

Senza Sord

DECEMBER 2015

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET
INJURY MANAGEMENT AND
PREVENTION PROGRAMME

NEW ZEALAND SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

AOBO HEALTHY
PLAYER SCHEME

SOUND PRACTICE

THE GREAT
INTERNATIONAL
TIMPANI TOUR

SOMA CONFERENCE

THE SHOW MUST GO ON:
KEEPING INJURY AT BAY



A MEAA Member





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Contents

Overture Tania Hardy Smith _____	2	Solo: Guy du Blêt	
New Zealand Symphony Orchestra Professional Development System		The Great International Timpani Tour _____	46
Lyndsay Mountfort _____	4	SOMA Conference 2015	
Sound Practice:		Matt Goddard _____	51
5 years of Workplace Health and Safety interventions.			
Bronwen Ackermann _____	8	Orchestra reports _____	54
Hearing matters. Ian O'Brien _____	10	Adelaide Symphony Orchestra _____	54
Ageing and performance		Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra _____	55
Dr Christoph Stahl – WDR Germany _____	13	Melbourne Symphony Orchestra _____	56
WASO Health and Wellness		Orchestra Victoria _____	58
Kierstan Arkleymith _____	16	Sydney Symphony Orchestra _____	59
AOBO Healthy Player Scheme		Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra _____	61
Mandy Hollins and Tom Dundas _____	17	West Australian Symphony Orchestra _____	62
Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and the Hush Foundation:			
The Magic Island Simon Rogers _____	20	Industrial Notes _____	64
Australian Ballet Injury Management and Prevention Programme _____	24	Orchestra Enterprise Agreements _____	64
The show must go on: keeping injury at bay _____	32	SOMA Executive Meeting _____	64
The Riley Effect Helen Tuckey _____	36	Final note Vale: Jennifer Morrish _____	65
A Conversation with Simon Collins			
Federal President, MEAA _____	38		
Access to training and adapted workload			
Bill Kerr, British Musicians' Union _____	42		

Overture

Tania Hardy Smith

Orchestra Victoria

Hi everyone

The December 2015 edition of *Senza Sord* is about Orchestral Health and Wellbeing, with stories from our own orchestras and from the UK and Germany. They range from aspirational to inspirational, and from health and wellbeing programs for orchestral players to ways our orchestras are helping improve the lives of other communities. I think it's really heartening to see strategies being developed that consider the wellbeing of an orchestral player from the beginning of their career to later life in the orchestra and beyond. The Australian Ballet Programme is particularly comprehensive, so I'm looking forward to it being adapted to help Orchestra Victoria musicians. And of course, the Riley Effect and the Hush recording project are two examples of how orchestras can affect the wellbeing of others.



On another note... after 7 years, I have decided to step down from the position of SOMA President, but I'd like to thank Mark Bruwel for stepping into the breach while I worked in management for 6 months, and congratulate him on his recent election to the position. Good luck! I'd also like to thank all the players who have been part of the SOMA Executive during my tenure, and all the orchestral representatives who have worked hard to give such authority and substance to our national player body. At every meeting, I have been reminded time and time again how crucial and relevant SOMA is for our profession and how important it is for us to work hard to maintain its primacy in our orchestras. Recruit your casuals!!

I'd particularly like to thank Howard Manley and Simon Collins for their support and wisdom – their experience is invaluable to our organisation.

Merry Christmas and all the very best for 2016.

Tania Hardy Smith

Right: 'Orchestre' – stage door of Opéra National de Paris at the Palais Garnier.



ORCHESTRE

Merry Christmas
and all the very best
for 2016.

ORCHESTRE



Lyndsay Mountfort

Viola

New Zealand Symphony Orchestra

NEW ZEALAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Like all professional orchestras, NZSO has grappled with the question of how to optimise remuneration scales to balance the need to support the highest possible artistic values and reward musicians for service and performance, while reflecting the egalitarian nature of orchestral work and the need to promote a strong team culture. In the 1990s, this latter concern led to the adoption of a simple structure, with a single salary for each position designation, abandoning service and merit steps altogether. But without direct reward for merit and the review process which underpinned it, there was a need to find another way to support positive performance values.

Alongside any performance review and development process, is the need to deal with any perceived loss of proficiency in individual musicians, or any situation where the artistic

progress of the orchestra has left an individual too far behind.

A fair and reasonable process for dealing with proficiency issues requires that musicians are adequately supported and nurtured throughout their careers. Performance issues must be identified and communicated in a timely, humane and positive way, to enable struggling musicians to bring themselves back up to standard if possible, or to make plans for as positive a departure as is achievable.

NZSO's Professional Development System (PDS) is designed to provide a structure for a positive and non-threatening feedback process, along with the allocation of funding for player development activities. It is completely independent of NZSO's defined Loss of Proficiency procedures. It is designed to limit the need for recourse to 'LOP', but



Boston Symphony Hall in the snow: Kirsten Eade on the left, Bridget Douglas on the right.

also to provide an early warning for musicians at risk. The System is comprised of two processes – annual review meetings for each musician, and a process for allocating funding for professional development activities.

PDS MEETINGS

Every musician in the NZSO is required to attend a PDS meeting each year, with designated reviewers. The Concertmaster's reviewers are the Music Director and/or the Chief Executive. For Section Principals, the reviewers are the Concertmaster and the Chief Executive or Music Director. For other musicians, the reviewers are their Section Principal and one of the Concertmasters.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the musician's goals, aspirations, professional development and any other relevant matters, and to provide professional feedback. The discussions are a two way dialogue.

Individuals may bring an independent facilitator or support person if they wish. For Section Principals, feedback from nominated members of their section may be sought by the Concertmaster or Music Director.

Musicians are encouraged to discuss any issues affecting their work, their sections and, if they wish, their individual performance. Reviewers may provide feedback on each musician's work in the orchestra. All parties are encouraged to use the meetings as the basis for an on-going dialogue throughout the year as required.

As part of the feedback process, the reviewer(s) and the musician aim to identify appropriate strategies to enhance the musician's professional skills, whether or not any perceived problems have been raised. These might include playing sessions (informal groups), coaching and mentoring provided by

CASE STUDIES



Bridget Douglas
Principal Flute
February 2015



Kirsten Eade
Associate Principal Flute
February 2015

Bridget and Kirsten travelled to Boston and New York together. They spent two days visiting Powell Flutes and Flutistry, trying instruments, selecting matched wooden head joints for use in baroque and classical repertoire and having their instruments overhauled. During this time they also caught up with a former NZSO Fellowship student, Hye-Won Suh, accompanied her to a Boston Symphony education concert, and took her with them to Flutistry.

From Boston, they flew to New York for five days. There they had lessons with the Principal Flute of the New York Philharmonic, the Principal Piccolo of the Metropolitan Orchestra, and members of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. They also heard as many concerts as they could fit in. "It was fantastic to hear the people play from whom we had just had lessons with, and to hear different orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and the Met Orchestra, in different venues."



At Flutistry Boston, L to R: Bridget Douglas (NZSO), Kirsten Eade (NZSO), Hye-Won Suh (previous NZSO fellowship student), Adam Workman (Flutistry President), Gabriela Ruiz (Flutistry Office Manager), Johnathan Bernhardt (Flutistry Repair Manager)

the Section Principal and/or another member of the orchestra, sectional rehearsals, master classes and/or private tuition from visiting soloists or other teachers, chamber music and recital opportunities, or player exchanges with other orchestras. Musicians managing injury or physical issues may be helped to identify specialist practitioners, such as Alexander Technique, Feldenkreis, or Pilates teachers, or recommended medical practitioners

PDS FUNDING

Musicians can bring to their annual meeting any proposals they may have developed for professional development that require funding, or may develop any recommendations from their reviewers into proposals after their meetings. The NZSO also recognises the value of non-musical study in enhancing an individual's potential, so applications to support this are also evaluated. A template is provided for funding requests. The proposal must include a detailed budget, comprehensive information about the professional development activities, proposed dates and timing for any required



leave, and benefits to the individual and the NZSO. Applicants are encouraged to research any related activities, such as concerts, masterclasses, or lectures, to maximise the benefit of any funded travel and leave.

Proposals are evaluated by a PDS Committee, which makes funding decisions. The Committee is the Chief Executive, Music Director, Concertmaster, Principal Human Resources Advisor and an elected Musicians' representative. The NZSO Board allocates funds as part of the annual budgeting process, in addition to two special scholarships provided by benefactors and administered by the NZSO Foundation.

Funding may cover travel and accommodation costs, masterclass and/or lesson costs, concert tickets (where the concert is directly relevant to the proposed PDS activity), practical visit costs (e.g., instrument maintenance or travel costs associated with the purchase of an instrument or parts), and costs associated with performance technique and/or wellbeing.

After the PDS activity has been completed the applicant is required to submit a report to the PDS Committee.

CASE STUDIES



Janet Armstrong
Assistant sub-principal,
2nd violin
June and July 2015

Janet was keen to work with respected 2nd violinists, to observe their work in their orchestras, and to develop her sound and ability to blend with her section.

She had lessons in London, Frankfurt and Munich, with Tom Norris (Co-Principal 2nd violin, London Symphony Orchestra), Karin Boerries (former Principal, Frankfurt Opera Orchestra), Katharina Lindenbaum-Schwartz (Co-Principal 2nd violin, Bayerische Staatsoper) and Simon Fordham (Principal 2nd violin, Munich Philharmonic).

Janet also wanted to observe some of her teachers in performance, and was able to attend concerts including Tom and Katharina with their orchestras and Tom in his quartet, as well hearing Nicola Benedetti in recital and Joshua Bell with the LSO, and a performance by the RPO.



Rebecca Struthers
1st violin
2012

Rebecca attended an 'Art of Health' course at Taruna College (Hawkes Bay, NZ) <http://www.taruna.ac.nz>

Rebecca writes: "The course comprised of three types of activity – physical (movement classes), intellectual (lectures) and art (classes). Through all of these I learnt many tools, both for myself and for working positively in a team."

SOUND PRACTICE

5 YEARS OF WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY INTERVENTIONS.

Bronwen Ackermann

PhD, MPH, BAppSc(Physiotherapy), GDipWHS
Musicians' Physiotherapist
Biomedical Scientist, University of Sydney

Bronwen.Ackermann@sydney.edu.au

The Sound Practice Project was a national Australian Orchestral Health Initiative, led by a team of University of Sydney academics in collaboration with eight major state orchestras, funded by the Australia Research Council and the Australia Council for the Arts. The lead investigator, Dr Ackermann, has had a long history of specialty physiotherapy work with musicians, and felt there could be ways to better manage health in the orchestral workplace following models of healthcare provided by both Occupational and Sports Medicine. The team included an Occupational Physician (Professor Tim Driscoll), a Psychologist (Professor Dianna Kenny), an Audiologist (Ian O'Brien) and several health professional post-graduate students, to undertake a comprehensive overview of health conditions and practices of orchestral musicians. The Sound Practice Project remains the most comprehensive investigation into the health of orchestral musicians to date, and its publications are a point of reference for a myriad of researchers in the

field across the world. This paper will provide a reflection on some of the main findings and the relevance of these to musicians. More detailed project information is available elsewhere (e.g. see Ackermann et al 2014)

It is well acknowledged in sport medicine publications that there is a risk of injury related to sports participation that increases as the level and intensity of that sport increases (Richards 2015). The common term used now is 'overtraining syndrome'. However, it is also known that engaging in physical activity is highly beneficial for health, and implementing effective policies, injury prevention and intervention programs can reduce such risks. Since the 1980s, injury rate data presented in performing arts medicine literature has consistently highlighted similarly high injury rates in musicians, with similar causes due to overuse or misuse of muscles during playing. Again, substantial benefits are reported for both the health of the musician and the observer during music participation and

listening (Trappe 2012, MacDonald 2013). Unlike the other elite performance domains such as sports or dance, health education and music-injury prevention programs are virtually non-existent during the training of a musician, and training/practice patterns do not usually vary depending on demands as is now a critical part of sports training.

This section presents an overview of some key results from the Sound Practice study. At the commencement of the study, extensive baseline physical surveys and evaluations were conducted in order to inform and prioritise upcoming intervention projects. The main features to note were that while 50% of musicians from all orchestra sections reported playing related pain at the time of the first large cross-sectional survey, concurrent best-practice physical examination testing did not detect any problems compared to 'normal' populations. In further analysis, regions of the body affected appeared to represent those areas of the body likely to be heavily used during performance – either in static instrument support or in the more extreme range of movement demands. For example increased pain was reported in: the right shoulder in cellists, the left shoulder in trombonists, the right forearm in woodwinds, jaw and face in brass players, and the neck in violinists and violists.

To investigate some of these issues in more detail, muscle usage studies (via electromyography) were conducted in a range of instrumental groups. The key finding from this was that in most instrument groups, some muscles were subjected to particularly high loads when playing, and this varied substantially in many cases between the types of repertoire played. In some ways, the findings in relation to studies investigating musicians' exposure to sound were similar, with highly variable noise exposure levels occurring between instruments and

repertoire, in both the practice room and the orchestral setting.

These studies indicate that care should be taken by performers to vary their practice or rehearsal strategies as much as able to take into consideration the variability of muscular and postural workload when playing different repertoire. Some simple solutions may include ensuring the dietary intake is increased to reflect increased demands on the muscles, with particular care taken to re-fuel and rehydrate as much as possible. Fatigue and muscle tension were the 2 most important reasons cited by the professional musicians for the causes of performance-related injuries. Accordingly, further research could investigate other interventions such as adjusting rehearsal duration, for example to more short sessions, for repertoire where earlier fatigue is considered likely to occur. In some cases increasing strength of the supporting muscles may be helpful, as found by the reduction of playing related pain in those musicians undertaking regular exercise classes (Chan et al 2014).

Two other important findings were (i) many musicians still did not get health professional advice for injuries and (ii) depression was related to having pain, with both increasing in a linear manner (i.e. the more pain, the more depression and vice versa). To address the early injury management issues, trials were run with health professionals providing advice to musicians on a regular but intermittent basis. This was found to be very useful, and several orchestras are continuing to offer this service so that injured performers undertake appropriate health care strategies as early as possible (Chan et al 2013). In relation to the second point, it seemed that psychological issues and their prevention is an area that still needs much more attention. One major concern was that few musicians reported seeking proper psychological or medical help for various mental health issues.

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HEARING MATTERS.



Ian O'Brien

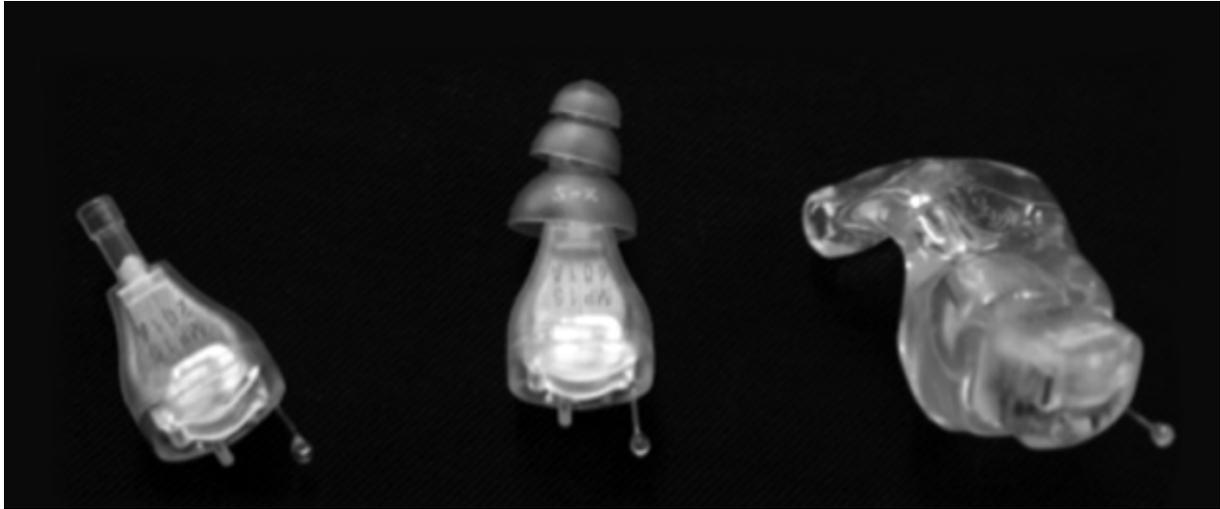
PhD MAudSt MPhil BMus(hons) MASA(CCP)
Clinical Audiologist
3rd Horn, Queensland Symphony Orchestra

iano6965@uni.sydney.edu.au

One element of the Sound Practice Project was dedicated to hearing conservation.

While it was known at the commencement of Sound Practice that orchestral musicians were an at-risk group for permanent hearing impairment from orchestral sound exposure, little objective data was available on techno-

logical developments, effective management strategies, and sound exposure patterns by instrument group. Investigations looked into attitudes of managements and players, rates of hearing loss, earplug use and problems, latest technology, acoustic screens, effective management approaches and sound exposure during private practice.



Level-dependent ('electronic') musician's earplugs. (O'Brien, Wood & Ackermann, 2014)

Some of the key findings from the six main investigations were:

- Up to 38% of Australia's professional orchestral musicians believe they have a hearing loss of some sort
- Brass players are the most exposed group of instrumentalists, the most likely to have a hearing problem and the least likely to wear hearing protection

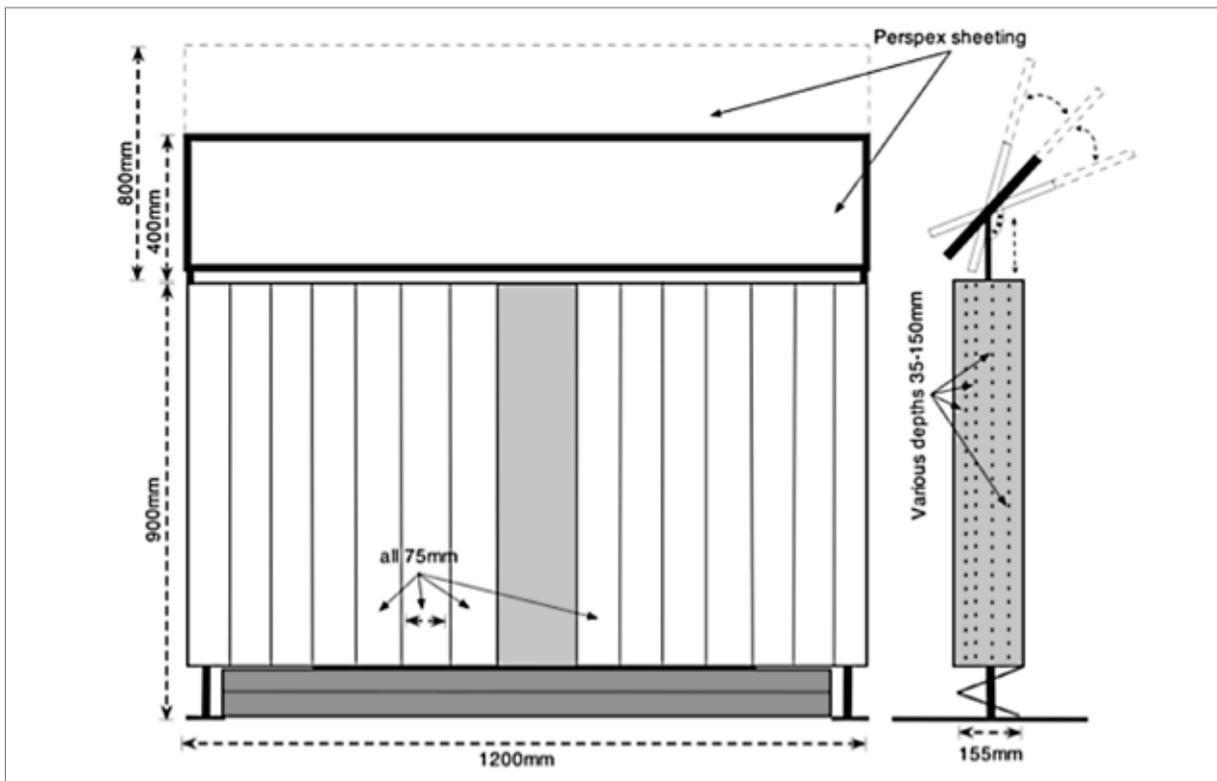


Illustration of an orchestral acoustic screen. (O'Brien, Wood & Ackermann, 2014)

- While hearing protection has improved for this population in the last few of decades – especially with the introduction of level-dependent devices – there are still improvements to be made
- ‘Electronic’ earplugs are generally preferred to ‘passive’ devices by orchestral musicians
- Improvements can be made to sound screens without increasing exposure for those musicians ‘upstream’, but these often have to be built specifically for the needs of individual orchestras
- Australia’s orchestras have a wide variety of approaches to hearing conservation
- There are approaches to orchestral hearing conservation that have been proved to be effective at managing sound exposure, although these require detailed strategies drawing on the latest research
- The most effective hearing conservation strategies – both in Australia and in the UK – incorporate a small management group made up of musicians, operational, management and artistic staff
- Orchestral musicians engaged in private practice face similar risks of hearing damage to those experienced while playing in ensemble
- Well-informed audiologists working together with the musicians are a critical part of effective hearing conservation programs

While there is still some way to go in managing musicians’ sound exposure, it is clear that the solution is not simply “a better earplug” or “management’s problem”, but rather a comprehensive and dedicated strategy incorporating a raft of control measures together with appropriate technology which

will enable musicians to perform unrestricted yet at minimal risk of permanent hearing injury.

For further details on each of these studies please refer to the published articles in the reference list.

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Dr Christoph Stahl

General Manager Orchestras and Choir
WDR Germany

AGEING & PERFORMANCE

“Even the most focused musicians may not be able to maintain the same level of performance forever. Is it compatible with the roll-out of a full professional career?”

Panel address given at the International Federation of Musicians Conference, Oslo, February 2014. Reproduced with kind permission from Christoph Stahl.

WDR ORCHESTRAS AND CHOIR

The WDR Symphony Orchestra, the WDR Funkhaus Orchestra, the WDR Radio Choir and the WDR Big Band are among the most renowned musical ensembles in Germany. Live in concerts and multi-medially they set standards in the interpretation of musical works. With numerous compositions, orders for editing and new arrangements they cover the current aesthetic trends in the world of music. With the “Plan M” music education program, in particular, children and teenagers are introduced to the theme of music.

PROGRAMME MANDATE

With around 100 live and studio performances produced annually, the orchestras and the choir develop new programme resources on radio (particularly WDR 3, WDR 4 and WDR 5) and on television. The fulfilment of the programme mandate also

includes the concerts in the transmission region, which are always broadcast. With around 200 concerts and a further 100 appearances for children and teenagers, the four WDR ensembles are among the largest concert organizers in North Rhine-Westphalia.



They thus make a major contribution to the music culture in this federal state.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The two orchestras, the big band and the choir as well as the “Markenführung Klangkörper” (Ensemble Brand Management) department make up the main department Orchestra and Choir. 235 musicians on the stage as well as 45 full-time and freelance employees behind the scenes, ensure that all performances run smoothly.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to look at the extremely interesting area of ageing and performance from the perspective of one of the biggest employers for musicians, WDR. To give you some background, after the BBC, WDR is the biggest broadcasting corporation in Europe, with some 4,500 full-time employees, including two orchestras, a choir and a big band, each of them consisting entirely of full-time musicians.

The title of my short talk is ‘Ageing at WDR Orchestras and Choir – Looking for New Concepts’. The words “looking for” in this title shows you that we haven’t found any perfect solution – otherwise I would now be seeking self-employment as an HR consultant. Nevertheless, we have put together some of the jigsaw pieces and have therefore come a little closer to our goal.

A major representative study was published in Germany in 2012, under the title ‘Ageing in an Orchestra’. 2,500 musicians replied to a wide range of questions, and yes, it’s unfortunately true that when musicians get older, they do find it more difficult to meet their own musical standards. Every other musician over 50 says so. Another remarkable outcome is that less than one per cent of all respondents believe that maximum musical performance is still possible at 60 plus.

This does of course contradict our demand for maximum performance at all times as well as our musicians’ aspiration to meet this standard and the demands of our audience to receive it. And neither does it fit in with the increase in the German retirement age to 67.

WDR is currently studying the impact of demographic change and how it should be handled. Three areas are important for musicians and singers:

- HR development
- Health management
- Work (time) organisation

(a) I believe that the essential issue in ‘HR development’ is CPD – continuous professional development. If suitable provisions are made, it is indeed possible to increase the musical quality of the individual to an audible extent. We therefore support individual musicians in taking, for instance, targeted one-on-one tuition. In fact, we cannot overestimate the importance of proper practising at a more advanced age.

This is borne out by the results of the study. Two out of three musicians say that practising is the most important way to compensate for loss of personal performance.

In addition, our Training and Professional Development Department also offers seminars on specific areas, such as strategies to combat stage fright, communication skills, healthy management and maintaining a good work-life balance – all of which I believe to be important ways to help ensure better performance. Each of our musicians can take five days of training leave per year to attend seminars such as ‘The Second 50 – Full-Scale Fitness for the Future’ about balancing one’s career and private life and ensuring physical well-being.



Christoph Stahl, General Manager Orchestras and Choir, WDR Germany.

However, we also noticed – and this is one of the main problems – that musicians only approach us very rarely with their concerns and that they don't often make use of such facilities.

(b) When it comes to health management, the promotion of good health is essential for a musician to perform at their best. The results of the study are alarming: two out of three musicians over 55 say that they are currently suffering from physical complaints which make it more difficult for them to play their instruments. WDR is offering a variety of preventative healthcare options, such as courses on back exercises, yoga, the Alexander technique, meditation and mindfulness training. I've counted them – there are 37 (!) preventative health care options. This is something where the overall size of WDR is useful.

Whenever a musician suffers acute complaints, they have the option of working with our in-house healthcare team or psychologist, and we also work closely with specialists in musicians' illnesses. Nevertheless, there are certain groups such as oboes and high voices in the choir where

a person's performance substantially declines above 60. This is something where we still haven't found a solution.

The third important issue is 'work (time) organisation': We are already successfully applying various specific solutions such as stopping solo performances, reducing working hours, and also early retirement, e.g. in combination with a semi-retirement scheme. Let's take a look at our colleagues. The NDR Choir had a collective bargaining agreement whereby each singer would start saving part of their salary at the beginning of their career and then retire at 55. However, this led to a rather low starting salary, so that NDR wasn't getting any suitable applicants for its auditions.

The solutions I've shown you all illustrate one fundamental problem, as none of them are cost-neutral under the existing regulations. Either the employer has to pay more, or the musician.

CONCLUSION

1. I believe it is high time we started to work with trade unions, setting up new regulations on 'work (time) organisation', focusing on the issue of ageing, and thus to ensure a win-win situation for both employers and employees. It's a major challenge!
2. Quite apart from all this, I do believe that in order to ensure a high level of performance among musicians right up until retirement, we need an entire bundle of different measures as a success factor.
3. All this can only work if there is a positive corporate culture. If this is missing and if the management cannot identify with these issues, then those are foundations which need to be created in the first place before the relevant measures can be implemented at the second stage.

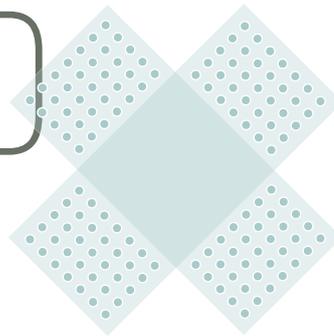
Kierstan Arkleymith

Viola/OSH Representative

West Australian Symphony Orchestra

WEST AUSTRALIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

HEALTH AND WELLNESS



Health and safety at WASO has evolved from covering the costs of annual flu jabs, hearing tests and ear-plugs and dealing with worker related injuries into a broader and more open forum resulting in greater awareness and participation.

There are now two qualified Safety and Health reps from the orchestra on the company's OSH committee and there is a willingness from all parties to being proactive and to finding solutions.

This year a 'health and wellness' program has been in place for all employees. This program comprises existing safety and health strategies alongside some new initiatives.

Naturally, elements of the program need review and development but the mere act

of placing all the relevant information together has been a good start.

WASO's Health and Wellness Program includes:

- Mental Health and where to seek assistance
- Noise monitoring and hearing protection
- Ergonomic assessments
- Physio, Pilates and Conditioning (costs subsidised by WASO)
- Vaccinations for Flu and Whooping Cough (pertussis)
- Subsidised 'Team WASO cultural' activities such as HBF Run for a Reason and cycling jerseys
- Company policies on issues relating to workplace Safety, Health and Wellbeing
- Workers' Compensation
- List of service providers who give discounts to WASO employees



Mandy Hollins
Associate Principal Flute

Tom Dundas
Violin

AUSTRALIAN OPERA AND BALLET ORCHESTRA HEALTHY PLAYER SCHEME

The AOBO's Healthy Player scheme began in 2005 in response to a season of a particularly high rate of player injuries.

There are many aspects to the program, designed to allow players access to practitioners and exercise programs of their choice in order to prevent and treat injuries.

The Sydney Opera House pit noise problems are well known. But equally a problem with the size of the pit are the often cramped playing conditions. Coupled with playing long operas, these conditions can lead to musculoskeletal injuries, especially experienced by, but not restricted to, our string players.

Over the last 2 years there have been two new initiatives made available to the players specifically with prevention in mind. Massages

and physio sessions (short but effective) have been provided between shows on Saturdays at times when the playing load is especially heavy. In our last winter season, for example, with opera matinees and evening shows of Figaro, Turandot and Don Carlos – all 3 to 4 hour operas – these treatments alleviated muscle strain during peak periods.

The second new initiative is an ongoing Alexander Technique class. This class is taken by Janet Davies. She is highly regarded as both a violin and Alexander Technique teacher and she has been bringing her wealth of experience of working with musicians to the AOBO.

The class is free for all permanent and regular freelancers with players just needing to sign up on an online scheduling app



Alexander Technique Conga Line of AOBO players.

(Doodle) by the day before, with no need to commit to every week. The class is held once a week at the Sydney Opera House a couple of hours before a performance.

Such factors as no cost, flexibility, the timing and venue, all encourage greater participation. Our experience is that when players have the option to try Alexander Technique classes without any financial cost to them, they want to continue once they feel the benefits. Our Management sees the classes as part of an ongoing process designed to raise increased awareness of physical maintenance.

Alexander Technique, although taught in every music college in England and having benefits well known by UK musicians, is an under-utilised technique in Australia. We are fortunate in the AOBO that one of our freelance viola players, Greg Ford, is also an AT teacher. This has helped raise awareness of the technique in the orchestra. However, many players, having had no experience of the technique, are unsure of what it is, what it involves and how it prevents players' injuries.

There is always the difficulty of explaining the Alexander Technique to those who haven't experienced it, since it has little to do with

common notions of 'good posture'. Alexander Technique re-educates neurological organisation and improves whole body co-ordination. Posture is not corrected mechanically using the strengthening of specific muscle groups, therefore it is unique in that it corrects posture by REDUCING the muscle effort required to carry out the full dynamic range of movements and postures required to play an instrument. Pupils learn to inhibit the global excess muscle tension, which occurs as a response to stress, and the result is kinaesthetic finesse and sensitivity of great value to a performer.

SO WHAT HAPPENS IN AN AT CLASS?

The AT facilitates an observation of tension by the student and develops skills that help them change the way they use their body.

Each class begins with the students lying down observing and learning how to direct their attention in order to lengthen, widen and create space in their bodies. Throughout the class the teacher uses gentle hands-on guidance to give the student the experience of this happening in a variety of activities such as sitting, standing, walking and playing their instrument. Students develop a practical understanding of anatomical structures in

the body and how the AT works to support this natural physiological design.

The potential benefits of Alexander Technique may be under-recognised among orchestral musicians, according to results from a study conducted by Sydney University's Sound Practice Project*, which compared the benefits players reportedly received from a purpose-designed exercise program to those received from a series of Alexander Technique classes.

Players expected to receive more or equal benefit from exercise in the majority of 12 variables, however they reported actually receiving more benefit from Alexander Technique than exercise in all but one variable – strengthening muscles that support playing. The eleven variables where Alexander Technique was reported of more benefit were:

- Posture
- Ease of movement
- Playing-related and non playing-related stress
- Confidence
- Concentration
- Energy levels
- Learning techniques that support playing
- Overall rehearsal
- Private practice
- Performance levels.

More information can be found at the website: <http://www.austat.org.au/the-science> including studies which outline some of the scientific research showing benefits of the AT for people with chronic pain conditions.

*Chan, C. (2014) *Fit to Play: Physiotherapy-based interventions for professional orchestral musicians*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Sydney University, Sydney, Australia.



Janet Davies

Janet studied violin, piano and harpsichord at Sydney Conservatorium. As a professional violinist she was a core member of the Australian Chamber Orchestra and a freelance player with Sydney's other major orchestras.

She has been teaching at Sydney Conservatorium for more than 25 years and has had numerous roles during this time, including teaching violin, chamber music and orchestral studies and Head of the Preparatory Division (now Rising Stars). She has also been very actively involved in violin pedagogy through curriculum design, lecturing and research supervision.

In 1985 Janet completed a three-year Alexander Technique (AT) teacher training, and has since specialised in the application of the Technique to musical performance at an elite level. As a result of this extensive experience she has developed her own innovative method, The Resonant Body®, which aims to make AT readily accessible to musicians for immediate improvements in playing and performance.

Currently she conducts AT classes for players in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra and New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, as well as for secondary and tertiary students at Sydney Conservatorium.

In 2011 as a consultant to Sydney University's Sound Practice Posture Trial she designed a series of classes in Alexander Technique specifically for players in eight of Australia's major orchestras.

A Personal Recollection by

Simon Rogers

Manager of Artistic Planning

Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra

TASMANIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND THE HUSH FOUNDATION



THE MAGIC ISLAND

CONDUCTOR BENJAMIN NORTHEY

When I was asked by Conductor Ben Northey whether the TSO would be interested in developing a new recording with the Hush Foundation, my immediate response was “definitely”! In my experience as a Manager of Artistic Planning, I have found that one of the key functions of this role is to be open to new ideas. This is especially the case at the TSO – due to the small population base and risk of saturation of the subscription audience, it is important to be innovative and create interesting projects and concerts. Being very close to the Tasmanian community comes with a lot of responsibility (our approval rating in the general public hovers around 90% each year) but also is a tremendous privilege and provides the environment to explore these creative opportunities.

The collaboration with Hush is a good example of how arts and non-arts organisations can come together for a significant cause, to the benefit of everyone involved. I thought that sharing our experiences below may be of some use to orchestras and organisations planning similar projects in the future, and I wholeheartedly encourage them to do so.

Great collaborations need great partners, and by any measure, Hush Foundation excels in all areas. Groundbreaking and successful, Hush had already produced 12 CDs, the brainchild of Dr Catherine Crock, a pioneer in patient-centred care, and the driving force behind the recordings and the organisation. Hush also has strong artistic leadership through Music Directors Paul Grabowsky and Ben Northey, and *The Magic Island*



project centred on a sound artistic concept – twelve Australian composers were each asked to write a new work. It was undeniably ambitious, quite possibly unique from a compositional and recording perspective. There was no way to know what the end results would be, but this was another important aspect of the project, be prepared to take the risk – and we all were.

It is also important to listen closely to your partners, as they know more about their field of expertise than you do. Hush was adamant that each of the composers should visit the hospital to see first-hand where the music from this album would be played, how it would be used and the impact on the young patients and their families. What set Hush apart is that the albums are not just used for fundraising purposes, but in fact played every day in a working hospital environment to try and make the experiences a little more bearable.

From the outset, Hush felt it was important for me to visit the hospital too, so that I fully understood the context. I actually have some hospital experience myself, having trained as a diagnostic radiographer many years ago, however the visit to the Royal Children's

The Magic Island project centred on a sound artistic concept – twelve Australian composers were each asked to write a new work. It was undeniably ambitious, quite possibly unique from a compositional and recording perspective.

Hospital was one of the most moving and confronting experiences of my life.

Conversely, it is vital to be patient with your partners, as they are trying to understand your world, and there are many aspects of an orchestral culture that are not immediately understood to an outsider. It is therefore important to take the time to plan the project properly; then do it right. *The Magic Island* took around four years from inception. We refined the compositional brief many times until we were happy, and there were many conversations amongst the Artistic team about the selection of composers. We elected to split the recording over two years, to give time for the composers the time to visit the hospital, absorb this experience, and write. Keeping the recording periods short helped



Photograph courtesy: Sam Adams

In the recording studio – Jane Holden, Nicholas Heywood, Ross Edwards, Lara Giddings, David Malone, Graeme Koehne, Catherine Crock and Benjamin Northey.

to keep the intensity and concentration in the recording sessions themselves – this is certainly something we have learned in our many recordings.

One of the best decisions we made was to fly the composers to be present at the recording, to work alongside the wonderful Producer Veronika Vincze. I was very concerned for Hush regarding these travel costs – they were mounting up and were already many times in excess of what had been incurred for previous recordings – however Hush’s will never wavered from the importance of these aspects. Looking back, it is hard to imagine doing it differently.

The briefing of the orchestra was an important step in the evolution of the recording and we did it well in advance of the recording sessions, as we wanted the musicians to feel part of the project. We found some rehearsal time in a rehearsal for another concert with Ben, and both he and Cath Crock spoke passionately. The musicians seemed to understand the significance of the project immediately – you could have heard a pin drop.

I found the recordings themselves a joy. There is often not a lot to enjoy about being

“behind the scenes” however this was the opposite, as we came into contact with some dedicated and special people. It was a pleasure to spend time having a coffee with each of the composers and hear what the project meant to them. All enjoyed seeing one another, in many cases it had been years since their paths had crossed. Many commented on how liberating the experience had been compositionally, a chance to forget what the public and music industry would expect, and rather dedicate themselves to the Hush brief and the young patients.

Of course my overriding interest was artistic, and musically the results were fascinating. We ended up with every variation possible – pastoral, upbeat, meditative; differences in orchestration, style and colour. But overall, thankfully they all worked, and each had the unmistakable individual voice of their creator.

I have found on numerous occasions that if you do projects for the right reasons, then good things happen. ABC Classic FM, who had been supportive throughout the project, played *The Magic Island* regularly, perhaps more than any other TSO recording. The short tracks proved ideal for the Morning and Drive segments and this album has already been

responsible for introducing a wide audience to Australian composers. It also fulfilled a broader “A and R” purpose, with orchestras from around Australia expressing interest in performance materials, and the TSO has played a number of these works in different concert settings already. This repertoire function is a stated aim of the TSO’s Australian Music Program, as was the ambition of presenting a concert consisting solely of new commissioned Australian pieces – which was achieved in the resultant live concert and broadcast from The Magic Island in late 2013.

On a personal level for myself and TSO staff and musicians, we were very honoured to dedicate the album to the memory of the beloved son of the TSO Managing Director, Nicholas Heyward, who sadly passed away during the recording. The Hush Foundation has an ability to bring people together, something that music can also do better than anything. Who could have thought this project would prove so special and important to so many people, from that one conversation all those years ago.



Catherine Crock and Sophie Toll – Hush 13.

Photograph: Vanessa@redbookphotography.com.au

THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET INJURY MANAGEMENT & PREVENTION PROGRAMME

With thanks to Sue Mayes, Principal Physiotherapist and Medical Team Manager at The Australian Ballet

The Australian Ballet (TAB) has formulated an 'Injury Management and Prevention Programme' aimed at protecting the health of dancers, prolonging their careers and preventing injuries that may affect their quality of life after dance.

The Australian Ballet is committed to the health (physical and psychological) and safety of its most precious asset, the dancers. This commitment stems from the Board and extends to all levels of the company.

The Australian Ballet has facilitated a change in behaviour over the years, which has directly influenced the culture from one that poses a high risk to health to one that

embodies health and wellbeing. This has resulted in fewer injuries, faster recovery for the dancers and an increase in morale.

Ballet is a physically and emotionally demanding art form, classified as a high risk occupation. The dancers of TAB also endure the pressure of a hectic national and international touring schedule.

TAB has adopted a broad multidisciplinary medical approach by employing a Medical Team of dance medicine specialists providing their services onsite. This approach has proven to be extremely beneficial in a wide range of applications, from resolving minor complaints to complete resolution of injuries.



The Team's in-house and external members have worked in consultation with each other to refine the principles and notions of dance medicine at TAB. The concepts and practices of the Medical Team are now at a stage where dancers and the company are realising the benefits of this extremely effective programme. High injury trends have been successfully reversed with a profound reduction in injuries to high-risk areas such as the ankle, back and hip.

The Medical Team's planning, training, research and development have evolved into a documented 'Injury Management and Prevention Programme', so that the benefits TAB has experienced can now be shared with other ballet companies across the world.

THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

From its inception, TAB had a degree of medical support through minimal part-time in-house specialists. When on tour, the dancers were referred to various health professionals in whatever city they were performing; thus treatment was mostly external, difficult to track, of varying quality and not at all centralised.

In 1984 a Sports Physician, keen to apply a multidisciplinary sports medicine approach to TAB, commenced with the company. The multidisciplinary model, which previously had been applied predominantly to the sporting community, was very appropriate to a ballet company made up of 'artistic' athletes. Hence there was a shift towards establishing full-time, centralised, multidisciplinary care, with an emphasis on both care and prevention, as well as increasing communication between Medical and Artistic Staff.

A significant move was the appointment of a full-time in-house physiotherapist in 1997. This was then extended into a fully-fledged risk management programme following the

appointment of the current Artistic Director in 2001 and a second full-time physiotherapist in 2002.

Today, TAB has a highly skilled in-house Medical Team specialising in dance medicine, and lead the world in dance medicine and injury rehabilitation. The physiotherapists and myotherapist travel with the company throughout the year to ensure dancers are provided with easily accessible, consistent medical care. In addition, certain members of the team are former ballet dancers and bring to the team experience that is invaluable.

The medical team's role is to support the health and wellbeing of the dancers and to optimise their performance. Recently Orchestra Victoria have joined The Australian Ballet and the medical team have extended their support to the musicians. Currently, the musicians are offered physiotherapy, Pilates and body conditioning by our team as well as free gym memberships. The aim is to gradually introduce a similarly successful centralised, onsite, multidisciplinary approach to support the health and wellbeing of the musicians.

The Medical Team comprises:

Medical team manager & principal physiotherapist

The medical group is headed by the medical team manager & principal physiotherapist, who is responsible for the day-to-day operational management of the Medical Team. The medical team manager & principal physiotherapist is currently developing an injury prevention and management program for Orchestra Victoria.

Physiotherapists

A team of physiotherapists work on-site and tour with the company. They are the primary contact for injured dancers offering detailed assessment, treatment and advice with

ongoing management. They liaise closely with the Medical team and Artistic staff to ensure the exercise programs and workload of the dancer are monitored closely to allow full recovery from injury and optimal performance.

Sports and exercise physician
A Sports and exercise physician works on-site in Melbourne and in Sydney to provide injured dancers with the required centralised medical assessment, review and/or recovery advice. They monitor the health and progress of injured dancers, liaise with the Medical Team about any medical issues, potential surgery, treatment regimes, rehabilitation and return-to-work planning. The physician also has an innate knowledge and understanding of dance medicine, including the constant physical and psychological demands placed on dancers. Their liaison with the Medical Team facilitates a forum for open communication and informed decision making.

General Practitioner
Working part-time in-house, the General Practitioner's role is to enhance the general health and wellbeing of the dancers, including their nutritional and psychological health.

Myotherapist
The Myotherapist provides in-house remedial massage and myotherapy for dancers' injuries, working alongside the Physiotherapists and Body conditioning specialist.

Body conditioning specialist
The body conditioning specialists develop, teach, assist, and monitor conditioning programmes, including providing instruction



Physiotherapists at work – Sue Mayes.

Photograph: Jeff Busby

in correct use of equipment, specific to the needs of individual dancers.

EHS/WorkCover Co-ordinator
An Environment, Health and Safety (EHS)/ WorkCover Co-ordinator is responsible for running the company's health and safety management system and managing WorkCover claims.

External
These include General Practitioners, Surgeons, Rheumatologists, Podiatrists and Dieticians, although all areas of medical expertise may be required depending on the medical condition involved.

Psychologists
Psychologist work with the dancers off and on-site and run workshops. The psychological aspects of being a dancer can often be overlooked, with respect to the high expectation of performing perfectly in front of hundreds of people. Performance anxiety is not uncommon for dancers in addition to

the constant lifelong fitness and production demands.

THE ARTISTIC TEAM

The Artistic Team acts as a 'branch' of the Medical Team within the 'Injury Management and Prevention Programme'. Without the support and involvement of the Artistic Team, the programme cannot work. Being former dancers themselves, they understand the particular needs, difficulties and rewards of a dance career. The Artistic Team comprises:

Artistic Director

The Artistic Director is closely involved with the programme and actively supports it. Regular communication with the Medical Team informs the Artistic Director's decision-making about a wide variety of issues, from repertoire and scheduling to weekly management of dancers' workloads. The Artistic Director upholds the notion of workload modification as a means of preventing serious or prolonged injury and allowing effective rehabilitation when an injury occurs.



Photograph: Susan Mayes

Andrew Garnham, sports and exercise physician, The Australian Ballet.

Artistic Staff

The Artistic Staff teach company class and repertoire, and coach individual dancers as required. Being responsible for planning and teaching class each week and warm-up barre during the performance season, they have an active and essential role in implementing the prevention programmes devised by the Medical Team. Their daily contact with dancers allows them to monitor the progress of each dancer and report back to the Medical Team.

Rehabilitation Facilitator

The Rehabilitation Facilitator works one-on-one with dancers or in small groups who are experiencing discomfort, have sustained an injury or require specific coaching for their technique. The Rehabilitation Facilitator acts as the interface between the Artistic and Medical teams.

Dancers

The success of TAB's 'Injury Management and Prevention Programme' relies on the commitment and involvement of the dancers. Though The Australian Ballet has demonstrated full support to the dancers in maximising their wellbeing, it is expected that the dancers also take responsibility for ensuring they are physically fit to perform optimally.

A CULTURE FOR SUCCESS

A Reporting Culture

The Australian Ballet has successfully facilitated a shift in culture to early reporting of all complaints. A key to injury prevention is early attention to minor musculoskeletal dysfunction such as cramp, fatigue, stiffness or low grade discomfort. Early intervention into these minor complaints or symptoms has proven to reduce incident frequency rates.

The early reporting practice is taught to dancers at TAB School (8 to 17 years), the importance of which is further reinforced at

The Australian Ballet during the annual Induction process, which is compulsory for all dancers. Early reporting is encouraged and supported by the Artistic and Medical teams. Early intervention is the primary means to preventing injury and/or minimising time off work.

A Consultative Culture
Consultation between members of the Medical Team, Artistic Team and dancers is frequent and open, and it takes various forms:

- Often a dancer receives treatment from multiple practitioners, in which case all practitioners liaise with each other about the future treatment and progress of the dancer. The dancer is consulted at each stage throughout the preventative and treatment regimes. While the dancers' contracts allow for discussion between various members of staff, high standards of confidentiality are maintained.
- All participants in the injury prevention programme, including the dancers, are consulted on policy matters that relate directly to their health, safety and wellbeing.
- The dancers have a forum for consultation about general health and safety matters, other than those specifically related to dance, via their EHS Representatives.

A Just Culture

The Australian Ballet fosters a culture that is supportive of the dancers' physical and mental needs. Support, nurture and complete rehabilitation of injured dancers by the Artistic and Medical teams stems from their understanding of a dancer's concerns and needs.



Photograph: Susan Mayes

The Rehabilitation Facilitator coaching a dancer in ballet technique.

In the past dancers were reluctant to report injuries so as not to jeopardise performance opportunities. TAB has demonstrated that reporting injuries does not disadvantage them in any way; on the contrary, everything is done to ensure that dancers are not restricted from their pre-injury status.

INJURY PREVENTION PROGRAMME

Dancers are exposed to multiple risks in every production. There are approximately nine productions and 180 performances per year, and about five months of national and international touring. Few other dance companies tour for as long, or travel as far as TAB. The company employs 70 dancers who range in age from 19 to 42 years.

Each production presents new roles and physical demands, with additional risks posed by the differing workplaces and performance conditions present at each venue.

The TAB's comprehensive injury prevention programme is designed to meet these



Photograph: Tim Buckley

Dancers utilising recovery facilities at the Victorian Institute of Sport.

GRADUATED RETURN-TO-WORK PROGRAMME

The graduated return-to-work programme has been in effect for fourteen years. It was initially devised by the Medical Team to address the high incidence of stress fractures originating at the beginning of each year due to the sudden onset of workload following the annual holiday break.

Before going on annual leave, the dancers are instructed in a home exercise programme that has been developed for them by the therapists of the Medical Team. In the three days prior to the company's first day back at work, optional conditioning classes are offered to all dancers.

The first two weeks of the return-to-work period are then structured carefully to minimise the likelihood of injury.

challenges and prevent the risk of injury. Its key elements are: screening; risk analysis; prevention programmes; communication and on-site facilities.

PREVENTION PROGRAMMES

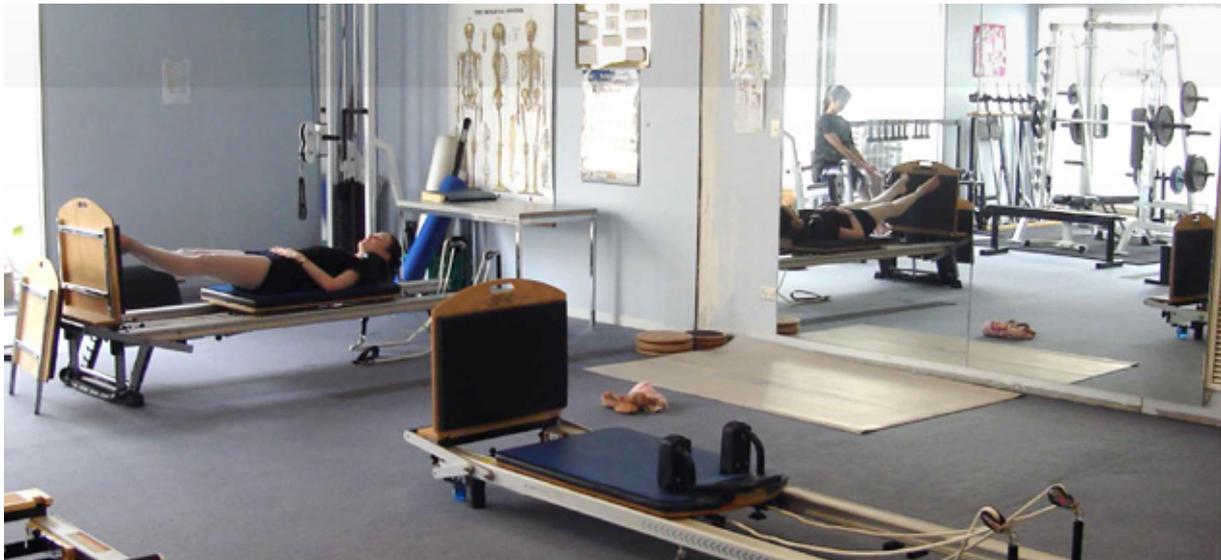
Following on from risk analysis is the development of site-specific, group-specific and repertoire-specific prevention programmes designed to address particular issues. Injury prevention exercise programmes are devised by the Medical Team and instructed by the body conditioning specialist with the dancers at the beginning of the rehearsal period.

Other prevention programmes include the annual graduated return-to-work programme as well as post-performance, in-flight and post-flight recovery strategies.

By the end of the second week, dancers have gradually increased the hours and intensity of their workload to a full day of class and rehearsals.

Covering a variety of health topics, the education sessions are an important part of this programme, aiming to increase dancers' appreciation of the importance of injury prevention measures and understanding of current injury management strategies. Topics include nutrition, stress management, recovery strategies, cross-training and cardiovascular training.

The programme has dramatically reduced the incidence of stress fractures, and also equips dancers with self-management techniques to improve their wellbeing.



Photograph: Paula Beard-Coit

A dancer utilising equipment in the exercise studio.

POST-PERFORMANCE RECOVERY STRATEGIES

Recovery from rehearsal and performance loads is an integral part of maximising performance. Both the mind and the body need to recover so many tools are utilised at The Australian Ballet including the use of spa and plunge pool, contrasting hot/cold showers, ice baths and compression garments.

Dancers are trained in specific methods of flexibility recovery such as dynamic stretching. Relaxation and leisure pursuits are also encouraged.

COMMUNICATION

Communication begins with daily liaison between the Medical Team, Artistic Staff and dancers and a weekly injury report, which becomes the basis for a weekly medical meeting between the Medical Team and Artistic Staff. The documented meetings are a forum for discussing the status of dancers and short-term treatment and prevention strategies, including workload modification.

The Medical and Artistic teams meet bi-annually to discuss injury data, incident trends, future prevention strategies as well as to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of current preventative measures. The Artistic Director, Executive Director and Director of Operations are included in this meeting, which looks beyond the short-term and

encourages innovative solutions to issues that have arisen in the previous six months.

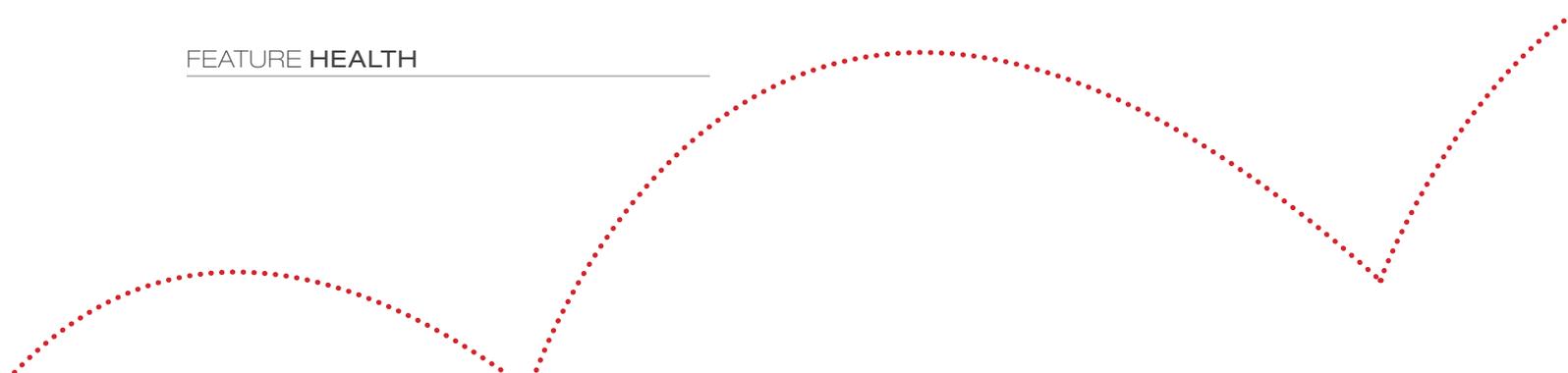
The EHS Committee meets quarterly and discusses a range of issues, including hazards within the dancers' working environment in the rehearsal room and on stage. They then develop safe working procedures, communicated to all relevant personnel. The vision for the company's health and safety management system is 'Speaking Up For Safety' and the EHS Committee is a key element in that line of communication.

ON-SITE FACILITIES

The Australian Ballet has an ever-growing range of facilities used to promote fitness and prevent injuries including an in-house exercise studio, travelling exercise equipment and a variety of portable devices located in and around the rehearsal studios.

CONCLUSION

The development of The Australian Ballet's Injury Management and Prevention Programme has evolved over several years, involving all levels of the organisation. The success of the programme extends both from the enthusiasm and commitment of all participants and the desire for continual improvement. The Medical Team regularly formulates innovative ideas and solutions to maintain the health and well-being of its dancers and thereby enhance the company as a whole.



THE SHOW MUST GO ON

KEEPING INJURY AT BAY

Reprinted with permission from the Australian Major Performing Arts Group magazine, February 2, 2015

Working at an elite level as an actor, musician or dancer, while artistically rewarding, is also physically and mentally demanding—and so, many major performing arts companies have a health and wellbeing program for artists and arts workers.

For orchestras hearing loss can be a major risk. Dancers are in danger of sustaining injuries to limbs and feet, and circus performers can take their pick of what injury could occur next.

Queensland Symphony Orchestra, for example, has had in place a program to protect its players from hearing loss for almost 10 years – a problem that can be quite common among orchestral musicians. A recent study by the School of Medical Sciences at The University of Sydney has found QSO's hearing conservation program is one of the most comprehensive in Australia.

Nine years ago, the orchestra started monitoring noise exposure, data reviews and plotting noise maps for concert halls and orchestra pits where the musicians played over a three-year period. According to lead author of the study, Ian O'Brien, it is the largest orchestral sound survey on record and the results have been used by several orchestras to plan their own approaches.



©Nik Babic Photography and Kaboom Percussion

The QSO has used wrap-around absorptive screens and a series of moveable diffusive panels for treating poor acoustic spaces since 2005. Many brass and woodwind players now use electronic earplugs.

The West Australian Symphony Orchestra also keeps a close eye on its musicians' hearing. The company manages the risk of

West Australian Symphony Orchestra Wellness Program is a hit for Kaboom Percussion players Catherine Hall and Joshua Webster.

noise-induced hearing loss for musicians by monitoring the noise levels in rehearsals and performances against acceptable exposure standards, employing noise control measures and encouraging musicians to undertake annual hearing tests.

It launched its new Health and Wellbeing program at the Perth Concert Hall in January 2015. As part of the program, the company has joined forces with the team at Star Physio WA to provide subsidised on site physio services to the musicians.

For each performance WASO reviews seating arrangements for the musicians and their instruments and liaises with musicians to test for ergonomically improved seating and stands.

Ballet and dance companies also have to mitigate any risk of injury through constant vigilance. The ballet companies, including West Australian Ballet and Queensland Ballet, all have extensive medical teams on board, with specialist dance physiotherapists, masseurs, pilates and cardio instructors.

The Australian Ballet's innovative Injury Management and Prevention Program received the award for 'Best Strategy for Health and Safety Management' at the 2008 WorkSafe Victoria Awards. The Medical Team comprises two touring physiotherapists, a touring myotherapist, a body conditioning specialist, two part-time sports physicians, a part-time general practitioner and a health and safety/WorkCover coordinator.

Its program is very much targeted to early reporting and intervention. It has found the key to injury prevention is early attention to minor musculoskeletal dysfunction such as cramp, fatigue, stiffness or low grade discomfort. As a result, the company has managed to reverse high injury trends with a profound reduction in injuries to high-risk areas such as the ankle, back and hip.

It also has two psychologists, male and female, available to the dancers. On its website, the

Ballet explains that 'performance anxiety is not uncommon for dancers in addition to the fitness and production demands that are constant throughout the life of a dancer'.

Under the leadership of past and current Rehearsal Directors, Bangarra has developed a Safe Dance Program that focuses strongly on a multidisciplinary approach to injury prevention and on creating a healthy workplace culture. The program is managed by the Bangarra Safe Dance Panel, which is composed of medical professionals who provide ongoing advice and support to the company's performers.

The program provides on-site physiotherapy and massage therapy, body conditioning and dietary advice tailored to meet our performers' needs, resulting in improved strength and fitness.

Sydney Dance Company's health team includes a GP and an orthopaedic surgeon as well as an in-house physiotherapist. All dancers are assessed before they start with the company and an individualised training program is developed to build their strength and prevent injury. This includes a gym membership and a personalised Pilates program. Daily in-house technique and strength classes are tailored to build strength to suit the choreography the dancers will be working with.

At Circus Oz, preventing injury is all about pre-empting risk and proactively managing every element of act development, rehearsal and performance.

In the development of the show, each of the acts is broken down into its component parts and analysed for risk, with

relevant mitigation strategies put into place. Before every season, a specific rehearsal is held in every new venue to work through the safety of each act under the specific technical set-up. A formal process before each rehearsal and performance ensures that each element can be performed safely, given any relevant changes in performers' physical state or the equipment or venue, and all individuals are encouraged to raise any concerns at any time.

Each performer takes responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, but where possible, the company also provides access to medical support staff, such as osteopaths, to assist with each performer's well being, and also provides access to some health-related equipment.

Opera companies have to deal with a range of issues, protecting singers' voices being of prime concern. State Opera of South Australia found that performing the Philip Glass trilogy last year threw up particular challenges. Nine hours of opera performed over five days required an enormous amount of stamina and skill from both singers and dancers.

The company rehearsed for four months, gradually lifting the frequency of rehearsals so that singers' vocal preparation and physical fitness were at a peak for the performance. Vocal rest, preventing infection and ensuring singers are never cast in inappropriate repertoire for their voice type are standard health management issues for opera companies.

Actors are also at risk. Touted as a world-first research project, the actors' union Equity and Sydney University have collaborated on a wellbeing study of actors in

Australia. Sydney University researcher Dr Mark Seton said 73 per cent gave details of the effects of ongoing stress on their physical and psychological wellbeing.

He said stress is more like to be experienced by people in theatre followed by film and then musicals. Forty-five per cent have experienced bodily, vocal or psychological complaints in the last year and a significant number of the participants—35 per cent—had suffered from their particular complaint for several years.

Dr Seton also noted that there is still more quantitative data yet to be analysed, as well as some very detailed qualitative data on actors' experiences of financial, physical and psychological stresses and the impact on their lives and significant relationships. A more comprehensive report will be published at June this year, to be launched at the annual Association of Theatre, Drama and Performance Conference at the University of Sydney.

Black Swan State Theatre Company tackles possible problems head on by including in a welcome pack for cast members information about health and voice care with a list of recommended health care service providers. It also has an association with a physiotherapy service for emergency and ongoing treatment for company members who have a pre-existing condition which needs to be managed or who develop an acute condition during rehearsals.



Helen Tuckey

Viola

West Australian Symphony Orchestra

WEST AUSTRALIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA THE RILEY EFFECT

Beautiful baby Riley John Hughes was my grandson. He was perfect awake, and asleep!

He died in March this year from pertussis (whooping cough).

At 32 days of age, Riley was too young to have started on the regular immunization schedule. The disease took him from a baby with a cold to being in a coma on life-support in three days.

As he was dying, his parents Greg and Catherine Hughes promised him that they would work to try to ensure that no other baby would have to endure such terrible suffering and death. They continue to address all forms of media, visit State and Federal members of parliament, work with local health organizations, organize and volunteer at infor-

mation stalls at pregnancy and baby expos, raise funds for more research and vaccinations in the third world, all on top of trying to cope with their loss and parenting their irreplaceable three-year-old daughter.

Pertussis is spread by airborne contagion, and in today's society where we share the air we breathe with others, the best prevention is to build 'herd' immunity. We can do this best by vaccination – not only of babies and children, but also with adult boosters, which many of us are probably less aware of. Like most adults, I had thought that my childhood vaccinations were life-long. In the case of whooping cough, that is not the case. Adults should have boosters every 10 years, or less if you are around the vulnerable (infants, children in contact with infants, and those with compromised immunity, such as those undertaking chemotherapy or the very



elderly). Every pregnant woman, with every pregnancy, should receive a booster to best protect the baby as well as herself (this is now free, and has been practiced for many years in many other countries, drastically reducing the chance of infants contracting whooping cough). More information about Light for Riley, including links to studies and further information about adult immunisation, can be found on their facebook page 'Light for Riley' (www.facebook.com/LightForRiley).

Along with the wider community, WASO has been very supportive to our family following Riley's death. As part of the WASO health policy, we have added the option of a whooping cough booster to the annual flu shot. I recommend that all players speak with their doctors about personal requirements, and consider including this booster as part of offerings in any future general workplace

health programs. Whooping cough won't usually kill adults, and it's quite possible to be unaware that the cough you have is whooping cough. As well as spreading this to the vulnerable, the disease can be very nasty and may last for several months, leaving a compromised respiratory system, something that could particularly impact on brass and wind players.

With a loss like this, so many people ask what they can do. Treasure your near and dear ones. Discuss your vaccination status with your doctor and family members, and think about how you and your orchestra can contribute to important initiatives in public health.

A CONVERSATION WITH SIMON COLLINS

FEDERAL PRESIDENT, MEAA

Simon was recently elected to the position of Federal President, MEAA, following an extensive period of time as the Federal President of the Musicians' Section. He has also recently retired from his position of tutti viola with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Interviewed by Tania Hardy Smith

You've been involved with the management committee of MEAA for 20 years. How did you become involved?

I first became involved in workplace industrial matters at MSO in the early eighties when the musicians decided to form a committee and try to influence management decisions in the ABC bureaucracy. It was virtually impossible for a start to get any traction at all – in fact the management said they didn't need to meet us so they refused to do so.

Similar moves were happening in other orchestras, particularly in the SSO. I was first elected as president of the MSO Players Committee in 1986. This was an interesting period in the development of the ABC orchestras which were being moved away from the Radio division of the ABC into a newly formed Concert Music division.

Within the Musicians Union (MUA), musician representatives from each orchestra started working together, convened from Sydney by Martin Foster. I was a delegate from the MSO, joining representatives from each of the symphony orchestras annually for training and strategic discussions. Most of our early influence over orchestra management was achieved by endless confrontations in the Arbitration Commission during which we virtually never lost a case.



rationalise the services provided by member organisations. The MUA leadership resisted the drive to amalgamate with the Actors Equity, the Australian Journalists Association and the Theatrical Employees and thus musicians missed out in this significant reform. A short time later, the mainland orchestras resigned from the MUA on mass, and formed SOMA. After some protracted legal action, SOMA was finally in a position to join into the MEAA and has continued to achieve great results for orchestral musicians ever since.

By the early nineties, we had become an extremely effective force and were starting to make inroads particularly around working conditions which had remained unchanged from the days of studio broadcasting, and not having adapted to the main activity which had become concert performance. With the high level of organised activism amongst the symphony orchestras, tensions developed within the MUA. The union was run by and for musicians who mostly did not perform as their main income activity. The MUA leadership were politically driven and highly resistant to the obvious strength of the orchestra sector. Financial resources were kept from us. Musicians were paying union dues... and funding arbitration battles as well.

This was also the period of union amalgamations, driven by the ACTU in order to

As the first national president of SOMA, I was co-opted onto the management committee of the MEAA in 1996... and I have been there ever since!

How has the union evolved over that time?

The early days of the Alliance were wrought with several difficulties as you would expect when trying to meld 3 quite different organisational cultures into one. National meetings were frequently turf wars about the allocation of resources between sections and between states. Even now we are working through another significant round of rules changes which will remove more issues dating back to the first days of the amalgamation.

On entering the MEAA, SOMA negotiated a high level of autonomy within the structure which set us up as a separate cost centre in the accounts. This shielded us from the political struggles which carried on throughout the rest of the amalgamation for many years. SOMA still operates to its own budget within the larger union and continues to provide efficient and transparent outcomes for our members.

Over the last few years, the leadership of the MEAA has taken some significant and ground breaking steps for a union in Australia. As of April this year, we no longer have any elected employees. All staff are employed on merit, including the CEO who is engaged and directed by the board. The board of the union is made up of elected delegates drawn from all sections and from all states. Relations between branches and between the sections are a great deal more harmonious and we are in a position to address good governance and best practice management.

What have been the challenges for unions in Australia over your time with the MEAA?

All unions in Australia have had to face up to challenges on multiple fronts. The most obvious of these is of course the anti-union stance which is the bastion of conservative government policy. Industrial legislation has been designed to weaken collective bargaining and to inhibit the effective representation of members in their workplaces.

Unions are also challenged by the rapid technological change impacting most industries. Many jobs disappear entirely.

The current Royal Commission was intended to expose union corruption but has been more of a fishing expedition, having found little basis for investigation. The results in terms of potential convictions do not justify the expense or the hype. But it has been a very valuable tool from a conservative political view... damaging the union brand.

Unions are also challenged by the rapid technological change impacting most

industries. Many jobs disappear entirely. Tenured employment continues to decline in favour of contingent work so the traditional 'workplace' which was the grass roots level of union activism has changed or gone forever.

Unions also have to raise their standards of governance. Legislated governance requirements for unions have been minimal and way below those for companies and corporations. There has been some improvement in governance requirements over recent years – much of it more politically motivated than with the intent to strengthen union governance.

The restructure of the MEAA away from elected management has been a bold step. We are now working to develop accountable and transparent processes not only in our financial management but also in the allocation of resources, supervision of staff and human resources processes.

What do you see as the future challenges for MEAA?

Bedding down our new structure remains a significant challenge! There has been a very robust debate amongst MEAA activists over several years, and now that the new structure is fully implemented we still have to realise the advantages. I am confident that it will all work though!

Industries traditionally covered by the MEAA are no exception to the impact of technological change. Journalism is being affected particularly hard as we see the business model of the newspaper collapse completely. Where there were once large press rooms in all of the country's newspapers, now all the sub-editing is 'outsourced' offshore, and the same content is used right around the country. Many hundreds of journalists' jobs have disappeared with an obvious impact on the MEAA's membership.

Many of these skilled professionals are taking up careers in contingent enterprises such as blogs, or moving to jobs such as PR. Casualisation continues to increase in all our industries – including the orchestras – as we see more and more jobs not being filled and an ever increasing reliance on our freelance pool.

It is worth doing a count of the casual presence on stage in major concerts. The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra has been consistently presenting in major concerts with at least one third of the string section comprised of non-permanent players for a long time. This trend not only affects the performance standard when the ‘ensemble’ is not preserved – but it also weakens the collective power of musicians in negotiations with their managers.

Casualisation continues to increase in all our industries – including the orchestras – as we see more and more jobs not being filled and an ever increasing reliance on our freelance pool.

In order to remain viable and relevant, unions including the MEAA have to adapt to the changing environment. The traditional approach in well organised permanent workplaces is no longer going to be relevant to most members and potential members. MEAA is looking to a range of services which we might provide for members including networking, skills training and public campaigning along with contract advice and legal support.

What does your role as MEAA President entail?

As MEAA President, I have an equivalent function to the chair of a board of directors. My role includes chairing monthly board meetings and also meetings of the Federal Council of the union (about 90 members). I also interact directly with senior staff, particularly the chief executive and the director of finance on behalf of the board – and therefore the membership.

There remains a great deal of political activity within the membership and my task along with the 4 deputy presidents and 5 vice presidents is to manage that interaction. A key tenet of our new structure is to depoliticise the staff so that management decisions are based on best practice. Politics plays an essential part in the union and robust debates amongst activist members are an important measure of the relevance we have to the media and entertainment industries and the people who work in them.

What does MEAA do for our orchestra members?

SOMA continues to provide the industrial support for all of Australia’s professional symphony orchestras. A significant part of SOMA’s work is behind the scenes, lobbying directly with all governments and all relevant government agencies. SOMA has made significant contributions to the numerous government inquiries which continue to plague the arts sector – usually to avoid resetting funding levels to reflect economic change! We are currently engaged with a significant review into the major opera companies. SOMA draws on the resources of the MEAA for legal advice and support for members when they need assistance.



Bill Kerr
National Organiser Orchestras
British Musicians' Union

ACCESS TO TRAINING & ADAPTED WORKLOAD

Panel address given at the 3rd International Federation of Musicians Conference, Oslo, February 2014. Reprinted with kind permission from Bill Kerr.

'Even the most focused musicians may not be able to maintain the same level of performance forever. Is it compatible with the roll-out of a full professional career?'

In the UK, compulsory retirement at the default age of 65 ceased to be lawful in 2011. This presented UK orchestra employers with a new issue concerning

ageing and performance which required a carefully thought-through series of solutions. The British Musicians' Union (BMU) has cooperated with the Association of British Orchestras (ABO), the UK's orchestral management association, over the last two years in order to try and find a mutually acceptable way forward.



It was agreed from the outset that effective solutions would have to be operative throughout a musician's career, right from the very start, and not just when a musician reached a particular age of 55 or 60 for example, as this would in itself constitute unlawful age discrimination. The five main elements that were identified as important in addressing the potential problems are:

1. Fair and balanced system of career review
2. Continuing professional development programme
3. Adequate health / income protection insurance cover
4. Retirement planning capability
5. Good pension provision

Let us look at these five issues in more detail:

1. CAREER REVIEW

Musicians do not just experience problems with maintaining standards of work when they reach a certain age. Physical, psychological, medical, emotional, technical and personal issues can adversely affect a musician's standard of work at any age from 20 through to 65 and beyond. If an orchestra has a fair and balanced system of regular career review in place these issues can be discussed and identified at the earliest opportunity and dealt with effectively before they become career threatening. Help and assistance can be provided to the musician to ensure that problems that can be overcome with the right support are resolved. This system, if carefully and sensitively managed, will prevent the sudden and unexpected shock of an older musician being told without prior warning at a later stage in their career that their standard of work is no longer acceptable.

2. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

An essential partner to run alongside Career Review is a properly resourced CPD programme which will allow musicians to

develop and expand their skill set both to the advantage of the orchestra as well as their own career. CPD might include the study of specialist techniques on the musician's instrument with a recognised pedagogue. Or it might encompass self-help therapies like yoga, massage, Pilates or relaxation techniques which will help extend the musician's useful working life.

Much work has been accomplished by medical experts in the USA with professional dancers to the extent that it has extended their professional working lives by an average of 10 years increasing the usual retirement age from 35 to 45 and above.

Equally importantly, there needs to be a system built into the CPD programme for assisting musicians to think about alternative career paths – a 'plan B' in the event that they might be no longer able to continue as orchestral players at any point in their working life up to and including retirement for whatever reason. Physical problems such as focal dystonia, carpal tunnel syndrome or some form of injury or accident can so easily prematurely terminate a musician's career and a backup plan is essential for every musician so that they can face these life changing events should they occur.

3. HEALTH / INCOME PROTECTION COVER

Whilst some orchestra musicians are able to work comfortably into old age without any deterioration of ability, there are sadly many more players who, through no fault of their own, develop physical or psychological impairments that begin to adversely affect their ability to play their instruments before they reach an age at which they can afford to retire.

In the UK, a number of orchestras offer additional protection to musicians who develop these problems by the provision

of Permanent Health or Disability Insurance (PHI/PDI) schemes which pay a reduced salary of 50% or 75% from the time the musician is no longer able to work and their sickness pay runs out until they are able to draw their pension or retrain for other types of work. These schemes also pay the musician's continuing pension contributions until they reach pensionable age or change profession.

The knowledge that there is a safe haven which affords financial stability and security allows these players to relinquish their playing careers gently and approach retraining or retirement in a dignified and less stressful way than would otherwise be the case.

4. RETIREMENT PLANNING

Many orchestral musicians develop a deep emotional attachment to playing their particular instrument in the orchestra and, much like losing a dear close friend, find it extremely difficult to make that leap into a world bereft of something that has

almost become a part of them. Training and guidance for retirement is needed for musicians who have devoted their entire working lives to orchestral performance and find it difficult to adjust to new circumstances.

A few musicians are irreplaceable and continue working into their 70s with consummate ease. But many do not have this longevity. I believe that there is a need for balance – an orchestra should have both the vigour and enthusiasm of young players and the experience and wisdom of old musicians.

There are important factors other than the more obvious performance issues that affect a musician's ability to work comfortably in an orchestra into old age. Orchestras that tour extensively, both in their own country and abroad, require their members to turn up at airports or to catch trains and buses at all hours of the day and night. A difficult concert can often be preceded or followed by a long journey. Very early starts and late finishes can

CONCLUSION

Unfortunately, the reality for many orchestras is that the pressure on finances caused by reduced investment from national and local government and from private and corporate investors has caused them to reduce the level of assistance available to ageing musicians.

Pension schemes are more at the mercy of the global markets and failing economies than their defined benefit predecessors, with the risks now being taken by the musician rather than by the employer. Not only is the value of pension funds shrinking

but the cost of an annuity that has to be purchased with it in order to receive a pension income has risen sharply.

Coupled with this those UK orchestras that continue to provide PHI and PDI schemes have severely curtailed their scope, in order to avoid excessive rises in insurance premiums. This has either reduced the length of cover to just 5 years or reduced the percentage of salary payable.

Taken together, the retrograde developments of the last few

years have had the unintended effect of pushing orchestral musicians into working for longer than they might otherwise have done in order to earn a better pension.

I therefore ask the 3rd FIM IOC to consider adopting a strategy for ageing musicians in orchestras, as part of its final declaration this year, to encourage all orchestras to adopt the five points I have identified as follows:

1. The creation of a fair and balanced system of regular career reviews to identify and deal effectively with issues

follow each other with relentless frequency. Even those musicians whose playing remains on top form can begin to tire of the incessant travel and antisocial hours, and this does not get easier with age; in fact it gets a lot harder.

To assist with this, systems should be introduced to allow orchestra musicians to reduce their workloads as they age and if they wish to. Part-time work or job shares would allow those with career threatening physical or psychological impairments to continue their orchestral careers where working full-time would exacerbate the problem and cause them to cease playing altogether. Phased retirement should be introduced so that musicians could, if they needed to, reduce their workload progressively during their final years in post.

5. PENSIONS

For an orchestral musician to be able to work successfully up to an optimum age, he or she requires a good pension in order to be able to retire at the most appropriate time.

Orchestral employers and musicians must be encouraged to contribute to pensions from the earliest possible age as the value of the pension will accrue much faster in the early years than later in life when it may be too late.

These pension schemes must be robust, dependable and affordable for all orchestral musicians. They should be structured in a way that would permit retirement from age 55 or earlier without the loss of pension benefit but would also allow those musicians who wished to, and were able to, to continue beyond this age.

Without proper pension provision an orchestral musician will be forced into continuing to work for longer than they might wish to in order to be able to afford to retire on an adequate pension. This in turn can present problems for the employer who is trying to balance the need for the orchestra to be constantly at the top of its game with the need to be compassionate and caring with its employees.

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|---|--|---|
| at the earliest opportunity before they become career threatening. | disability or income protection schemes or other types of insurance or indemnity that will offer financial support to musicians who are forced to quit their orchestral jobs because of physical or psychological impairments before they become eligible for pension benefits or are able to retrain. | training and guidance for retirement for musicians who have devoted their entire working lives to orchestral performance and find it difficult to adjust to new circumstances. |
| 2. The creation of continuing professional development programmes to assist musicians to develop and expand their orchestral skills whilst also encouraging them to think about and build an alternative career plan in the event that they might be no longer able to continue as orchestral players due to illness or injury. | 4. A system of retirement planning which allows orchestra musicians to reduce their workloads progressively as they age if they wish to and provides | 5. The instigation of robust, dependable, affordable pension provision for all employed musicians that would permit retirement from age 55 without loss of pension benefit but would also allow those musicians who wished to, and were able to, to continue beyond this age. |
| 3. The introduction of mechanisms such as health, | | |

Solo

Guy du Blêt

Principal Timpani

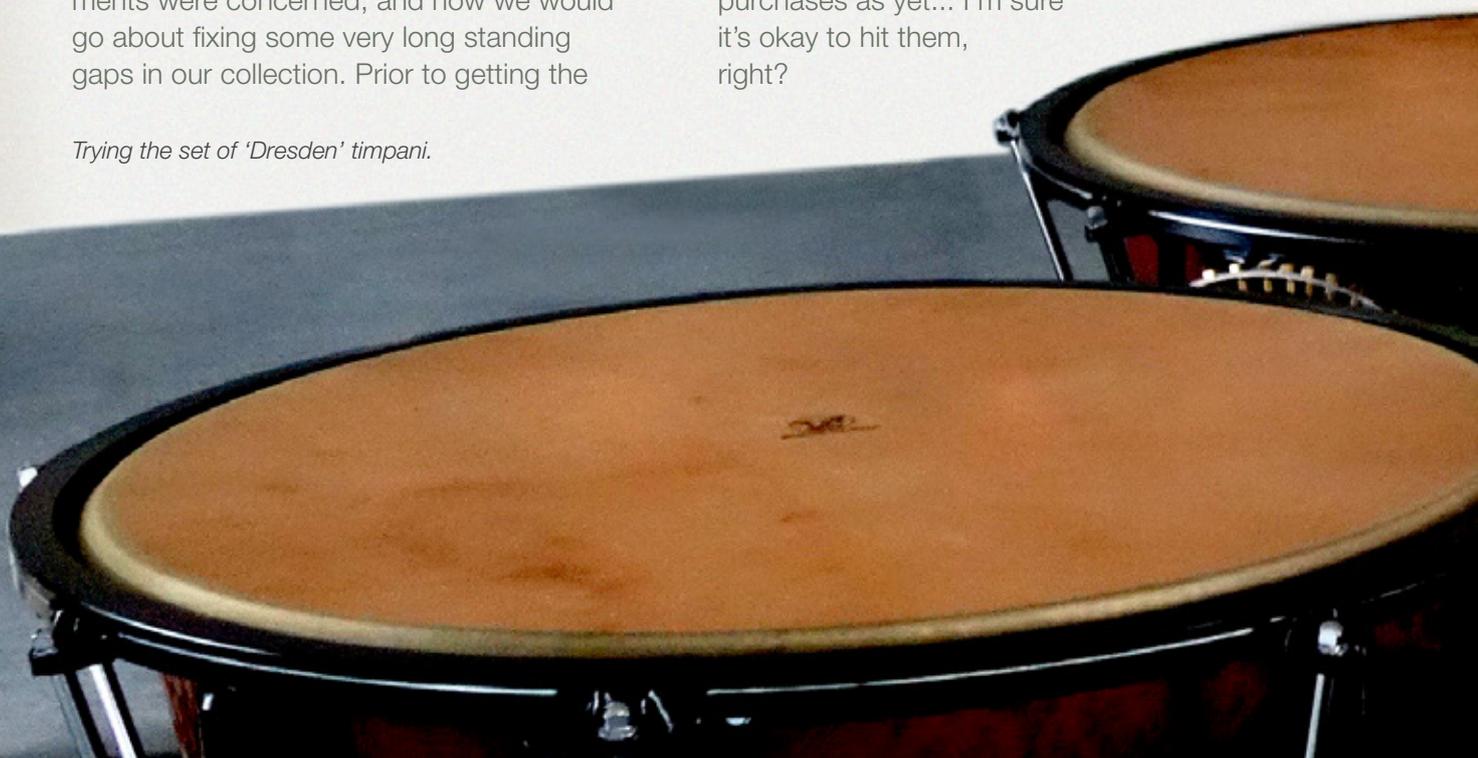
Orchestra Victoria/The Australian Ballet

THE GREAT INTERNATIONAL TIMPANI TOUR

As you all know, Orchestra Victoria found a very happy home with The Australian Ballet on July 1st 2014. Little do you know that for the months leading up to this transition, lots of work was going on behind the scenes to discover what was needed as far as instruments were concerned, and how we would go about fixing some very long standing gaps in our collection. Prior to getting the

green light for our new timpani, OV had already purchased some beautiful cornets with tremendous support from our wonderful benefactors, and plans are in place for a new Harp and Celeste... they haven't asked for my direct involvement in either of these purchases as yet... I'm sure it's okay to hit them, right?

Trying the set of 'Dresden' timpani.







Anyway, with amazing support from the colleagues, the management and a big push from Nicolette Fraillon, the larger company has put in place new benefactors and new fund-matching mechanisms and following our second annual Philanthropy event at Albert Park in October, I was off!

With regard to timpani fashion in Australia, a lot has happened, even in my time (whilst very little indeed has changed in its heartland of Germany the whole time...) and also in our wider knowledge of style and historical performance practices. With this in mind, and the really wide variety of repertoire we play (and the huge number of performances we give!) I was shopping for two sets of new timpani. This is really a once-in-a-career opportunity so, having just sent the maker our final list of inclusions this week, I'm feeling the pressure to get this right!

In terms of technical information we are getting two sets, including a set of six 'Ringer' timpani. Günther Ringer was the great timpani maker in Berlin from the 1950s to the 1970s. His timpani are all over the world and orchestras here such as the Melbourne, Tasmanian and Sydney Symphony have original Ringers. They are characterised by the shape of the bowl, straight sides with a shallow cup at the bottom and the hammering, made up of at least 30 thousand blows, all done by hand.

Guy at the Hardtke Pauken Werkstatt in Berlin trying out the 'Berlin Classic' timpani made by Wolfgang Hardtke.

Our new 'Ringers' are made by a 'descendant' maker, Wolfgang Hardtke in Berlin. He has an amazing factory and his version of the 'Ringer' called a Berlin Classic, can be heard at the Berlin Philharmonic, Paris Opera/Ballet, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic (just to name a few), throughout Germany, Europe and the USA, as well as in Brisbane at the Queensland Symphony Orchestra. There's even a piccolo timpani in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

In terms of technical information we are getting two sets, including a set of six 'Ringer' timpani. Günther Ringer was the great timpani maker in Berlin from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Aside from the regular four, we decided six was the right number as there are many more occasions these days when we need the low range – down to a 'C' below the bass clef and all the way up to a high 'C' above it. This is a very big range for an instrument which really has its perfect home between the octave F – F. Operas like Brett Dean's *Bliss* and Joby Talbot's ballet music to the *White Stripes* both call for the extremities of the range and we have to be able to do it comfortably when needed.

Our other set will be a set of four 'Dresden' timpani. Not to go overboard on the details here, the Dresden timpani have a thinner bowl than other types and in this case, a heavier frame. The bowl shape is slightly different as well. Wait for the photos – both sets will look very different to what we are used to here... these will be the first drums of this type in Australia and it's a real credit to the bosses to have recognised how valuable and important they will be for us. They have a different sound, and the thinner bowl generates a different type of resonance. Players are falling over themselves to get these drums at the moment and I can't wait for them to arrive. There is a blog planned telling the story of our acquisition and the building of our drums – watch this space...

So, the trip was planned and booked. There was no point going all that way without doing some professional development. I organised to meet with Anton Mittermayr (Solo Pauke, Vienna Philharmonic), went to the ballet *Don Quixote* at the Vienna Staatsoper, visited Stuttgart to meet one of my mallet makers... yes, it's true folks... I am a card carrying member of the 'must try that mallet' club... went to hear the Radio Symphony Orchestra Stuttgart, sat in the pit for a dress rehearsal of *Fidelio* at the Stuttgart Staatsoper (natural trumpets and sackbuts were amazing!), met the timpani player from Concerto Köln, Stefan Gawlick, and then went on to Berlin. The schedule included Berliner Philharmoniker playing Mozart and Haydn, spending some time with both timpani players in the Berliner Philharmoniker (Weiland Wenzel and my

teacher, Rainer Seegers) and then it was off to the factory to talk timpani with the maker and the agent.

This one week trip finished with sitting in the pit at the Deutsche Oper for a performance of *Magic Flute* and the next morning, I was coming home!

I found it very helpful to have an effective dialogue between the colleagues and management with this acquisition. In my case, I certainly feel very fortunate to have been handed the keys and the company credit card (figuratively!) and been gifted the chance to reset the bar for the sound of Orchestra Victoria. It was definitely the best thing to do to go in person – I had only about 500 questions before I went, and about 800 more since I got back – and from a cost perspective it was good investment in light of the whole package of securing these magnificent instruments.

A big thank you to Hardtke Pauken Werkstaat Berlin, their agent Dan Percussion in Denmark but really, it's thanks to the colleagues and the bosses at Orchestra Victoria and The Australian Ballet for their support and continued inspiration to go the extra mile.

Cheers,
Guy du Blêt



Matt Goddard

Principal Timpani/SOMA Representative
Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra

SOMA CONFERENCE 2015

SYDNEY, AUGUST 30-31

Delegates from the six state symphony orchestras, Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra and Orchestra Victoria along with colleagues from the New Zealand Symphony

Orchestra descended upon the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia in Sydney on the Sunday and Monday, 30th and 31st August for the biennial SOMA Conference.



Role play as 'practice'.



Howard Manley, National SOMA Officer, MEAA, SOMA Conference 2015

We were very happy to welcome Lyndsay Mountfort, Malcolm Struthers and Belinda Veitch from NZSO as guests at this conference. Their *New Zealand Briefing* gave us an insight into the orchestral landscape and funding arrangements in New Zealand. We also heard about recent contract negotiations which were successfully completed using a process of 'interest-based bargaining'. There seem to be many benefits to this approach.

Sunday afternoon's session kicked off with a discussion on Orchestra Education and Outreach featuring Nicolette Fraillon (Music Director and Chief Conductor, The Australian Ballet and Artistic Director, Orchestra Victoria) and Colin Cornish (Chief Executive, Australian Youth Orchestra), moderated by Lachlan Bramble (Adelaide Symphony Orchestra/ SOMA).

Queensland Symphony Orchestra horn player and qualified audiologist Ian O'Brien's interesting and entertaining presentation *Hearing Conservation in Professional Orchestras: Developments of the last 10 years* concluded the afternoon's proceedings. Ian has a great depth of knowledge on this important issue.

Delegates then returned to the Vibe Hotel in Rushcutters Bay for the Conference Dinner,

SOMA Wants	Management Response	SOMA Counter

From the 2015 SOMA Conference, session on negotiation. Sketch: Sandro Constantino, Sydney Symphony Orchestra



SOMA conference delegates on the marina.

featuring Lyndon Terracini AM (Artistic Director, Opera Australia) as guest speaker.

Monday morning was devoted to negotiation training with Karene Walton (MEAA Director, Campaigns and Education). There was discussion around our varying levels of engagement with issues in our workplaces, the variety of management attitudes and of course the dreaded but valuable role plays (re-badged as 'practice!').

Bronwen Ackermann spoke to us in the concluding afternoon session about the final outcomes of the Sound Practice Project.

The conference proved to be a day and half jam-packed with all kinds of information and exchange of ideas and all would agree that it is a valuable part of the SOMA calendar. Thanks to SOMA National Officer Howard Manley and SOMA President Mark Bruwel for putting it all together.

Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

Lachlan Bramble, Violin

Following on from our Strategic Review of 2013 the ASO is undergoing a major restructuring of our administrative staff with a net gain of several new positions. The Board's objective is to put more resources into revenue generating areas, thus making the company more financially sustainable. The players have welcomed this initiative as the orchestra has been running on a shoestring administration team for many years. There has been much activity over the last couple of months recruiting new staff and also farewell-

ling old friends. We are looking forward to commencing 2016 with a refreshed team.

On stage we congratulate and welcome Adrian Uren (Principal Horn), Cameron Hill (Associate Concertmaster) and Hugh Kluger (Associate Principal Double Bass) who join us after successfully completing their trial periods. At the same time we farewell Matt Dempsey (Principal Trumpet) who has moved back to Sydney and Bryan Griffiths (Horn) who is undertaking further study in conducting.

Jackie Hansen (Contra Bassoon) and Dean Newcomb (Clarinet) were just married in a beautiful ceremony at Myponga. And Emma Perkins (Violin) and Cameron Waters (Cello) welcome their second baby Ruby who has been just born to very happy parents.

Our mid-year 'opera sandwich' had its difficulties with State Opera's take on the Verdi *Requiem* filling in the blanks between performances of Gounod's (very lengthy) *Faust*. In October ASO staged a mini festival celebrating Mendelssohn and his relationship with Bach. There was a healthy sprinkling of theatrics as we combined Shakespeare's words and Mendelssohn's music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the help of the State Theatre Company. We will finish 2015 with Arvo Volmer (our departing Principal Guest Conductor) and Nicholas Carter (our incoming Principal Conductor) before climbing the Stairway to Heaven with the Zep Boys.

In other news the ASO's unofficial indoor cricket team bowed out in the semi finals last Monday blaming a spate of bad luck.



Photograph: Kat Cochr

Jackie Hansen (Contra Bassoon) and Dean Newcomb (Clarinet) celebrated their wedding in a beautiful ceremony at Myponga.

Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra

Mark Bruwel, Oboe

The last few months has seen a range of activities and issues come AOBO's way that have been rewarding to work on. We weren't involved with the Musical *Anything Goes* so instead recorded a new CD with the delightful Australian soprano Nicole Car, did some conductor training workshops with Johannes Fritzch, continued recording the made for TV opera *The Divorce*, and went on our first tour (albeit brief) as a full Orchestra for nearly 30 years with Romanian soprano Angela Gheorghiu.

Jun Yi Ma has also taken up his position as Concertmaster and we have a new HR Director, Mahua Das, so I anticipate a new range of ideas coming into the Industrial and Enterprise Bargaining arenas.

We had some successful auditions recently with appointments to trial being made for Deputy Concertmaster, Associate Principal Percussion and Tutti Viola. It is great to finally be edging back up to a core strength of 62 after a number of years of having positions effectively (and artistically shortsightedly) frozen as a means to reduce costs to the Company. The push to get us back up to 69 will, of course, continue.

There are, however, some clouds looming in 2017 with the Joan Sutherland Theatre at the Opera House due to be closed for seven months for stage machinery upgrades. While the Opera and the Ballet will continue to present seasons at different venues in Sydney, there will no doubt be significant financial challenges. Hopefully there will also be some new opportunities, similar to what we have recently just done. We are due for EB negotiations to start in a few months for the 2017 period.



Lying down – Alexander Technique class with AOBO musicians

Finally, every now and then something comes along outside of playing which inspires us to work collectively and produce something amazing. Our Players' Committee decided to make its own submission to the National Opera Review. That spurred a range of thought, discussion and ideas that was really rewarding. It became a very interesting process of review for us as an Orchestra, both of where we are at and where we would like to go. The National Opera Review is big and seems to be getting bigger but just preparing this one submission has been a very satisfying experience. Highly recommended!

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Patrick Wong, Violin

So another year, another *Messiah*. Well actually it's the same *Messiah*, but for some reason people still come to it, so why not. Thankfully the MSO plays some other things too, and highlights of the second part of the year included the return of Renée Fleming after thirteen years, an incredible *Heldenleben* with concertmaster Dale Barltrop and one of the best Grieg Piano Concerto performances in recent memory with young pianist Benjamin Grosvenor. With ticket sales strong the forecast is for a breakeven result at the end of the year.

It seems that every man and his Shih Tzu is heading to China these days and the MSO has just announced a multi-year agreement with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. The first of these collaborations will be in April 2016 when the MSO will visit Shanghai for a week of chamber music, masterclasses and a joint orchestral concert with the Shanghai Symphony.

The MSO has seen an eventful year of comings and goings in both orchestra and management. In upper management the most notable must be the appointment of (previous Deputy Chair) Michael Ullmer to Chairman of the MSO Board, replacing Harold Mitchell who has retired from the position after 7

years. Harold has seen the MSO through some challenging years and is stepping down after ensuring the orchestra has renewed hope and direction for the future. However he is not going far and will be taking on a leadership role with the MSO Foundation.

Managing Director André Gremillet has also resigned, after almost 3 years at the helm. André has taken up the Executive Director position at the Cleveland Orchestra. Richard Evans (former Chief Executive of the Sydney Opera House, Executive Director of Australian Ballet and General Manager of Bell Shakespeare) has taken up the interim Managing Director role until a permanent successor is found.

Chief Conductor Sir Andrew Davis has signed a new 3 year contract, extending his tenure until the end of 2019.

In the orchestra we welcome Thomas Hutchinson on trial as our new Associate Principal Oboe, and welcome back Chris Moore as our new principal viola. We missed the June edition of *Senza Sord* so we must mention the retirement earlier in the year of Anne Martonyi (1st violin) after 42 years of service to the MSO. Anne brought her boundless positive energy to both the stage and the

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band room, and she will be sorely missed. We are fortunate however that Anne continues to play with us occasionally as a casual, but it seems she only comes in for things like *Scheherazade*, and not *Back to the Future*. Even Anne's boundless positive energy knows its bounds.

Last but not least, Simon Collins (viola) has retired after 35 years from the MSO to focus on, amongst other things, his new position as president of MEAA. Simon was integral

in the formation of SOMA and negotiated its entry into the MEAA as its first president. As both violist and Players' Committee president for many years his contribution to the MSO is immeasurable, leading the negotiation of five EBAs and in recent years giving his time generously to pass on his encyclopaedic knowledge of everything MSO to those of us who can only aspire to follow in his footsteps. We thank Simon for his service to the MSO and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.



MSO players and Stephen Fry.

Orchestra Victoria

Josh de Graaf, Associate Principal Oboe/OVMA Vice-President

Greetings from OV! Another year draws to a close, the first complete calendar year for OV under the TAB banner. Since my last report, the orchestra has been kept busy in and out of the pit in a variety of roles.

Notable amongst these were:

- Our inaugural Festival in Hamilton, with a follow-up in Bendigo. These week-long festivals combine our mOVe education programs with OV chamber concerts, pop-up performances and culminate with a full orchestral concert. Essentially, OV immerses itself in these regional centres (and surrounds) for a week, enhancing our name as an orchestra for all Victorians. Both festivals proved incredibly successful with plans already well under way for next year.
- Back to back ballet seasons. Stravinsky followed by a much anticipated season of David McAllister's *Sleeping Beauty*. The season came complete with a live recording, documentary (both to be aired on Foxtel Arts) and a further week in the studio recording a reduced version for an ABC children's ballet.
- The opera season with Opera Australia. Concluding a little earlier than usual, but perhaps granted given the Ring Cycle is returning again next year.
- The 'Remembrance' performances with Victorian Opera, as well as the recently staged *Seven Deadly Sins* and *Grumpiest Boy*.



In May 2015, Orchestra Victoria welcomed Glynn Davies to the position of Orchestra Librarian.

- The Production Company shows, including *Jerry's Girls* (running now).
- In and around all of this came more mOVe education workshops, the chamber series *Five at Five*, *Mostly Mozart* concerts, as well as various events such as the *Herald Sun Aria*.

Through all of this, many comings and goings. Ben Anderson (Bass Trombone) and Tim Murray (Contra/2nd Bassoon) have passed their respective trials, embarking as pioneers on the new 3-year contracts. Rachel Shaw and Sydney Braunfeld have both commenced trials on Tutti Horn and most recently, Alyssa Conrau was successful in auditioning for Tutti Violin.

Departing the orchestra, after long and distinguished careers, are Lorraine Bradbury (Flute/Piccolo), Ray Hope, (Viola) and Mark Skillington (Trumpet). Severin Donnenberg (Violin) has also left, having returned home to Austria. Best wishes to all.

Finally, a quick mention of the fantastic initiatives popping up around health and wellbeing at OV. Free pilates, physio sessions and recently a free trial gym membership are all being rolled out to the orchestra by The Australian Ballet. It is fantastic to see TAB's commitment to physical health and wellbeing extending beyond the obvious needs of the dancers to the musicians. Thanks in particular, to Principal Physiotherapist Sue Mayes and her team for their efforts.

Sydney Symphony Orchestra



Photograph: Shannon Fagan

Sydney Symphony Orchestra outside 'The Egg' – Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts.

Geoff O'Reilly, Principal 3rd Horn

As the 2015 Sydney Symphony season comes to a close I would like to thank a number of conductors and soloists that have made the journey to Sydney over the past few months.

We have seen collaborations between Bramwell Tovey and Gil Shaham (Violin), Lionel Bringuier and Yuja Wang (Piano), Vasily Petrenko and Simon Trpceski (Piano), James Gaffigan and Kirill Gerstein (Piano), Jakub Hruša and Anne-Sophie Mutter (Violin), Andy Einhorn and Audra McDonald (Vocal),

Miguel Harth-Bedoya and Shefali Prior, and performed with Simone Young, Jessica Cottis and Charles Dutoit. We also welcomed back our former Chief Conductor Edo De Waart.

Since the last edition of *Senza Sord* the SSO has undertaken some great repertoire with our Chief Conductor David Robertson.

In June we gave three performances of *Tristan und Isolde*. Members of the horn section smashed out Haydn's *Symphony No 31* (Horn Signal). There was Schubert



Flautist Carolyn Harris, trombonist Ron Prussing and violinist Sophie Cole at Beijing's iconic 600-year-old Qianmen Street.

Symphony No.4 and Sibelius *Symphony No. 2* with Andrew Haveron (concertmaster) playing the Walton Violin Concerto in the same program.

In late October the orchestra went on tour to China and Korea. The itinerary was tight – we played one concert at the Beijing National Centre for the Performing Arts, and then flew across the Yellow Sea to South Korea to play one concert at the Daegu Music Festival. We also played two concerts at the Seoul Arts Centre.

As usual when the orchestra tours, musicians from the orchestra held master classes for

the students at the Seoul National University. These educational outreach activities have become an important part of the orchestra's international touring programme.

To finish off, members of the Management Committee are devoting hours of time updating our EBA using interest-based negotiations with management. It's a slow process that we hope to have finalised in the New Year.

From the Sydney Symphony we wish all the Orchestras a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. To Howard – thank you for all your great work this year.

Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra

Matt Goddard, Principal Timpani

As the working year draws to a close we can look back on a year that has seen consistently good audiences across all series and the orchestra going from strength to strength with some great new appointments. Jenny Owen (Principal First Violin), Jonathon Ramsay (Principal Trombone), James Menzies (Tutti Double Bass) and Stefanie Farrands (Principal Viola) have all successfully completed their trial periods. In September we farewelled concertmaster Jun Yi Ma after 13 years with the orchestra.

Concerts in this second part of the year have ranged from performances of the five Beethoven piano concertos with Stephen Hough through to playing with Antony Hegarty as part of the Dark MOFO festival during winter.

A major focus of our outreach activity this year has been with the Risdon Prison. The culmination of this is two concerts in December at the prison. The first is collaboration with the prison rock band and will feature a small orchestra playing arrangements by TSO Principal Tuba, Tim Jones, with the band in a performance in the minimum security section of the prison. During the course of the year the band members have also attended an open rehearsal as well as having their material recorded in the TSO rehearsal studio. Later in the week the orchestra will perform Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* with Chief Conductor Marko Letonja for a small group of inmates and their families.

Congratulations to Greg Stephens (Tutti French Horn) and his wife Maria on the birth of Emilie.



Alison Lazaroff-Somssich (Tutti Violin) and Roger Jackson (Tutti French Horn) with Dianne Truskett (right), President of Friends of TSO, celebrating 25 years playing with the orchestra.

West Australian Symphony Orchestra

Melanie Pearn, Violin



The happy WASO Oboe Section: Peter Facer, Liz Chee, Leanne Glover

WASO is delighted to announce that we have finally appointed a concertmaster to begin working with us full-time from January 2016. Lawrence Jackson is moving to Perth after 10 years as concertmaster of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, bringing with him a long list of orchestral and chamber music credentials. He has spent a few weeks with WASO this year including our Brahms Festival, and we are looking forward to his official start. Shortly after this announcement came the renewal of Asher Fisch's contract for another three years – to the end of 2019. Both of these appointments will hopefully bring a further sense of stability throughout the orchestra.

On the stage WASO has continued to be busy. Finishing *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy

came with relief felt by all. Our first Education Week with a variety of different performances and projects showcased WASO to the wider community – the Open Day may have been more successful if it hadn't been accompanied by a rare rainy winter's day.

The highlight of the year for many was the Brahms Festival in August – with Asher Fisch on the podium, we presented the four symphonies and concertos to capacity audiences over two weekends. For the WA football fans, both the West Coast Eagles and Fremantle Dockers club songs were prepared as encores leading into the AFL Grand Final, however it was not to be!

A couple of small ensembles have travelled to regional areas in recent months as part of the



*WASO on the Road Tour to Leinster, WA.
From left: Rachael Kirk (viola), Cerys Tooby (violin),
Bec Glorie (violin), Shigeru Komatsu (cello),
Alistair Cox (Orchestra Management), Cass Lake
(Community Engagement)*

WASO on the Road program. One ensemble visited the mining town of Leinster for schools concerts and had the full Fly-in Fly-out experience complete with accommodation in the Single Persons Quarters, meals at the mess hall and pink 'hi-vis' vests.

More exchanges are scheduled with the China Philharmonic Orchestra: in November several players and management from CPO joined us for Mahler 1 and in December Peter Facer (Principal Oboe), Josh Davis (Principal Trombone), Brent Grapes (Principal Trumpet) and Xiaole Wu (cello) will enjoy the Chinese hospitality. This relationship will be furthered with the announcement that WASO will be going to China in 2016 to continue this partnership with the orchestra in its entirety this time.

Throughout this year our HR department has been implementing "Version 1" of a Health and Wellness Program for the company. This has involved Physio Pilates before/after work, employing a physio to be on-site during pre-organised lunchbreaks and for the same physio provider to film musicians for postural

assessments. Given this program is in its infant stages, there have been a number of hiccups along the way and some tweaking is needed to enable participation from greater number of musicians.

Enterprise Bargaining negotiations are currently underway and we've hit the usual stumbling block of 'there's no money'. Given time, things will eventually sort themselves out. Thank goodness for Howard!

We still have a number of violin trials underway, as well as a tutti viola trial. We're also in the middle of mini-trials for the Principal Percussion position. In June, Caleb Wright passed his trial for Principal Viola. At the end of 2015 we will be farewelling Kathie Drake after nearly 30 years of service in the viola section. We wish her well in her 'retirement' and we'll miss her positive contributions to the viola section and the orchestra.



Frankie Lo Surdo (French Horn) sporting the WASO cycling jersey on Ride to Work Day.

Industrial Report

Orchestra Enterprise Agreements

current status December 2015

Howard Manley

National SOMA Officer

MEAA

WASO	Agreed in principle for 12 month agreement from 1 January 2016. Salary increases of 1.5% and up to 12.5% employer super co-contribution. Subject to musicians' vote in early 2016.
ASO	Discussions underway for new EA to operate from 1 January 2016.
TSO	Current agreement provides for May 2016 increase in salaries and allowances in line with Hobart CPI.
OV	Current agreement provides for a 3% increase to salaries on 1 February 2016.
MSO	Current agreement provides for a 2.5%, or alternatively a 3% salary increase from May 2016 conditional on the Company's 2015 financial performance.
AOBO	Current agreement provides for 2.6% increase from 1 January 2016.
SSO	Discussions underway for new agreement for 2016 and beyond. Agreed that 2016 salary increase will operate from January.
QSO	New 12 month agreement provides for a 1.5% increase from January 2016.

SOMA Executive Meeting Melbourne, December 6-7 2015 – Agenda

- Financial Reports
- SOMA Presidency
- National Opera Review
- SOMA Conference
- Enterprise Agreements
– current status/2016
programme
- MEAA website
- *Senza Sord*
- MEAA Circulars
- Education
- Retirement
- Professional Development
- Travel Allowance
- Childcare
- Orchestra reports

If you have any items you would like added to an Executive Meeting Agenda, please see your SOMA representative.

Vale: Jennifer Morrish

12/2/84-11/8/15

It was a wonderful celebration of the life and work of our beloved Jenny Rose Morrish on August 20th at the Albert Park home of Orchestra Victoria. Following a short battle with cancer, Jenny passed away on August 11th 2015. Jenny was a shining light of happiness, health and humour and it was our honour that she was so heavily involved in our work at OV in recent years. The service was streamed live and hundreds were in attendance to pay their respects. As it happened, there was a fund raising concert scheduled at the Albert Park studio for August 23rd which went ahead in Jenny's honour – solo performances, brass band, percussion ensemble, African drumming, full orchestra and a head and beard shave! – all funds raised were directed to The Alfred Hospital where Jenny was being treated, and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Foundation. In the end, more than twenty thousand dollars was raised in Jenny's name. A fitting and lasting tribute to the memory of someone loved by so many.





MEAA Application Form – SOMA Section

I, _____ of the _____ Orchestra hereby make application to join the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (and its related State registered unions where they exist) as a member of the Symphony Orchestra Musicians Association (SOMA), and agree to be bound by its rules and Constitution as amended from time to time.

Title: Ms Miss Mrs Mr

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

D.O.B: _____

Address: _____

State: _____ Pcode: _____

Phone: (home) _____

(work) _____

(mobile) _____

Email: _____

Previous Member: Yes No

Employment Status: Permanent Casual Weekly Contract

Method of Payment

Payment may be made in one of the following methods.

Please indicate your preference (choose **ONE ONLY**) with ✓ in the appropriate box

cash/cheque credit card (please indicate your preference below)

one off payment monthly quarterly half-yearly yearly

Credit Card Details:

Bankcard Mastercard Visa Amex Diners

Name of cardholder: _____

Card Number: ____ / ____ / ____ / ____ Expiry Date: __ / __

direct debit financial institution – four weekly deduction only (please complete the PDC form attached)

employer deduction from regular pay (please complete the section below)

Payroll Deduction Authorisation

To the Paymaster:

I wish to authorize payment of my subscription to the Symphony Orchestra Musicians Association to be paid by fortnightly payroll deduction to the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance.

Signature: _____

Date: __ / __ / __

Please complete this application form and hand it to your SOMA delegate/ committee member or mail directly to :
Alliance Membership Centre
Locked Bag 526
Spring Hill QLD 4004
Phone: 1300 65 65 13
Email: members@meaa.aust.com
Internet: <http://www.alliance.org.au>

Alliance membership fees are levied annually by Federal Council in consultation with the SOMA Executive. All membership fees are tax deductible. If you leave the industry and wish to resign your membership, you must do so in writing to your Branch Secretary, in other cases, three months written notice of resignation must be given.