**St Mary’s Music**

Music plays an important role in the everyday life of St Mary’s and is featured daily at times of ceremony, celebration, leisure and worship. There are many intrinsic benefits of a high quality music education. The happiness, joy, mystery, wonder and camaraderie that students feel when dealing with music are rewards that are often experienced, and are only some of the intangible benefits for our music students, who are immersed in a positive, motivated and enriching musical environment.

St Mary’s Music provides a quality music programme delivered by committed teachers and musicians to students working in an environment and climate of working towards the highest possible musical standards. This requires our staff to show high levels of drive, leadership and initiative and for all of our students to respond accordingly. Our performance calendar each year, amongst other things, is a summation of all of this.

**Classroom Music**

Beginning in Kindergarten, all Junior School students participate in a structured, sequential, Kodaly-based classroom music programme, which recognises singing as the most direct path to a successful musical education. Skills are taught through active music making, cultivating an atmosphere of inclusivity, self-expression, and respect for others. The Junior School music programme produces extremely competent and confident young musicians, who display a passion for both performing and listening to others.

From Year 1, Junior School students also participate in a year level choir, which continues as part of the timetable through until Year 6. Singing is not only the best way to access a child’s natural music capacity, but also singing in a group enhances teamwork skills and discipline. Working together harmoniously towards a single goal, the girls learn craftmanship as they study how details are painstakingly put together, as well as what constitutes good work. These standards, when applied to a student’s work, demand a new level of excellence and require students to stretch their inner resources.

In the Senior School, Year 7 students have one music class per cycle. The course incorporates elements of a Kodaly-based programme. Students with little past music experience are taught the basics of music notation and begin to explore the concept of music composition, music of different cultures and the role of music in the media. More experienced Year 7 music students undertake additional aural analysis work and have the opportunity for more advanced music composition and other activities using the department’s computer facilities.

In Year 8, students have their first opportunity to select music as an option subject. Year 8 Extended Music has three classes per cycle. The course has a significant focus on historical and cultural musical elements, studying Instruments and orchestra, introductory score reading and basic music forms. Music notation is covered through music theory, studying major and minor scales, primary triads, intervals, simple and compound metres and transportation. On the class computers, music composition is developed using the software Sibelius. Aural analysis introduces interval recognition, triads, rhythmic dictation and melodic dictation, also studied at times on the computer program Auralia. As a pre-requisite of the course, students must be undertaking vocal or instrumental lessons, and complete two performance assessments throughout the year. Year 8 students who do not elect Extended Music will take the Year 8 General Music class, which is one music class per cycle, continuing with Kodaly based work, studying music appreciation of a variety of music styles and some basic music composition.

Similar in structure and also option courses, Year 9 and 10 Music continues on from Year 8 Extended Music in the same four areas; perception gradually increases in complexity, adding additional key signatures, metres and depth of aural analysis. Also continuing on from Year 9, theory covers all keys and cadences. Various composition work is covered, both hand-written and computer-generated. As a pre-requisite of the course, students must be undertaking vocal or instrumental lessons, and complete two performance assessments throughout the year. In the historical and cultural area of the course, significant works and composers from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic and 20th Century are studied. The option classes from Years 8 to 10 are an ideal preparation for students who wish to study Music in Year 11 and 12. Music in Year 11 (2A and 2BMUSW) and Year 12 (3A and 3BMUSW) are accredited by the SCSA and count towards the Western Australian Certificate of Education and for either University or TAFE admission. St Mary’s studies the Western Art Music context in both these courses. Details of the course can be found at www.scsa.wa.edu.au/

**Learning a Musical Instrument - Music as an Extra Subject**

Students may learn an orchestral or band instrument, take vocal studies or study music theory from one of the 30 specialist peripatetic music teachers who teach at the school each week. A Music as an Extra Subject form (Senior School available by clicking here, Junior School available by clicking here) must be completed and handed into the Music Department. A comprehensive selection of musical instruments is available for hire through the school for students who do not have their own instrument.

**Ensemble Programme - Co-curricular Music**

The aim of the Ensemble Programme is to provide a performance opportunity for any instrumentalist or chorister who wishes to be involved. There are numerous band, choral and orchestral ensembles in the Junior and Senior School.

**Junior School Ensembles**

The Year 2 String Programme is designed to provide a fun, dynamic environment for students to learn how to play violin, viola or cello. Students receive free tuition and free use of both a school instrument and tutor books for the first semester.

The programme is especially tailored to suit the needs and interests of this particular age group, so that students can have fun while developing a strong technical foundation and appreciation for music.

Taking an eclectic approach to string tutoring, the programme and repertoire are carefully planned to ensure students can achieve, develop
and improve their skills step by step. The string programme works hand in hand with the classroom curriculum, developing aural skills and music literacy as well as instrumental proficiency. The half-hour lessons take place during the school day and are timetabled by the Music Department.

**Giocoso Strings** is a beginner string ensemble for girls who have reached a basic level of proficiency on their instruments. Students need to have completed six months of learning and need to be able to read music at a basic level. Focus is on consolidating good posture and creating sound foundations of string playing by playing mostly in unison. Giocoso performs at Music Night and on occasion at school assemblies. They rehearse once a week out of school time.

**Academy Strings** is an ensemble for more advanced students who have a more detailed knowledge of technical aspects of their instruments and can read music with ease. Repertoire is more challenging and fast moving, with a focus on ensemble playing and improving general musicianship through playing together and solos. Academy Strings plays at Music Night and school assemblies and collaborates on occasion with Hale.

**Chamber Strings** is a small group of highly progressed string players. These students work without a conductor in performance and therefore need to prove they can play confidently as individuals before they are invited to play in this ensemble. Being able to tune one’s own instrument is an advantage. These students work towards school functions such as assemblies, Grandparents’ Day and Presentation Night.

**Junior School Bands**

All Year 5 students will be given the opportunity to learn certain concert band instruments in the **Year 5 Band Programme**. This is done via assessment at the start of Term 1. Students will be offered free group lessons (three in a class) for half an hour a week and the free use of a school instrument for Semester 1. Free tuition on a band instrument will not be offered to students who will be playing a string instrument at the commencement of Year 5. If students wish to play both a string and band instrument, they can choose the private lesson option and still participate in the Year 5 Band.

In addition to the weekly lesson, students will attend Year 5 Band rehearsals, where tuition continues in an ensemble situation. Lessons will commence at the beginning of Term 1 and will be timetabled during the school day.

**Junior Band** is a concert band for the more experienced Year 5 and Year 6 players. Members of the band must be learning their instrument, either privately out of school with a qualified teacher or in a private lesson during school. Junior Band plays at Music Night and school assemblies. Students who are new to the school are welcome to join the band and should contact the Music Department.

**Junior School Choirs**

Choir begins in Year 1 and continues as part of the timetable through until Year 6. Singing is not only the best way to access a child’s natural musical capacity, but singing in a group also enhances teamwork skills and discipline. Working together harmoniously towards a single goal, the girls learn craftsmanship as they study how details are painstakingly put together, as well as what constitutes good work. These standards, when applied to a student’s own work, demand a new level of excellence and require students to stretch their inner resources.

In addition to singing in their year group choir, Junior School students in Years 4, 5 and 6 are also invited to audition for the **St Mary’s Junior School Chorale**. The Chorale rehearse once a week before school, providing girls with a specific interest in singing, an opportunity to sing more difficult repertoire and focus more specifically on vocal technique.

**Senior School Ensembles**

**Strumenti Strings** is a String Orchestra for the Year 7 and Year 8 string musicians. Students have to have reached an appropriate standard to join the group, though the focus is on inclusivity. The ensemble rehearses weekly with a number of school-based performances throughout the year.

The **Senior String Orchestra** is by invitation only and is comprised of the finest string players in the Senior School. The ensemble typically cover a wide selection of challenging repertoire, including playing the orchestral accompaniment for senior soloists at Concerto Night.

String musicians in the Senior School are given the opportunity and encouraged to participate in **Senior School Chamber Music Ensembles**, organised and directed by our string specialists.

**Hale St Mary’s Music**

Since 1994, St Mary’s has a strong musical liaison with the neighbouring Hale School for boys, with a regular series of combined recitals and concerts by ensembles consisting of students from both schools. This rich musical tradition enables us to provide wonderful musical opportunities for our students and for them to perform to the highest possible musical standards.

**Hale St Mary’s Concertante Orchestra** rehearses weekly and caters for our emerging Senior School string musicians, from Year 9 onwards. Weekly rehearsals on a Tuesday evening work towards one major performance each term, typically Music Under the Stars, the Hale June Concert and the St Mary’s September Concert.

The **Hale St Mary’s Camerata Orchestra** is one of the outstanding student orchestras in the state. It is comprised of the finest string players of Hale and St Mary’s Senior Schools. The ensemble will typically cover a wide selection of challenging repertoire, including playing the orchestral accompaniment for senior soloists at Concerto Night and performances at St Mary’s Music Night, the Hale Governors Concert and Music Under the Stars. First formed in 1994, this orchestra has played in the Sydney Opera House, Perth Concert Hall and St George’s Cathedral, amongst other venues.

**Senior School Bands**

**Year 7/8 Concert Band** is a band for the Year 7 and 8 woodwind, brass and percussion musicians. Students will have reached an appropriate standard to join the group, though the focus is on inclusivity. The ensemble rehearses weekly with a number of school-based performances throughout the year.
All Year 7 students not currently learning an instrument will be given the opportunity to learn a selection of concert band instruments in the Year 7 Beginner Band. This is done via assessment at the start of Term 1. Students will be offered free group lessons (three in a class) for half an hour a week and the free use of a school instrument for Semester 1. In addition to the weekly lesson, students will attend before-school Beginner Band rehearsals, where tuition continues in an ensemble situation.

**St Mary’s Concert Band** is by invitation only and is comprised of the finest concert band players in the Senior School. The ensemble plays an important role in the numerous formal assemblies throughout the year, providing processional and ceremonial music. At the end of each year this band visits a number of local kindergartens and primary schools to provide an educational programme of concert band favourites.

**Hale St Mary’s Concert Band 2** rehearses weekly and caters for our emerging Senior School band musicians, from Year 9 onwards. Weekly rehearsals on a Tuesday evening work towards one major performance each term, typically Music Under the Stars, the Hale June Concert and the St Mary’s September Concert.

**Hale St Mary’s Concert Band 1** is comprised of the most accomplished concert band musicians from Hale and St Mary’s Senior Schools and is one of the finest student concert bands in the state. The ensemble will typically cover a wide selection of challenging repertoire, including playing the orchestral accompaniment for senior soloists at Concerto Night and Music Under the Stars. First formed in 1994, the orchestra has played in the Sydney Opera House, Angel Place Recital Hall and the Sydney Town Hall, Perth Concert Hall, St George’s Cathedral, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, and other public performances such as ANZAC Day ceremonies in Kings Park, and the opening of the Graham Farmer Tunnel, Perth.

The **Jazz Band** (Years 7, 8 and 9) and the **Big Band** (Years 10, 11 and 12) provide an opportunity for the Jazz-inclined students, playing a range of standard Big Band swing and rock repertoire.

**Senior School Choirs**

**School Chorale** is an inclusive choir open to students from Year 7 to 12. There is no audition necessary to join this choir – just a love of singing. The high standard of singing and repertoire produced by the Chorale is testament to the strong choral tradition at the school, one that is established in Kindergarten and developed through to the Senior School. The Chorale plays an important role in many school ceremonies and is featured regularly in school and community based concerts.

**Magnificats** (Years 7, 8 and 9 Chamber Choir) and **Hi-Fidelity** (Years 10, 11 and 12 Chamber Choir) are two specialist choirs, joined by invitation and audition only. They cater for the more advanced vocalists who will typically have strong aural skills and an ability to read music, so as to sing a range of often challenging choral repertoire. **Hale St Mary’s Cantate** is comprised of the most accomplished vocalists from Hale and St Mary’s Senior Schools and is one of the finest student choirs in the country. School-based performances include St Mary’s Music Night, the Hale Governors Concert and Music Under the Stars, and the Cantate is also a regular feature at St George’s Cathedral, singing Evensong and the popular annual Carol Service. Performance highlights in recent years include Evensong and concert performances at Westminster Abbey, St Paul’s Cathedral, London, York Minster, Eton College Chapel and Christ Church Chapel, Oxford.

**Music Department Facilities**

The music facilities at St Mary’s are amongst the finest in Australia. The Lady Treatt Centre for Music and Dance has two classrooms, one of which has extensive computer facilities. There are fourteen music studios to cater for individual instrumental and vocal lessons, while the spacious percussion room houses the school’s comprehensive collection of percussion instruments. The ensemble room has quite a live acoustic and is designed to accommodate chamber ensembles and choirs. The music library houses a large collection of orchestra, band and choral music.

Recent developments in music technology have been introduced to the classroom programme, with the latest software used to assist with music perception, composition and literature research, and in music sampling and sequencing.

The Music Department adjoins The Lady Wardle Performing Arts Centre, in which the spacious music rehearsal room provides for the concert band, choir and orchestra rehearsals. St Mary’s and Hale School jointly purchased a single manual Gobles and Sons harpsichord, made in Oxford, UK. The auditorium has a nine foot Concert Grand piano made by Berdux, of Munich, Germany.

For any enquiries about Music at St Mary’s, please email music@stmarys.wa.edu.au

**Music Scholarships**

The Music Department offers several scholarships each year to incoming Year 7 and 8 students. Music bursaries are also available, providing free tuition and the provision of an instrument to incoming Year 7 and 8 students. Some bursaries for instruments in demand by the Music Department are available for other year levels in the Senior School.

A Vocal Scholarship is available for an exceptional Year 10 or 11 vocalist. An International Music Scholarship gives an opportunity for a talented music student from South East Asia to join St Mary’s.

Further information about Music Scholarships is available by clicking here.

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