



## CHAIR'S LETTER

Dear Members,

As you read this letter your sons will be settling into the new school year, and for some it will be their first year here. I would therefore like to start with a warm welcome to all new members. We look forward to meeting you at events and, hopefully, getting to know some of you as committee colleagues. We are looking for a new Honorary Secretary and Membership Secretary to take over at the November AGM, so do get in touch if you are interested.

Looking back to the summer term, we had the usual post-exam flourish of performances, including Jazz in the Park and the Summer Concert, for which we were blessed with sunshine. Good weather was not always present for the Voices of Lions' run at the Edinburgh Fringe in August – but the boys valiantly braved the rain in order to publicise their concerts and sang to packed audiences each day.

Of course, the focus of HSMS is to raise funds for the Music

Department and I thought you might like to hear about some of our donations over the past academic year. Firstly, there have been the regular items: music trips for 1st and 2nd year boys and support for the 'Rare Beasts' programme (for musicians taking up less popular instruments). There have been a handful of new instruments and sundries such as orchestra bow ties! HSMS also funded visiting musicians: the pianist Caroline Palmer and 'String Fever', a string quartet which played during the ISSP music day. Thank you to all members for continuing to support our work and to everyone who has helped us with organising events and running bars this year. Your contributions are much appreciated and the Music Department is grateful for everything we do.

This will be my final 'Chair's Letter' as this is my last year as a Hampton parent and I will be passing on the reins at the forthcoming AGM. Our current Membership Secretaries, Celia and Melissa, have offered to take over the role, so you will be in safe hands!

With best wishes for a happy and music-filled term,

**Janet Wood, HSMS Chair**

## Caroline Palmer Masterclass

On Wednesday 14th of May, I attended Caroline Palmer's piano masterclass in the Hammond Theatre. A great number of pupils took part, playing pieces ranging from the complicated polyphonic structures of Baroque music to the explorative expressionism of 20th century music. I was greatly impressed by the quality of music being played, and hopefully Caroline felt the same way! She gave a lot of advice, not just to the individual pupils she was teaching but also to us as an audience. The helpful tips included being relaxed in order to play more freely and to enable the sound to last longer, as well as recommending pianists learn all movements of a piece, such as sonata, rather than just the specific extract required for an exam. Doing the latter would enable the performer to gain a better understanding of the piece. In my opinion this is great advice and, with Grade 8 fast approaching, it will hopefully benefit me in preparing for the exam. I feel privileged to have experienced Caroline Palmer's masterclass and hope to attend many more masterclasses at the school.



**Cameron Marshall (3C)**

## Junior School Workshop

On Sunday 28th April, a junior music workshop was held at the school, with many age groups involved as well as many different instruments, from violins to ukuleles. Throughout the day different instrument groups went out to rehearse for the big concert at the end of the day, to which the children's parents were invited to watch their hard work. The groups included: the main orchestra, a guitar ensemble, a choir, a trio, a woodwind/brass band and everyone at the end of the concert came together to play the song from the play *Oliver - Oom-pah pah*. The actual concert was very professional where the children performed in our prestigious Hammond Theatre.

In order to prevent the children from becoming tired, there were various breaks throughout the day during which refreshments could be consumed. The workshop revealed many impressive improvements from the children: one child managed to learn a whole new way of reading music, and some played for the first time in a big group with a conductor guiding them through the music. A few Hampton Boys, including me, helped out with various activities throughout the day, such as teaching the children to perform in different groups, focusing on the various places in pieces which they were struggling with. Overall, I think that the workshop was a huge success and I hope that we have managed to inspire some of the children during their time here.

**Freddy Liang (3B)**

## Art & Music Concert

As a new addition to the music calendar, the Art and Music Concert certainly maintained the impressively high standard of music that we have come to know at Hampton. The repertoire consisted of German composer Gurlitt's *Album Leaves for the Young*, a collection of pieces which ranged from *Waltz to By the Spring*, each conveying a contrasting mood to the one before. The concert started with *March* which certainly woke up anyone after a long first half of term, before ending with *Salto Mortale*, dramatically played by Joe Strong.

Showing artwork to accompany each piece was an innovative idea for the concert and thanks must be given to those boys in the second year who put these colourful paintings together. They helped contribute to the mood of each piece, and the evening was an opportunity for budding artists in these classes to demonstrate their creative skills.

Special thanks also to Mr. Oyarzabal for thinking of, and organising, the event as well as teaching his pupils these pieces. We were even able to enjoy Mr. Oyarzabal perform a couple of the pieces himself! All in all, it was a very delightful evening, and a treat for both ears and eyes

**Daniel Morgan (4J)**

## 'Voices of Lions' at the Edinburgh Festival

There were quite a few firsts for 'Voices of Lions' in Edinburgh this year: the biggest group (47 boys), new accommodation at Euro Hostels, the biggest audience ever for the final show (about 200), and of course Mr. Roland's first show! There was a first for me too, as I finally made it to the top of Arthur's Seat; something I have never done on any of my seven previous trips to the Fringe. So good in fact, I did it twice!

Flying is always something of a challenge, although with such a large group we were a considerable presence on the High Street. The boys did well, with audiences of over 100 throughout the week. How



'Voices of Lions' singing in Old St Paul's Church, Edinburgh

## Caroline Palmer Recital

Caroline Palmer, who has been a piano professor at the Guildhall School of Music since 1990 and has featured on many CDs, treated the audience to a piano recital in the evening of 14th May, having spent four hours with the school pianists earlier (see previous page).

For the first half, Caroline's choice of music comprised a selection of Debussy's less well-known preludes – *La Puerta del Vino*, *Ondine* and *Feux D'artifice*, Schubert's *Rondo in A Major* and Ravel's *Rhapsodie Espagnole*. The second half was exclusively Chopin, so the evening (Schubert aside) was definitely inspired by the great French impressionist composers.

Many famous composers have written a set of preludes. Debussy wrote 24 preludes, but unlike Chopin *Op.28* or Bach's *Well Tempered Clavier*, they do not follow a key signature pattern (i.e. one in each key, major and minor – thus 24 in total). Debussy's preludes are also a little different in that, instead of focusing on the pieces as technical exercises, they are free-form and full of his signature impressionistic phrases. Caroline's rendition was brilliant, fluid and expressive.

Caroline was then joined on stage by Antonio Oyarzabal to play Schubert's *Rondo in A Major*. This was Schubert's last piece written for

they managed to get 200 on the last day is something of a mystery, given the torrential downpour which curtailed publicity that morning. Perhaps Will Nettleton's decision to take a bath in the stream pouring down the road, then wisely, given the grime on the street, a shower under a rain spout impressed the punters sufficiently to bring them in.



Will Nettleton, 'pulling in the punters!'

An additional first this year was the presence of another Hampton act, *Moby Dick*, adapted and directed by Mrs. Moore. Congratulations to them on a great show! Thanks to all the staff who helped with the performances, running the box office and of course looking after the boys: Mr. Fox, Mrs. Esser, Mrs. Oldfield, Miss. Jacobs and Mrs. Cash. Congratulations to the boys for some fine singing and, of course, also to Mr. Roland.

Many firsts, but for me a final one. I am delighted that Edinburgh is in such safe hands, and look forward to being a member of the audience in years to come. Although it had better be with a complimentary ticket!

Mr. I Donald

four hands, some five months before his death in fact. This is a very melodic and sophisticated work, which was played tenderly and with great expression by Caroline and Antonio.

*Rhapsodie Espagnole* is also a suite of pieces for four hands. It is made up of four parts: *Prelude a la Nuit* (introducing the piece with a repeating ostinato bass), *Malaguena* (fast and rhythmic), *Habanera* (rather dreamy) and, lastly, *Feria* (very fast and with a syncopated feel). Caroline and Antonio looked like they enjoyed every minute of playing this wonderful music.

After the interval Caroline undertook a real challenge, playing all 24 of Chopin's preludes in succession as a single piece. These are recognised as some of Chopin's best works, despite the fact they were written during a period of great turmoil for the composer who was ill at the time. The styles vary but there are common melodic themes that appear and reappear throughout. It takes a virtuoso pianist to play these preludes. Caroline was more than up to the task and delivered a masterful performance – technically superb, expressive and passionate.

This was a truly inspiring recital for pianists and non-pianists alike.

Stuart Skeffington

## Summer Rock Concert

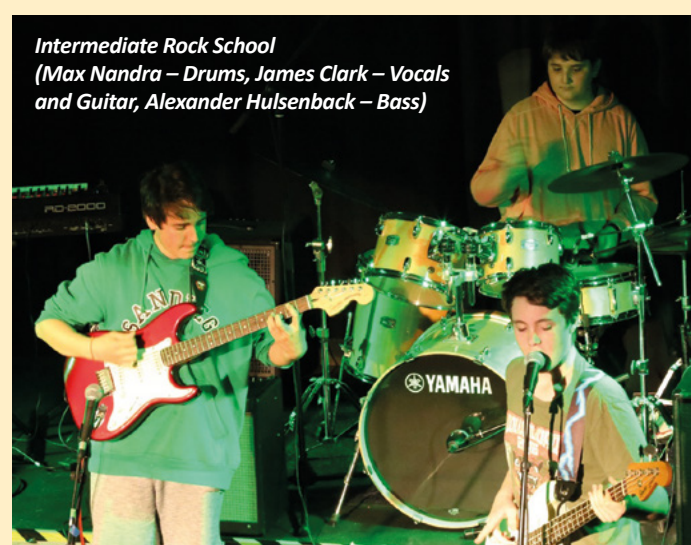
Musician, turned last-minute compère, Max Elliott, opened the concert as if a seasoned pro, despite only finding out about his new role minutes beforehand. Undaunted, he set a humorous and upbeat introductory tone for the evening.

First up was Junior Rock Band, with *84* by The Strypes, featuring a rollicking drum intro, confident vocals, rock steady bass lines and tight guitar riffs. This was followed by *Welcome to Paradise* by Green Day – a vocally demanding song, with driving drums and punching intensity. Joel Arulpragasam and Neo Sukhraj-Hammerl were up next, with *Fast Car* by Tracy Chapman, an 80s classic, showcasing solid guitar riffs and emotional vocals, and even reproducing Chapman's characteristic vibrato. Then Felix Von der Geest, on guitar and vocals, performed a self-penned original called *Get Up!* By using a loop pedal and some faultless guitar picking Felix created a stark and cohesive sound.

Dylan Rutter and Tom Milton came together for another great original called *No One*

For *Your Memories*, a thought-provoking song about the disadvantages of miserliness and social isolation. The last band before the interval was the Intermediate Rock School providing a fast and furious wall of sound from three guitars, tight drums and solid, octave-jumping bass lines supporting a confident stage presence and 100% commitment from the vocals. They performed three covers: *No One Knows* by Queens of the Stone Age, and two Green Day classics, *American Idiot* and *When I Come Round*.

Compère Max Elliott resumed his usual role of musician to open up the second half with an exclusive preview of his song called *Waiting on*



Intermediate Rock School  
(Max Nandra – Drums, James Clark – Vocals and Guitar, Alexander Hulsenback – Bass)

*You*, a soulful song with jazzy flavours. His impressive and unexpected use of chord progressions and voicings combined with a truly professional level of vocal control left me breathless. This was followed by the What Happens Next band, also performing a couple of originals: *Day Dreamer* and *Children of the City*. Thanks to an accomplished piano intro and introspective guitar following the song-lines, we were taken on journey of contrasting moods and enormous vocal range.

Max Cardosi came on next, singing Vance Joy's *Riptide* with absolute





The Chamber Choir

## Summer Concert

On a balmy summer evening, the audience was serenaded with four lovely songs in the cloisters by the Chamber Choir. And so the concert began. Voices of Lions' *Shenandoah* was sung with a warm tone, and the Brass Band brought a great sense of fun and verve to *The Acrobat*, while Will Nettleton's virtuosic soloing in *Virtuosity* was stylishly neat and punchy. The Brass Quintet's performance of *Quintet* by Kamen was tender, with each voice clear and a great sense of teamwork.

The Hampton Sinfonia then played a selection from Grieg's *Peer Gynt*, with lovely urgency in *In the Hall of the Mountain King*. I also enjoyed the Concert Orchestra's rendition of Deep Purple's *Smoke on the Water*, which featured some very committed drumming. This was followed by the Boys' Choir singing Dido's *Thank You*, with a smoky lead guitar solo as a bonus. *Ego Flos Campi*, performed by The Consort of Voices, was well-blended and the tenors in particular produced a lovely sound.

Anthony Wang brought his ever-present sparkle to an engagingly beautiful performance of a movement from Mozart's *G Major Flute Concerto*, with a thoughtful cadenza and a great sound from the String Orchestra. *La La Land* followed – a really enjoyable warm-hearted performance.

After the interval we were treated to two more concertos. Dylan Evans-Hutchinson played the first movement of Bruch's *Violin Concerto* masterfully, accompanied by the Symphony Orchestra, playing assuredly under the direction of Mr. Roland. Then Tom Morrison played all three movements of Rota's *Trombone Concerto*. Tom handled the rhythmic intricacies of the piece with ease, in a crisp, communicative and commanding performance.



Tom Morrison on Trombone, with the Symphony Orchestra

And to end with a summer firework, nothing less than Sibelius's *Finlandia*! 'Bravi tutti' to the orchestra for such a stirring performance, with some truly stunning brass and flutes (it was all good, but the brass have a special place in this piece!). Finally, the evening concluded with some touching farewell speeches to the teachers from those young men leaving the school. Their contribution to the musical life of the school will be sorely missed, and it was truly heart-warming to hear what was said.

**Andrew Brixey-Williams**

confidence and flawless guitar accompaniment, followed by Theo Bailey singing *Outfit* by Jason Isbell, a lilting country song. Theo's voice is one to remember: beautiful tone, and perfect pacing. Next up, The Shams, performing a couple of well-structured and rich songs, featuring compelling and evocative story-telling, with punkish influences. The finale was a flawless Talking Heads cover with excellent pace, grooving bass-lines and tasty vocals.

All-in-all, it was a truly memorable and entertaining night, with a light and upbeat feel, and stunning performances.

**Matt Skeaping**

## Jazz in the Park

There are few things more lovely than sitting outside on a sun-drenched afternoon, listening to excellent music. Those of us attending Jazz in the Park were fortunate enough to experience just this. Against the idyllic backdrop of Bushy Park in late June, some of Hampton School's finest jazz musicians took to the stage. Hampton's 'set' opened with the Swing Band, ably directed by Mr. Fox in his debut concert with the group. The band gave an assured and vibrant performance of a number of jazz favourites, beginning with a rendition of *Wade in the Water*. Mr. Fox (and, I'm sure, some of the players) felt that *The Incredibles* was a particular highlight – certainly, it was popular with the many children in the audience!

No sooner had the Swing Band taken us for a ride on *Pennsylvania 6-5000*, then it was the Jazz Band's turn to entertain us. The audience were treated to some of Hampton's senior jazz musicians performing works by some greats such as Gerry Mulligan and Miles Davis. Opening with a rousing performance of *Joost at the Roost*, the audience were soon tapping their feet in the late afternoon sun. It really was the perfect way to round off 2019's Jazz in the Park.

**Mrs. Esser**



The Swing Band in Bushy Park

## REMEMBERING THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT - SIX FORM LEAVERS WRITE:

"For me, music has been almost more important than my academic studies, and the department has helped to define how I wish to continue in my musical endeavours."

– **Jacob Abel**

"I first started getting involved in music at Hampton in the second year, playing the bassoon in the orchestra, and I remember Dr. Ward persistently telling me to learn my Beethoven 'Egmont Overture' solo correctly! My best music memories would have to be all my duets with Felix Elliott; composing a concerto for our HELP project in the third year, and perhaps most of all playing Poulenc's 'Concerto for Two Pianos' in the 2018 Christmas Concert."

– **Christian Chan**

"It was an incredible opportunity to be able to play a concerto with one of my best friends. I've also really enjoyed all the Christmas Music – singing in Hampton Court and the annual Carol Service at St Mary's Church."

– **Felix Elliott**

"There has not been one rehearsal, show or concert during my time in the Music Department where I was not made welcome, or felt like I was having the time of my life! Hampton music has represented seven years of complete joy and devotion- from Consort of Voices, to Brass Quintet and even our short-lived funk band! Although it is incredibly difficult to pinpoint one moment that tops any other, particular highlights for me include: the Konstanz orchestra tours, participating at the Edinburgh Fringe each summer, and performing in the annual musicals. I feel confident to take part in, and even set up, music groups anywhere! Many thanks to our excellent Music Department."

– **Tom Morrison**

# '10 Minute' Interview

with Alex Fox  
Teacher of Music



## Q: Can I please start off by discussing your specific responsibilities in the Music Department?

A: As I did a Masters in Composition at university it was quite easy for me to assume responsibility almost immediately for all the A level Composition Classes. I have also rebooted the Composition Club. It existed before I arrived, but I love it and run it twice a week, and I am proud of getting a lot of first years to participate and to do something creative.

## Q: Have you been given responsibilities for any specific music events?

A: During Mrs. Esser's maternity leave I was given responsibility for the Rock Concert, and that is something I would like to do next year. Our curriculum is quite traditional, but I am passionate about giving opportunities to a wide range of musicians such as the rock musicians. Richard Elliott is the new theatre manager and his background is in sound engineering, so there will be no half-measures in future. We want it to sound great as well as look great, and we will build on this, going forward.

## Q: I must ask you about the Tweeting!

A: I think it is very important for the department to get across to everyone what we are doing, especially the concerts. Some parents do not have the time to get to the school concerts so it is important to showcase these via Twitter. I know that the boys are following my tweets as they like my puns, and I think the more they can watch vaguely educational and interesting things that are out there, the better!

## Q: What have been the highlights for you as teacher at Hampton School?

A: I think it is every single concert we have done. The thing that attracted me to this school is the sheer number of opportunities to perform. In the last half term, there were eight concerts – I find it incredible that we do so many, all of which are of such a large magnitude. Every one of these performances is a highlight, because even if the children eventually give their instruments up later in life, they will still remember the concerts at school.

## Q: Can you tell me about your musical experiences growing up, and how you ended up teaching?

A: I played the piano from a young age but my teacher thought that I had quite a nice voice so my piano teacher morphed into a vocal coach and I joined a local choir – St Barnabas in East Dulwich. I then attended the Westminster Abbey Choir School as a chorister. There, I sang eight times a week, took up the clarinet, and started to compose. I later switched from clarinet to the bassoon, and the bassoon is now my main instrument. From there, I went to Dulwich College followed by Durham University, and then became a management consultant at IBM! I studied Music at Durham, but when I left university with my Masters in Composition, I thought about what transferable skills I had, and I was quite proud to become a management consultant. This is a lesson to the boys – when you decide what you want to study at university, you should do something you enjoy because it will not stop you doing other

things. In fact, when I got my graduate job at IBM, they completely got that. As a musician I could bring experiences and make connections that someone who had read Business Studies might possibly not be able to. I was at IBM for four years, but then I started to miss music too much and I decided to go into teaching. As a management consultant you are being paid to explain concepts to people that do not necessarily want to be in that room, so it occurred to me that I could teach music – something I loved – rather than data management!

## Q: How did you come to join Hampton School?

A: I trained at the Institute of Education, now part of UCL, and which is where coincidentally the entire current Music Department trained! From a philosophical and pedagogical point of view, our approach to teaching has come from the same place. So, when the school is looking for a new teacher, the department will always check if there is anyone available from the IOE.

## Q: Which composers have been your biggest influence?

A: I can't really answer that question because of my choral experience. As a chorister you are exposed to so many different kinds of music every day, you learn very quickly not to dislike any music. As a composer you also need to listen to a great variety of music. When I was younger I enjoyed listening to 'new music' so I loved Poulenc with its jazzy harmonies, and I was fascinated by Jacques Loussier, a French jazz musician. He has an album called *Play Bach*, on which he takes famous Bach compositions and jazzifies them. But he does not do this in a pastiche way – he plays jazz really precisely.

## Q: So it is important to be open to various musical styles in order to grow as a composer?

A: Yes – the more the boys listen to, the more opportunities they have to generate ideas. If you have a narrow playlist, there is a lot of music you are not exposed to, and the reality is that musicians do take inspiration from one another. For example, Stevie Wonder was influenced by Herbie Hancock, and Herbie Hancock was influenced by Miles Davis, so everything is interlinked. That is what is exciting about music.

## Q: Do you compose in your spare time?

A: I have done in the past, but the thing about composition is that you need time. So, as teacher, I do more arranging, which is less taxing time-wise. At the Christmas Concert, the Junior Choir performed *I should have been a North Pole Elf* – I arranged that for the choir and a small jazz band.

## Q: Do you still play music outside school?

A: Yes, I do. I am going to sing in a choir and we have recorded a CD. We sing a bit of everything, but mainly polyphony – Renaissance music. I also still play the bassoon and I 'dep' for the Kingston Chamber Orchestra.

## Q: You have mentioned an interest in jazz – is that something you would like to pursue more?

A: Yes. I love arranging pieces for big bands, and this term I have taken over the Swing Band from Mr. Roland so this is an area of interest.

## Q: We are casting you away to a Desert Island – what one piece of music or recording will you choose?

A: This is going to be a strange answer. The album I was most influenced by when I was young was Jamiroquai's *Emergency on Planet Earth*. They used very jazzy chords, and the songs are really well arranged.

## Q: And what would your luxury be?

A: An unlimited supply of coffee – because I do not function without coffee.

Caroline Muller (editor)

## ABRSM EXAMINATION RESULTS

Congratulations to all the boys – in the Summer Term, there were:  
**13 Distinctions, 18 Merits, and 17 Passes.**

Please note that, in accordance with the new GDPR requirements of May 2018, we are no longer able to publish results for individual boys.

## News and Information...



To keep updated with the wealth of musical performances and achievements from Hampton boys please look to the following for up to date information and images between now and the next edition of the newsletter: [www.hamptonsschool.org.uk/music](http://www.hamptonsschool.org.uk/music)

Music Department can be found on twitter @Hampton\_Music and as a webpage <http://twitter.com/HamptonSchool>

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