

## Director of Music 2023-2024 Report, SAPPS Music Society AGM 2025

It is with much pleasure that I present my report for the 2024 program and concert series. We have a dedicated and passionate Team, and along with the amazing commitment of the PSMF Family, and the many volunteers, we all come together to make this unique festival a noteworthy event on the calendar.

### **Repertoire**

The entire program of songs was really enjoyed by teachers and students alike. We commissioned a 4-song cycle from local composers [Robyn Habel and Adam Page](#) titled *State of the Arts*, (*The Festival State, It's All Art, The Artist, The Audience*). This commissioned work (cw) is a celebration of the arts in SA, and looks at what art is, the inspiration of an artist, and the audience. There was plenty of rhythmic music to sing, an epic choir rap, numerous solos, solo and group dance and breaking the 4<sup>th</sup> wall to involve the audience. Songs that 'wrapped' around this CW:

- ✚ *Beautiful Creatures* – surdo drummers placed around the theatre stalls and in boxes to begin the show,
- ✚ *Song To Sing* – Archie Roache's feel good gospel song
- ✚ *I Must Clean My Room* – Katherine Ruhle's fun, 'classical' and humorous song
- ✚ *Small Stuff* – by Festival Alumni Angus Brill Reed,
- ✚ *Watoto* – sung in Swahili with body percussion and 3-part singing – it worked!
- ✚ *Impossible is Possible* – a big sing featuring talented troupe dancers
- ✚ *Proud* – a strong message sung and signed in Auslan
- ✚ *Waterloo and Thank you for the Music* – such a happy and joyful end to the concert celebrating ABBA's 50 year anniversary of winning Eurovision.

7 songs by Australian composers, 3 brand new and one written by a 14-year-old.

### **Festival Theatre Concerts**

The [11 concerts](#) held in the 2024 series were highly successful with very positive responses from students and the audience. Every concert had [full choirs](#). The lighting was very effective, and the stage sparkled with the star curtains on the 'legs' and lights 'flanking' the choir riser. The AFC sound team were new to us, and the improvement from rehearsal 1 to concert 1 was significant! The visuals and stage presentation were stunning once again, making each concert a visual feast for the audience. The [Orchestras, Troupes, and Hosts](#) worked hard in each show, and were stars every night, the [soloists](#) and [choreography leaders](#) were confident and well prepared, the [guest artists](#) entertaining. A highlight was the [Australia's Governor General](#) attending C#11 and speaking with the students on stage after the show. A life-long memory for ALL.

[Down stage opportunities](#) for students were once again offered and draw new young people to the festival, hook them in to return the following year in either choir, troupe, orchestra or as hosts.

- ★ [Rhythmic Rumlbers](#) to begin the show – 2 teams of 20 students managed by Michael and Michael,
- ★ [Auslan Signing Choirs](#) for Advance Australia Fair, managed by Heather Mc.

Thank you - [Rohan Yates](#), [Steph Marcus](#), [Andrew Johnston](#), [Jo Casson](#), [Addi Schwartz](#) and the Festival Theatre sound and lighting teams, who work closely with us to ensure the success of our concert series.

The [Choir hold](#) returned to the Banquet Room, and students walked through the foyer to stage via prompt side. We used the [Piano storeroom for soloist warmups](#), and the breakout space for orchestra and troupe was once again in the dress circle foyer.

[Students are at the centre](#) of all that we plan and create – there are many busy families who support their students in all that we offer. Well done and thanks to the everyone we work with for providing so many South Australia students the opportunity to participate in and experience quality music and arts. [What have you done today to make you feel proud? THIS!!](#)

### **Hosts, Orchestra and Troupes**

These teams are an integral part of the Adelaide PSMF and continue to provide opportunities for students to strive for excellence in ALL areas of the arts.

- ★ The [hosts](#) who were adorned in 'wearable art' compered the concerts from stage, Box 5, the orchestra pit, and within the choir and were very well prepared and professional.
- ★ The [orchestra](#) conductors once again rehearsed and lead their young players with skill and expertise. They shone as they played The Tetris Theme and ABBA Medley, which segued from Waterloo with choir, and then into Thank you for the Music with choir, another 'first'.
- ★ The [Troupe](#) joined us on stage for Beautiful Creatures and waved flags, danced Impossible is Possible, Waterloo and Thank you for the Music, and added drama and dance to the 4 commissioned work songs in very bright 'arty' costumes.

### **Choir Teachers and Accompanists**

To the team who delivers our program in schools - thank you and congratulations!! [Choir teachers and accompanists + school support staff and other volunteers](#) – your work is so valuable and appreciated.

### **Resources**

The SAPPS Choir, Coromandel Valley and Highgate PS assisted with the [recording process of 2024 sound files](#). Thanks to all staff and students for their preparation and Glyn Lehmann for recording and editing. Appreciate Jonny who puts our music on the App, and Terry for thoroughly checking the orchestra scores.

The [App, website and Songbook](#) are outstanding resources for our students and teachers. They continue to improve every year and are high quality and engaging. The [Songbook Cover competition](#) is gaining in popularity, and the winning entry really reflected the CW theme.

### **Our amazing Team:**

- ★ Irene – [manager extraordinaire](#) who makes it happen!
- ★ Cathy – [ADoM and SAPPS Choir Conductor](#) – one hard working gal, with a smile AND a new hip 😊
- ★ Kristin and Regina (Kendall C left just before concerts), our [all-star office gals!! U Rock!](#)
- ★ Felicity and Caroline – outstanding [accompanists](#) to choirs and orchestras
- ★ [Michael M + Michael A and team - Susan and Lisa, with Kate and Katie](#) – spectacular!!

- ★ **Maria and team – Charlotte and Kathleen, Toby and newbie Andrew** – makes the music sparkle!
- ★ **Heather and mentors** – Took it up another notch this year – extremely professional!
- ★ **Anne and concert managers** – ‘Keepers of the choir’ - navigating Banquet Room to stage – skilled teamwork!
- ★ **Chad** for IT support, Stars on Stage + the new Journey to Performance vision, along with Heather

★★★**To everyone, BRAVO**★★★

**Conference One** - always a wonderful 2 days. Robyn H and Adam P spent time with us as we launched their CW. The **Expo** was held on the Thursday, Mark Oates warmed up our minds, bodies and voices from 8am on Friday morning, and Adam returned to share his expertise and music with us on Friday afternoon.

**Country Conferences** – held at **Whyalla, Naracoorte, Monash and Jamestown**. We love visiting our country teachers and spending a day on teaching the repertoire and choreography with them.

**Combined Choir Rehearsals** – Started in week 3 - 1½ hour sessions and two per day. Well attended and plenty of time to teach and travel.

**‘Sing the Repertoire’ session** – held at Unley PS in week 4, term 1 for choir teachers and accompanists to focus on particular songs or aspects of the repertoire.

**Conference 2** – Term 2, Friday, week 1. Another great day spent on repertoire polishing and conducting.

**Choir Assessments** – Term 2, weeks 1-8. Cathy left us in week 3 for a new hip, and Georgie Simmons joined the team for 8 weeks. All Adelaide schools were visited to provide structured feedback according to the Choir Rubric. The Assessment Team included Stacey S, Ira H, Lisa J, Susan M, Kendall H, Julia W and Tania F.

**Soloists** – Auditions in Term 2 week 6, after pre-audition solo workshops, followed by Term 3 masterclasses across two different weeks – students select which one to attend. Billy St James joined Mark Oates to upskill the students in presentation, stage presence and confidence. So fortunate to have these experts work with our students.

**A Conducting Masterclass** was held at Klemzig, term 3, Friday week 3, for choir teachers and regional conductors to rehearse, refine, conduct the 2024 repertoire. We had 15 teachers attend, from experienced to quite new, but all eager to learn and practice.

**Offsite rehearsals** - Week 4/5 – each orchestra having a longer FIRST rehearsal, then two rehearsals a day. An excellent opportunity to polish and practise all elements of the concerts. Sound, Lighting, Stage manager and assistant, videographer all visit to get a sense of the show. Works very well.

**Regional PSMF** – Country choir visits for Adelaide Affiliates + remote schools along with regional workshops in weeks 9-11. Kangaroo Island, Southeast, Whyalla, Port Lincoln, Port Pirie, Murray Lands and East of Ranges. Riverland self-sufficient and run their own cluster rehearsals. Port Augusta and Eyre Peninsula did not have a regional concert again. The Northern Metro ran a 2-concert series back at Trinity College in the Hewitson Theatre, Southern Metro held 2 concerts at the Revival Fellowship Church.

## **The SAPPS Choir**

The choir has had another outstanding year – performances included the ANZAC Day Dawn Service, Guest Artist at the Adelaide Festival Theatre, combined concert with ADYO Junior Strings, SAPPA Conference and recording. Excellent opportunities for students in such a variety of venues around Adelaide.

Congratulations to Cathy, Steph, Cheryl, Jo and Chad. Thanks to Georgie S for her stepping in while Cathy was away. Numbers were slightly down this year, and with illness affecting attendance it made for some challenges.

But nonetheless – they are truly a talented and showcase choir for the PSMF and the Department.

**Year 3-4 Class Singing** – repertoire and ideas are still available on the website for Teachers to access.

## **Collaborations –**

- \* Uncle Moogy – Vision for welcome to country for concerts.
- \* Eisteddfod Choral competition – sponsorship by PSMF, award presentation.
- \* Adelaide University – offering university students sessions with our choir teachers in schools.
- \* Western Australia Massed Choir Festival associate affiliate,
- \* UNESCO – inclusion of logo in Songbook and website
- \* Support from Lorraine from the Klemzig Centre for Deaf Education in the teaching of Advance Australia Fair Auslan Signing –they are very positive about us including their language in the festival.
- \* Attending MERSA meetings and Department Leadership days.
- \* ABC 891 at the Royal Adelaide Show Interviews with Drive and Afternoons, Parkside and CLG choirs.

## **Professional Development, events, community concerts and conferences –**

- \* BBB Educators Course, ADYO and Young Adelaide Voices concerts, Catholic Music Festival, Kodaly Educators' Choir, The Arts full day workshop, Board Training, Paint 'n' Sip – Starry Night, Stan and Mabel SASVI and ASO, Iwiri Indigenous choir concert, Regional concerts Riverland, Murray Lands, Southern and Northern, Exploring the Arts SA Curriculum, PUB CHOIR, WA Massed Choir trip to Perth, various online classes,

**Congratulations on a remarkable year of engaging students in artistic excellence through choral music. ♥ Thank you to everyone involved - in any way great or small!**

**The PSMF continues to provide performance opportunities for students to learn and thrive..... thrive and prosper..... and achieve★**

Robyn Filmer, February 2025.