

Notes from NESMS

North East of Scotland Music School Newsletter

Autumn 2020

Where has this year gone? A new academic year started amidst the ever-evolving “new-normal” of blended learning and ever-changing pandemic restrictions. Thankfully technology has allowed NESMS to tick along, albeit in a more reduced capacity, with online lessons continuing to be offered by most of our tutors. We wish to share your good news and keep you as connected as we can with rest of the NESMS community, so please remember to share your online or off-line musical achievements in any future exam, audition or competition.

Congratulations to the following NESMS students in:

Trinity and ABRSM exam results

Aaron Magill: piano ABRSM Grade 8 - Distinction

A full list of NESMS student’s exam achievements are listed [here](#) and are continually updated on our website.

NESMS Scholarship Auditions postponed - online

In a first for NESMS, this year’s postponed Scholarship auditions took place entirely online by video submission. The panel were very impressed with the exceptionally high standard of the musical and video quality achieved under this year’s extraordinary circumstances. With such a high standard, competition was incredibly fierce so congratulations to all the successful applicants awarded part scholarships.

Special mention goes to the following students who received full scholarships:

Chenghong Zhu, piano - *Tom and Cath Johnston Award*

Eve Begg, voice - *Ellie Pirie Bach Choir Award*

Ruaraidh Williams, cello - *Joan Dickson Award*

Louis Kowal, organ - *Dorothy Hately Award*

Gladys Sangster Award

Thanks to a substantial donation made this year, a new award has been made available to specifically benefit those students of musical promise at Local Authority schools. The following successful students will receive a mixture of lessons, travel costs and instrumental hire to help them increase their musical potential here at NESMS.

Bethany Clarke – Cello

Hannah Glendell – Flute

Lachlan McClarence – Horn

Olwenn Stewart - Piano

What's been going on at NESMS:

NESMS moves online

During lockdown, most of our tutors were able to continue teaching pupils using the NESMS Zoom room option. Negotiating online lessons was a steep learning curve for everyone at the beginning and one which has continued to evolve to ultimately provide the best continuity of musical tuition in these challenging times.

A reminder that for those musicians using Zoom, please see this YouTube video [here](#) on enabling the Original Sound function, and the recently updated High Fidelity Music Mode (see advanced audio settings) when using a laptop or computer and continue to ensure you are using the most recently updated version of the app.

Summer Singing School 2020

After such a successful pilot scheme last year we were hoping to run the Summer Singing School with renowned singer Linda Ormiston joining the returning vocal tutors Graeme Lauren and Gillian Jack. Unfortunately, like so many summer music courses this year, we had to postpone the event in its current format for the foreseeable future. However, students were able to sign up for 1-1 online lessons with Gillian or Graeme during what would've been the same Summer Singing School week at the end of July.



Masks for sale

With the rise of face coverings required in more and more indoor spaces, NESMS has two limited edition designs available for purchase.

Top design "Swirl of Music" £10 each

Bottom design "String Trio" is £13 each

Each mask has two layers (outside material: 100% polyester, inner material: 100% cotton) making a compartment suitable for a protective filter (not included), elastic rubber ear loops and are reusable (wash at 60C, suitable for ironing).

Coming soon to NESMS:

Have your online lessons at NESMS

While regular face-to-face teaching has yet to resume at 21 Huntly Street we can offer students to have their online lessons from our studios here while still abiding to the current restrictions. Ideally students would bring their own devices for any online lessons, but may borrow the NESMS laptop & webcam if required.

As always the studios are available to rent as a private practise room away from busy homes for £7.50/hour. Any students wishing to hire or use a studio for their online lesson should book via the NESMS office.

New setup for face-to-face lessons

Strings & Piano

Recent Scottish Government guidelines are now allowing for regular face-to-face teaching to resume. However it will now be up to tutors and students when they decide to return and with only the Main studio at NESMS being in use, to allow one tutor in the building at any one time, online lessons will continue to be a necessary option. Tutor timetables for in-person lessons will be scheduled with 15 minutes between lessons to allow for ventilation and extra sanitation. With large moveable screens now in situ, the studio can be set up for the individual needs of each instrument, protecting both student and tutor. We would ask that students keep promptly to their lesson start time and avoid arriving too early to help limit the number of people in the building at any one time. We also would like to remind students to wash their hands before and after each lesson.

Woodwind, Brass & Singing

Due to the increased aerosol production of certain instruments, woodwind, brass and singing lessons will continue online for a while longer until these lessons are deemed safe to resume.

Delayed Jazz Ensemble start

Due to the combined restrictions of social distancing and indoor group numbers, the start date of our exciting new ensemble led by Neil Birse is delayed. This ensemble will focus on the practicalities of Jazz through performance based learning and will be open to any interested instrumentalists. We are hopeful for a start date in an 2021 to usher in the roaring 20's with a live Jazz ensemble at NESMS!

Programme notes class online

A new initiative was successfully launched at the start of the new term with NESMS flute tutor Catherine O'Rourke offering students the opportunity to learn how to compile and write programme notes for use in recitals, diplomas and exams. These bespoke one-to-one tutorials are currently being held online and are free for students to sign up to.

Keynotes Lunch – postponed to 2021

Sadly due to the ongoing and ever-changing and unpredictable pandemic restrictions we've taken the decision to postpone this year's Keynotes Lunch at the Marcliffe Hotel. We hope to see you at this unmissable event next year on Sunday 21st November 2021.

The Keynote Lunch is the biggest fundraiser in the NESMS calendar with last year's event raising over £5000 for the school. If you would like to make a donation in lieu of this year's event, please fill out the attached Gift Aid form. Forms completed and sent to the NESMS office before Tuesday 1st December will be valid as entries into a special prize draw. Please tick the relevant box on the form if you wish to opt in or out of this draw.

Social Media

A reminder that it has never been easier to keep up-to-date with all the latest NESMS news and weekly competitions with our [website](#), Facebook page and Instagram account (NESMS_abdn).

I hope everyone continues to keep safe during this difficult time; our thoughts go out to those whose families have been affected directly with COVID-19.

This year has passed incredibly quickly and I hope everyone stays safe this winter. Remember to keep in touch and keep the music playing.

Colin Brockie, Manager