthy described her, she confessed to a shyness that simply vanished on stage, drawing the audience in with emotive, sonorous vocals and folksy charm throughout her prolific 70-year career.

"Beloved by so many for upholding the English folk tradition, Norma rallied against conservatism"

First playing folk and pop around her native Hull with siblings Lal and Mike as 50s skiffle group The Mariners, it was traditional folk that would inform Norma's next family outfit, The Watsonsons, with various line-ups involving Lal, Mike, Martin and cousin John

Harrison. The debut album *Frost And Fire* (1965) was a perfect vehicle for their earthy, four-part harmonies celebrating traditional folk. With two further albums the next year, the resultant UK tour saw the press anoint the young quartet as 'the folk Beatles'.

Following a four-year sojourn in Montserrat, Norma reformed The Watsonsons in 1972, this time with new husband Martin's intricate guitar and smooth vocals replacing John. Daughter Eliza joining in the early 90s, bringing her own vocals and fiddle playing to the mix, saw the band evolve into Waterson:Carthy.

Beloved by so many for upholding the English folk tradition, Norma rallied against conservatism. "You can't do that with tradition. You have to hope each generation brings their own thing to it, so it keeps going," she said. "Folk music is just stories about the human condition." Suitably, her solo album *Norma Waterson*, with intriguing covers of Elvis Costello, Billy Bragg and Jerry Garcia, almost won the 1996 Mercury Music Prize, an award perhaps more associated with avant-garde pop music.

Honoured with an MBE and a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2016 Radio 2 Folk Awards, she continued to perform at the annual Normafest, created by Eliza in her honour, and gave her final performance in London two years later.

Clive Somerville

Norma Waterson, revered folk singer and doyenne of the British folk revival



Photo: Jon Lusk / Getty Images

Sheila Bromberg

Harpist who played on both classical and pop greats

On 17 March, 1967, Sheila Bromberg became the first female musician to play on a Beatles record. That night, during a three hour session at Abbey Road studios in London, she put down the harp accompaniment to *She's Leaving Home*, the group's plaintive lament to a runaway girl and her parents, which appeared on their 1967 album, *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band*.

For Bromberg, who got paid £9, it was all in a day's work. In 2011, she told the *Oxford Mail*, "of all the music I've performed in, I'm noted for four bars of music. I found that a little bit bizarre."

Born in London on 2 September, 1928 to Rose Lyons, a seamstress, and Michael Bromberg, an orchestral viola player, Sheila Zelda Patricia Bromberg was already a skilled pianist when she began studying harp at the Royal College Of Music in London at the age of 14.

After graduation in 1949, she enjoyed successful stints with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and the BBC Concert Orchestra. She also played harp on the scores to the James Bond films *Dr No* and *Goldfinger*, regularly backed musicians on *Top Of The Pops* as a member of the show's orchestra, played on the *Morecambe And Wise* TV show and appeared on *Monty Python's Flying Circus* playing harp in a wheelbarrow.

She was particularly in demand during the disco era as a stalwart of the Armada Orchestra, making two albums, 1975's *Disco Armada*

"Of all the music I've performed in, I'm noted for four bars of music. I found that a little bit bizarre"

and 1976's *Philly Armada*, for John Abbey's Contempo label, and as the label's in-house orchestra playing on many more. She also provided the memorable intro to Heatwave's 1977 No. 2 disco hit *Boogie Nights*. Over the years she also recorded with artists including Andrew Lloyd-Webber, Frank Sinatra, Dusty Springfield and The Bee Gees.

She remained active up to her retirement, then turned to teaching music to children with learning difficulties. She gained a degree in music therapy at 70 and continued teaching through her 80s. She died on 17 August, 2021 aged 92 at a hospice in Aylesbury, and she will be dearly missed by everyone who ever knew her.

Lois Wilson



Courtesy of David Laurence



Ken Essex

Much admired violist who worked with The Beatles and Sinatra

The violist Ken Essex has died aged 101, after a stellar career spanning 70 years. Ken studied at the Royal Academy of Music and after serving in the Royal Marines in the Second World War, he joined the London Philharmonic. He was the Hurwitz Quartet, performing at Glyndebourne.

Ken went freelance in the 1960s and worked with major names. He played on The Beatles' *Yesterday*, worked with Frank Sinatra and Bing Crosby, and played on Abba's winning 1974 Eurovision entry *Waterloo*. He played with the Aeolian Quartet on the theme tune for *Fawlty Towers* and on hundreds of film scores, taking the solo on the title music of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*.

Most recently, Ken raised thousands of pounds for Hospice Aid UK and Moorfields Eye Hospital, walking 10K in 10 days for both his 100th and 101st birthdays. "I've had so many musicians say what an amazingly wonderful person he was," says his daughter Liz Golding. "Generous, kind, funny and welcoming... he really didn't appreciate what high regard he was held in by the rest of the music profession."

Clive Somerville

Gillian Eastwood

Violinist and the first female string principal of a major London orchestra

Gillian Eastwood was born in Runcorn, Cheshire on 2 April, 1933. She studied the violin with Albert Sammons at the RCM, winning all the major violin and chamber music prizes.

Her first appointment was as leader of the Carl Rosa Opera orchestra. She then joined the Philharmonia Orchestra in 1957, and was promoted to Principal Second Violin in 1975. Gillian was the first female string principal of a major London orchestra. She also became the first woman to serve on the Philharmonia's council of management. In 1985, she moved to the English National Opera Orchestra, where she also played as Principal Second Violin until her retirement in 2004.

Gillian was utterly dedicated to her music, the orchestras she played with, her students, and of course her husband Anthony Farnell, who she missed sorely after he died in 2009. Tony was the reason that she left the ENO in order to be his sole carer.

Gillian Eastwood died at home on 9 November, 2021.

Fiona Wilson



Judd Procter

Jazz and session guitarist who worked across many media

One of the most admired and versatile guitarists of his era, Judd was born in Doncaster, he started out on the banjo but switched to guitar at 14. After demob in the early 50s, Judd's first professional work was with Peter Fielding at the Nottingham Palais dance hall, where he met Jean Marshall, whom he married in February 1955.

He made his name as a member of the Ray Ellington Quartet, the jazz combo that would become the in-house band for *The Goon Show*. He signed to Parlophone as a solo artist in 1961, but also kept his hand in with frequent session work, playing for The Springfields and on Cilla Black's 1964 chart topper *You're My World*.

The 1970s and 80s saw him expand his film and TV work – he spent many years as the guitarist and fixer for BBC doyen Ronnie Hazellhurst. Always famed for his technical ability and speed, many knew him as 'the fastest left hand in the business'.

Garry Campion

David Willis

Multi-talented saxophonist, guitarist and pianist to the stars

Born in South London, David accompanied his father Freddy on his saxophone every weekend in dance halls and town halls before turning professional at the age of 18.

He followed the usual path of young musicians at that time, playing at seaside summer seasons and ballroom residences. He toured the UK and Australia with the controversial American pop star PJ Proby, and in 1966 joined the orchestra at London's famous cabaret venue The Talk Of The Town, which was to be his base for the next sixteen years.

He also appeared on the soundtracks of such films as *Indiana Jones And The Temple of Doom*, *Antz* and *Eyes Wide Shut*, and briefly appears in the films *Beat Girl*, and Paul McCartney's *Give My Regards To Broad Street*. He was also invited to play bass sax in Kenny Baker's reformed Kenny Baker's Dozen in 1994.

David considered the highlights of his long and varied career as being chosen to play for Benny Goodman's Orchestra on his three European tours in 1970/71, and playing in Ray Conniff's two British tours in 1973/74.

Rachelle Green

Stan White

A talented musician with a long career in central Scotland

Henry Stanley White, known as Stan White, died on 24 November 2021 after a short illness. Stan was a talented piano and keyboard player, with a long career entertaining in social clubs and hotels in central Scotland. He did this despite not being able to read music.

Stan joined the Musicians' Union in 1968 around the time he had his first professional music engagement, only finally stopping in 2015 at the grand old age of 80, and after 48 years in the business.

At his funeral, Morecambe and Wise's recording of *Bring Me Sunshine* [composed by Arthur Kent with lyrics by Sylvia Dee] was played. We hope, somewhere, Stan is doing what Andre Previn failed to do and is teaching Eric to play all the right notes in the right order.

Joanne White

We also note the sad passing of: Francis Jackson (organist and composer), Robin Le Mesurier (guitar), Simon Foxley (musician, composer), Peter Moody (guitar), Ian McDonald (King Crimson, Foreigner)

Tools Of The Trade

Drummer and singer John Park has travelled the world in the army with his drums and says he's lucky that the kit is as robust as he is

Report by Katie Nicholls

When John Park was a young drummer learning his craft (courtesy of Paul Smith, drummer with 1980s punks Toy Dolls of *Nellie The Elephant* fame) he used to love the attention of the small crowd that gathered around the music room window and he'd dream of playing on a big stage. Twenty-five years later, and with 22 years' service in the army, the vision was realised. "After the army I went on tour with the support act for Take That (on the *Beautiful World* Tour, 2007). So I came off one roundabout and straight onto another. I loved it. Playing the O2 arena and Manchester Arena... it was a real buzz. Onstage is my happy place."

As the drummer (and singer) in two tribute bands, Special Kinda Madness and Pulse (Pink Floyd tribute), onstage is where John continues to spend much of his time, completed by his work as a drumming teacher. While appreciative crowds are now the norm, during his time in the army as the principal percussionist of The Scots Guard Band, the circumstances weren't always so benign. "I was 32 when I went to Kosovo and I thought I was pretty streetwise. But it was a shock, and it made me see just how horrible one human can be to another." His experience was also confirmation that music is a powerful and universal language that can cut through political discord. "We would do 'hearts and

"What I dread is more than one flight of stairs and no lift"

minds' concerts. We'd go to villages and play, and the kids would all come out and pretend to conduct the band. They loved it."

A Tough Gig

As the heartbeat of the band, the drummer is often the most physically fit as the practicalities of touring can be demanding – and that's something John is fully accustomed to. "I don't have crew. It's hard work and it's very physical. What I dread is more than one flight of stairs and no lift. I've got a huge hardware case and it weighs a ton. We played a gig in Peterborough recently and the stairs were so narrow. Steep and narrow. It was absolutely goofing it down outside, too." A test of your love for the drums? "Absolutely!"


A consolation, perhaps, for the hard graft is that the drums are a robust instrument that require only basic maintenance. "Back in the 1950s and 1960s when the heads were made of calf skin, everything would affect them, but nowadays not so much. You have to keep on top of the drums with maintenance. Once every six months I will fully take the kit apart. Usually, the skins last about the same time, so they'll get stripped down and given some TLC and new heads. A bit of elbow grease and Pledge!" he laughs.

John says he's "lucky enough to be endorsed by The Cambridge Drum Company," who

provide his touring kit. "I also have two kits in [my drum room]: a Carrera kit that was made for me ten years ago, and a DW kit – and I have two spare in the garage, so I've got enough. Cymbals on the other hand [laughs]."

Joining an elite group of musicians (Karen Carpenter, Grant Hart), John is one of those enviably dextrous drummers who can sing and drum at the same time, "It's not hard if you don't think about it," he claims, humbly. "It's all about breathing. Stay relaxed."

John will also sometimes leave the drum stool to work as a singer, his biggest gig being the annual week of Royal Ascot. "There's a big singalong at the end of each day and it's me that leads it, so that's like my stadium gig. The *New York Times* did an article on it a couple of years ago. It's fantastic to do and I can just slip out of Ascot and walk to the station with the crowds and no-one knows who I am."

Whether John is playing on a street corner in Kosovo or bashing out Specials hits in well-loved venues, his philosophy is "to be the best I can be. So I want to get on and do bigger venues with both bands. I want to have that problem of employing someone to set my drums up and put them down again". 

For more information on John please visit facebook.com/johnparkdrums

Photo: Jonathan Stewart © MU



Why I Joined The MU

Members explain why they value their Musicians' Union membership and how it connects with their working lives



LISA REDFORD

"As well as being a gigging musician and songwriter, I'm a music tutor and run some community group singing sessions and beginner ukulele and guitar courses. By providing public liability, instrument insurance and PAT testing, the MU has given that much needed support to enable me to run these sessions with confidence. It has been such an easy process to join and the Regional Officer for my area has been very helpful with any queries I have had. I'm also really looking forward to exploring all the wide range of opportunities, workshops, events and relevant resources the MU offers, and am excited to network with others and be a part of its huge community of musicians."

Lisa Redford has been heralded by Bob Harris as "one of our finest singer-songwriters", and earned acclaim for her heartfelt acoustic music, which blends country, folk and Americana. She has released three studio albums and three EPs, and her song *Dragonfly* was played on a Radio 2 Best of British special. Having been based in New York, Lisa also writes music features for various online music magazines, and has hosted a music show on Future Radio in Norwich. She is also a music tutor and runs beginner ukulele and guitar courses and community singing sessions. To find out more about Lisa visit lisaredford.com

Photo: Tracy Morter



JERMAIN JACKMAN

"Joining the MU has been one of the best things I've done! They've supported and endorsed me in my campaign to be elected onto the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party. The access to opportunities for employment, training, development is invaluable. But more importantly, standing in solidarity with thousands of other musicians around the country, potentially going through similar situations, collectively campaigning to improve working conditions, investing in music education and working to dismantle racism and discrimination within the music industry, ensuring every musician can flourish."

Jermain Jackman is a singer and political activist who won the third series of the BBC TV series *The Voice UK* in 2014. From the age of 13, he was writing and recording for artists, and by 16 he was touring, doing backing vocals for various artists. He won *The Voice UK* on BBC 1 at just 19 years old. "My career has gone from strength to strength, singing in arenas and world-renowned stages such as the Apollo Theatre in Harlem, New York and the Royal Albert Hall," he says. Despite this, it did not make him exempt from racism, discrimination or attempts to take advantage of him – which can come in many forms. For more info, go to facebook.com/jermainjackmanmusic

Photo: Guy Levy / BBC / Wall To Wall

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

Musicians' 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
30 Snowsfields
London SE1 3SU
T 020 7840 5512
E live@theMU.org

Music Writers' Section

Kelly Wood
Live & Music Writers' Official
30 Snowsfields
London SE1 3SU
T 020 7582 5566
E writers@theMU.org

Orchestra Section

Jo Lavery
National Organiser
Orchestras
30 Snowsfields
London SE1 3SU
T 020 7840 5571
E orchestral@theMU.org

Recording & Broadcasting Section

Geoff Ellerby
National Organiser
Recording & Broadcasting
30 Snowsfields
London SE1 3SU
T 020 7840 5555
E rb@theMU.org

Education Section

Chris Walters
National Organiser
Education, Health & Wellbeing
30 Snowsfields
London SE1 3SU
T 020 7840 5558
E teachers@theMU.org

Theatre Section

Dave Webster
National Organiser
30 Snowsfields
London SE1 3SU
London SW9 0JJ
T 020 7840 5512
E 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

Musicians'
Union
mm