

# Notes from NESMS

North East of Scotland Music School Newsletter

Summer 2023

This has been a very busy term, seeing us well and truly “back to normal” with so much going on, not just at NESMS, but in the sheer number of concerts and events that NESMS students have been involved with throughout the North East!

## What’s been going on at NESMS:

### Murray McLachlan Piano Masterclass & Recital

We had a very successful piano day with Murray McLachlan on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> February at Queens Cross Church with a public Masterclass and afternoon recital. Four young pianists took part in the morning masterclass with pieces by Rachmaninov, Brahms, Haydn and Mendelssohn. Murray then treated us with an afternoon recital of Chopin and Chopin-inspired pieces, the full review of which can be found [here](#).



### Cowdray Hall Concert

We returned for our second Cowdray Hall concert on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023. This Lunchbreak concert featured NESMS students Hannah Magill, oboe and Scott Manson, piano with Shirley Magill accompanying Hannah. Read the full review [here](#).

### Four hand piano May Day

To coincide with their Cowdray Hall Lunchbreak Concert on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023. NESMS tutor Nigel Clayton and his duet partner Imma Setiadi offered us a four-hand piano weekend of masterclass sessions, recitals and workshops. They both gave a fantastic and insightful lecture recital on the Friday evening, duo lessons on the Saturday morning and a workshop on the Saturday afternoon with each available for 1-1 lessons on the Sunday and Monday! Definitely a weekend to be repeated again in the future!



## Singing Masterclass

At the end of May we were pleased to welcome international Mezzo-soprano Linda Ormiston OBE for a Stagecraft and vocal performance Masterclass. Linda has worked extensively throughout the UK and abroad and teaches at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, on the Music Theatre Course at the Dance School of Scotland and is a regular tutor at the Oxenfoord International Summer School. The five young singers were certainly put through their paces covering a mix of opera, operetta, and musical theatre classics to a small, yet appreciative audience.



## Scholarship Concert 2023

The annual Scholarship Concert took place on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June at Craigiebuckler Church featuring some of the current academic year's full scholarship students:

Eve Begg, *voice*, Charlotte Slater, *violin*, Laura Smith, *clarinet*,  
Olwenn Stewart, *piano*, Chenghong Zhu, *piano*, with Blair Cargill, *piano*

Several audience members have described the evening as "one of the best Scholarship Concerts ever". Read the full review [here](#)

## Congratulations to NESMS students

The NESMS Scholarship auditions took place at the start of June with a record-breaking number of 77 individual applications. The panel had some very difficult decisions to make due to the high quality of music offered by all. Congratulations to those students who received full (listed below) and part scholarships valid for the academic year 2023/2024. The full list of scholars can be found on our website. These scholarships have been made possible by donations from our generous donors.

Emily Gow, flute - Dorothy Hatley Award  
Harry Wood, piano - Tom & Cath Johnston Award  
Isla Rippiner, flute - Sandy MacDonald Award  
Freya Corry, voice - Ellie Pirie Bach Choir Award  
Matthew Mcguigan, piano - Gina Dallas Harper Award

### Additional Full Scholarships:

Olivia Kemp, flute, Eve Begg, voice

And also a mention to the following students of musical promise  
in Local Authority schools who are receiving a Gladys Sangster Award:

Michelle Tse, violin  
Fatima Sellami, violin  
Hannah Boggon, flute

Lillian King, voice  
Amber Craig, voice  
Zhaohong Chu, piano  
Sam Carroll, piano

Parmida Damanpak, piano  
Ailsa Anhel, piano  
Fatima Sellami, piano

Well done to any students who sat music exams recently. We have a list of NESMS student exam, diploma and audition achievements listed, and continually updated, on our website. If your exam achievement is missing from the full list or now needs updating please let us know.

# Coming soon to NESMS:

## Lyn Fletcher Masterclass

Unfortunately we had to postpone the June visit of violinist Lyn Fletcher to the start of the next academic term, now taking place at NESMS on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> August. With the upcoming fee increase, it will now be £35 for a 45 minute session for anyone wishing to play. Audience are free to attend, but with limited seating, please book your place via the office.

## Cowdray Hall Concerts

Advance notice that we will be back at the Cowdray Hall on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> November and again on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024 for Lunchbreak concerts given by NESMS students. This concert series is free to attend, 12:45pm – 1:30pm. Click [here](#) to see what's on at this and other Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museum venues.

## Keynotes Lunch 2023

A reminder to save the date for this year's Keynotes Lunch due to be held at the Marcliffe Hotel on Sunday 19th November. Fantastic live music, a delicious Sunday lunch and exciting raffle prizes to be won, this is one highlight of the NESMS calendar that we are sure you will not wish to miss.

## New Tutors to NESMS

We are pleased to announce that the new academic term will see at least three new tutors offering lessons at NESMS; Fraser Kelman for oboe, Lucy Webster for bassoon and Mark O'Keefe for trumpet. We have also approached several new tutors to give masterclasses and workshops, but they are as yet unconfirmed. As with all our tutors, once Fraser, Lucy and Mark have confirmed their teaching dates, we will let everyone know.

## NESMS 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Plans are afoot to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> year in 2025, but we'd like to hear from past NESMS students, particularly from those who had lessons pre-2000! If you would like to be involved in any way please get in touch, particularly those older students as some of our contact details may be out-dated with you moving away.

## Fee Increases

Four years on from our last fee increase in 2019 and to keep up with increasing costs, the time had reluctantly come for a further increase. We began a phased £4 increase after the Easter Holidays when a £2 increase of £44/hour took effect. A further £2 increase will also come into effect for the start of the next academic term from 1st August 2023 onwards.

As many of you are aware, lesson fees alone do not cover the ever increasing costs of running the school. Since our founding in 1975 we have been heavily dependent on sponsorship and donations from charitable trusts and foundations as well as private individuals and local businesses – and of course fundraising by the Friends of NESMS – in order to continue to bring your tutors to Huntly Street on a regular basis.

We had frozen all fees at the start of lockdown and throughout the pandemic when we were under Government restrictions and all became heavily reliant upon online teaching. We also increased the tutors pay at the start of this calendar year to better equate to the current Musicians Union rate which is why a phased, but overdue increase, began before the end of the current Academic year.

### **Assistant Manager moving on**

Sadly our assistant Manager, Chloe Gordon will be leaving us during the summer as she approaches the end of her Masters in Music at the University of Aberdeen. Chloe started the position online amid lockdown restrictions back in January 2021 and eventually met everyone as in-person lessons slowly returned. From website redesigning, overhauling the Scholarship Audition timetabling system and completing the mammoth task of the library stocktake (of over 8500 items!), Chloe has definitely left her mark in the future of NESMS.

An advert for her replacement is now in circulation and we hope to appoint someone before the start of the new academic year.

## **Get involved with NESMS:**

NESMS may be a small organisation but we're always looking to engage with more and more people. We have some ambitious plans in mind for our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is creeping towards us in 2025, but we need your help. If anyone feels they can volunteer their time and would like to join in on our fundraising efforts in helping to organise existing events like the Keynotes Lunch, help setting up new events or even just putting your name down to help out on the door of a concert or two, please be in touch with the office.

### **Library music**

Now that the Library stock take has been completed, we can now focus on reducing the number of duplications, particularly in the vocal section of the library. We will be aiming to keep just three copies of any opera/opera/oratorio score so that one may be out on loan, with two available for lessons. Where we can, these will be three of the same editions; nothing worse than using different copies with mismatched page numbers during a lesson! Similarly we will also aim for those pieces in the vocal single sheet music section that are published in various keys, to have three copies of each published key.

The excess duplicates will join our permanent and ever-changing music sale. Look out for us advertising a music sale day or two coming near the start of the new term.

### **Hire a NESMS studio**

21 Huntly Street has long returned to being a busy hive of musical learning but we still try to accommodate anyone wishing to rent a NESMS studio where we can. Perhaps for a quick practise on your lunch hour, a private practise room away from busy homes, or a rehearsal venue for you and your accompanist to practise for exams or concerts. From August onwards all studios for individuals will now be £8.50/hour. Anyone wishing to hire a studio should book in advance via the NESMS office.

Wishing everyone a great relaxing summer holiday!

Colin Brockie  
Manager

---

Dorothy Hatley Music Centre,  
21 Huntly Street,  
Aberdeen,  
AB10 1TJ



Email: [office@nesms.org.uk](mailto:office@nesms.org.uk)  
Website: [www.nesms.org.uk](http://www.nesms.org.uk)  
Telephone: 01224 649685  
Charity No: SC000197