

MAGA MUSIC ARRANGERS GUILD OF AUSTRALIA INC.

The Industry Benchmark in Professional Arranging.

MAGASCENE

Secretary's Report

A new year is upon us and we are already in March! Welcome to the first edition of MAGA Scene for 2024!

This year's Youth Arranging Competition is almost upon us and this year it will be "Brass". We are moving the dates back to May to better help avoid student exams. We are hoping to increase the participation through this and a few other tweaks. See the details in the newsletter below.

We have had many members celebrating significant anniversaries since the last newsletter including Ken Bennett, Honorary member, celebrating 63 years membership. We would also like to congratulate Ed Wilson and Derek Strahan on 50 year's membership in January. We will be sending certificates out to these members soon.

There are some exciting talks scheduled for this year and we will have the full details out soon. We are also looking at collaborating with other Australian musical organisations for some of these presentations. Stay tuned for more!

We have now just tipped-over to 300 arrangements on our Maga Music Catalogue, available at <https://magamusiccatalogue.com/> To ensure your arrangements are included, please visit the site and click on the link at the bottom to submit your arrangements. We are also planning a revamp and promotion of the site to help bring in visitors. We would love to get this to 500+ arrangements!

We hope you enjoy this edition of MAGA Scene and look forward to sharing more information about the arranging competition soon.

Tim Middleton – MAGA Secretary

Issue #55, March 2024 Contents

	President's Message A message from Gregory Flood	2
	2024 National Youth Arranging Competition	3
	Anniversaries	4
	Doc's Harmonica	5
	New Members	6

Who's Doing What? 7-10

President: Gregory Flood
 Vice President/Publisher: Jessica Wells
 Secretary/Web Master: Tim Middleton
 Treasurer: Ross Maio

National Executive for 2024

<http://www.magainc.org.au>

Board Members:
 Greg Schultz, Ian Boath, Matt Amy,
 Kieran Hurley, Roman Benedict



President's Message

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2024. It may seem later than usual, but the MAGA Executive has already met three times and there are a huge number of exciting plans that will get underway this year including seminars, arranging masterclasses and some changes to the annual competition after some great feedback from our members.

Whilst our industry still battles the pros and cons of music streaming and now the risks of Artificial Intelligence it seems that our elected representatives are letting the arts run down by continually reducing funding to the bodies that keep our industry vibrant including our orchestras, music schools and even music classes in schools.

The latest example is the Melbourne Youth Orchestra, which last year featured a brilliant concert of the music of Kutcha Edwards featuring arrangements by MAGA vice president Jessica Wells, Exec member Matt Amy and Patron Sean O'Boyle. The orchestra has provided training and opportunities to musicians and aspiring musicians for over 60 years but this year its minimal state government grant was cut. This is but one example of our elected representatives, the people whose job is to represent us, not seeing the importance of the arts.

Given each of our cultural institutions have emerged from the pandemic era with reduced staff, particularly music staff, and lower funding, it is certainly time for each of us to do what we can to remind our elected representatives that music and the arts is a fundamental ingredient of a modern civilised society by penning a heartfelt letter, contacting them by email or simply just signing an on line petition.

Anything each of us can do to put the continued funding of the Arts front and centre in the minds of the political class is important to ensure our industry remains the active, vital and essential part of Australian life that it has always been.

Go well until next time.

Greg

MAGA National Youth Arranging Competition 2024

This year we have pushed back the competition dates to between May - September.



Launch of the competition in May will include information about writing for Brass Band or Brass Ensemble.

There will be several pieces to choose from to arrange, and we encourage participants to use their creative flair in re-imagining the music for the rich and diverse sounds of brass instruments.

Prize money will be supported by Hal Leonard Australia once again, and we will put together a judging panel which includes a brass writing expert.

We look forward to discovering the talents of young arrangers once again after four successful years running this competition!

Anniversaries

January - March 2024



Congrats to Ed Wilson and Derek Strahan for their 50-year milestone!

January 2024

- #137 Dale Ringland - 59 years
- #244 John Pickworth - 55 years
- #265 Thomas Leroy - 54 years
- #135 Ed Wilson - 50 years
- #117 Derek Strahan - 50 years
- #351 Margaret Brandman - 48 years
- #425 Matteo Accadia - 47 years
- #455 Andrew Batterham - 25 years
- #557 Rhonda Towner - 23 years
- #209 Joan Thorp - 23 years
- #206 Libby Bee - 23 years

February 2024

- #119 Ken Bennett - 63 years
- #2 Ross Connors - 49 years
- #353 Graeme Brown - 41 years
- #25 Guy Cundell - 34 years

March 2024

- #169 Lionel Huntington - 56 years
- #27 Garry McDonald - 49 years
- #301 Derek Pearce - 47 years
- #212 James Humberstone - 22 years
- #535 Adrian Kelly - 22 years

Honorary Member Ken Bennett has reached 63 years membership!

Ken played piano and led the “Kowloon Honkers” at a Hong Kong venue “Ned Kelly’s Last Stand” in the 80’s and 90’s finishing up in 1997.

Here is a YouTube link with a recording of the album “Live at Ned Kelly’s Last Stand Ft. Ken Bennett and the Kowloon Honkers (1984)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWkk5IvGlgO>

Benny Ligon: Trumpet
 Ding Bas Bas: Reeds
 Neo Ragas: Trombone
 Ken Bennett: Piano, Trombone & Vocals
 Ernesto Dizon: Bass
 Rudy Barce: Drums



Henry “Doc” Bertram’s Bass Harmonica



Following on from the request we sent out to the membership in February, the Executive Board has voted to pass on “Doc” Bertram’s Bass Harmonica to our previous MAGA President George Bruno.

“Thank you for sending though all the information about Doc Bertram. I have known Doc for as long as I've been a member of MAGA and valued him both as member of MAGA/Trustee but also as a great person and fine musician.

If you are still seeking for someone to adopt Doc's instruments in safekeeping, I'd be honored to do so.

Warmest regards,

George Bruno”

Thanks to George for honoring the legacy of Doc Bertram.

Hi All

As you would be aware we learned of the passing of one of our longest serving members and Trustee, Henry 'Doc' Bertram who passed away peacefully just over a year ago on 21st October aged 102.

In the wake of his passing, his daughter Zoe has graciously offered to pass on his cherished "Hohner Bass Harmonica" to someone within our guild who will honour and appreciate its significance. This instrument holds sentimental value and represents a lifetime of passion and dedication to music.

We believe it's essential to find a deserving recipient who will continue the legacy of Henry and make meaningful use of this unique instrument.

If you are interested in being considered as the recipient of the Hohner Bass Harmonica, please reply to this email with a brief statement about why you believe you would be the ideal candidate to carry on its legacy.

We encourage all interested members to share a few words about their musical journey and their connection to the bass harmonica, and how they would utilize this instrument in their musical endeavours.

*We will collect responses until **29th February** after which the board will carefully review each submission to ensure that the harmonica finds a worthy home.*

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please join us in honouring the memory of Henry, as we continue to celebrate his life and contributions to our guild.

*Regards
Tim Middleton - MAGA Secretary*



New MAGA Members

#711 David Forrest

David Forrest is a Professor of Clarinet with an extensive performing background as a soloist, recital artist, orchestrator, conductor and teacher.

Following graduation as Musician 1st Class from the Royal Marines School of Music and being appointed to the prestigious Plymouth Group Royal Marine Band, he enrolled at Trinity College of Music London on a five-year Performers Course during which, becoming a soloist for the College he was privileged in his final two years to extend his instrumental studies with the internationally renowned clarinet virtuoso, Gervais de Peyer.

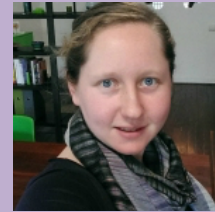
As a certificated and qualified music educator he has taught across the spectrum of Primary, Middle and Senior Secondary School curricula including teaching the International Baccalaureate and Theory of Knowledge at both prestigious national and international schools around the world including The Vienna International School, Austria, The Regents School Bangkok, The English International School Prague and Aloha International School Marbella, Spain amongst others.

Having previously worked as a clarinetist with London orchestras (LPO, RPO, BBC Symphony), then the Sydney Symphony after moving to Australia in 1968, following accreditation with the ABC in 1980 as an orchestral/Opera conductor he established The Orana Opera Trust in Mudgee NSW, subsequently conducting operas *Cavalleria Rusticana* and 'I Pagliacci' using the ABC Sinfonia, singers from the local area and principals from the Australian Opera.

Appointed Director of Music at Ballarat and Queens Anglican Grammar School he conducted the combined Melbourne Symphony and BQAGS Orchestra for two Con-Celebrated Eucharists for the Archbishop of Canterbury on his visit to Australia, music for which included a complete performance of Haydn's *Missa in Angustiis* (the 'Nelson' Mass) performed by the school's 120 strong choir and soloists from The Australian Opera, following which, as Lecturer in Music Theatre at Ballarat University he founded the Ballarat Symphony Orchestra and also conducted the Tasmanian Youth Orchestra.

#712 Maeve Lander

Software engineer by day, trumpeter by night! Originally trained in the classical music tradition, I spent 6 years in the Australian Army Band, before diving into jazz and contemporary music performance. In my spare time I love to compose and arrange, specialising in music for Brass. I'm a top rated arranger for Brass on Musescore.com, with my scores being sold/downloaded around 50,000 times on that platform. I contribute to the Musescore open-source notation software, and maintain [Orpheus](#), which is a popular sheet music reader app for Android.



#713 Alex Palmer

Alex is a composer, arranger/orchestrator, conductor and musical director for film, television, theatre and the concert hall. Based between London and Sydney, Alex trained as a cellist, pianist and singer. He holds a degree in music from the University of Cambridge and a Master's Degree in Scoring for Film, Television & Video Games from Berklee College of Music.

As an arranger and orchestrator he has worked for the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Australian Youth Orchestra, West Australian Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Youth Orchestra, and others. Alex has also worked in the music department with composers including Patrick Doyle, Lorne Balfe, Mark Mothersbaugh, Chris Willis, and Stephen Schwartz.



Who's Doing What?

Paul Nicolaou

In November 2023, I toured 'Birth and Rebirth' with my Harp, Viola and Cello trio around NSW. The program is made up of my arrangements of music by Austin Wintory, Elena Kats-Chernin, Astor Piazzolla, and more, as well as an original composition for the trio. We'll be taking the program to Canberra in April (Canberra tickets and more info on the program: <https://events.humanitix.com/concert-birth-and-rebirth-harp-viol-a-cello>). Performers are Sarah Zhu (viola), James Monro (cello) and Paul Nicolaou (harp). Photos attached.

In March 2024, I performed at the Orange Chamber Music Festival on harp as part of the Cultured program at the Orange Regional Gallery, where I curated and arranged a program of works to accompany the artworks. This included Elena Kats-Chernin's 'Blue Silence' arranged for Harp & Cello, Scarlatti 'Sonata in G major, K.91' arranged for Viola and Double Bass, my own work 'Of Light, Divided' for Viola, Cello and Harp, and two encores: Elena Kats-Chernin's 'Dance of the Paper Umbrellas' and Ross Edwards' 'Emily's Song', both arranged for Viola, Cello, Double Bass and Harp. Performers are Dana Lee (viola), Noah Oshiro (cello), Will Hansen (double bass) and Paul Nicolaou (harp). Photos attached.



Margaret Brandman

1) The release in January of my orchestral work **GENTLE SUMMER RAIN** recorded by the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra for Symphonic Chronicles Vol.2 on the Navona Label (nv6584) The album was CD of the week on Fine Music in early January and my piece has aired both on Fine Music and more recently on ABC Classic.

2) I have composed a new orchestral work title **FIESTA DE LA LUZ** (Festival of Light) commissioned by the Beecroft Orchestra to celebrate Dr Joanna Drimatis' 10 year anniversary as conductor of the orchestra. The work will be performed in September this year. Concert title 'From Brandman to Sibelius'

3) I have also just completed a three-movement work **SILVER WINDS** for flute and piano commissioned by UK based flautist Mark Underwood. Mark intends to come to Australia in November and together we will present the premiere performance.

4) My **LA VIDA APASIONADA** suite of 8 Latin-American inspired works for violin and piano, based on the ensemble versions commissioned by Violinist Vov Dylan for his Palace orchestra, is now released and several tracks have been airing on ABC Classic in the past few weeks. The book of scores and parts for the **LA VIDA APASIONADA** suite, has just been published.



Who's Doing What?

Certificate Member **Santrix Redston** joined after taking part in the National Youth Arranging Competition and has already achieved so much through our Mentorship Program. Well done Santrix! And big thanks to Graham Lloyd for providing the mentorship!

On the 27th of March, Top Class Sound will be held at Darebin Arts Centre, Melbourne. Top Class sound showcases the highest scoring VCE music composition/creation students of the previous academic year, and I was fortunate enough to receive an invitation to feature.

As you may know, in 2021 I became a Certificate of Merit Member after my submission to the Youth Arranging Competition. This was particularly exciting for me, then 14, because after muddling about with composing independently I was able to connect with a mentor, Graham Lloyd, who showed me how much more room I had to grow and encouraged me to keep composing.

The resources MAGA has provided inspired me to accelerate VCE Music Style and Composition (the year 12 Music composition subject in Victoria) and complete it a year early in 2023. Excitingly, my final composition folio "Untethered" - a 5 minute piece for full orchestra - was awarded 100/100 by both examiners.

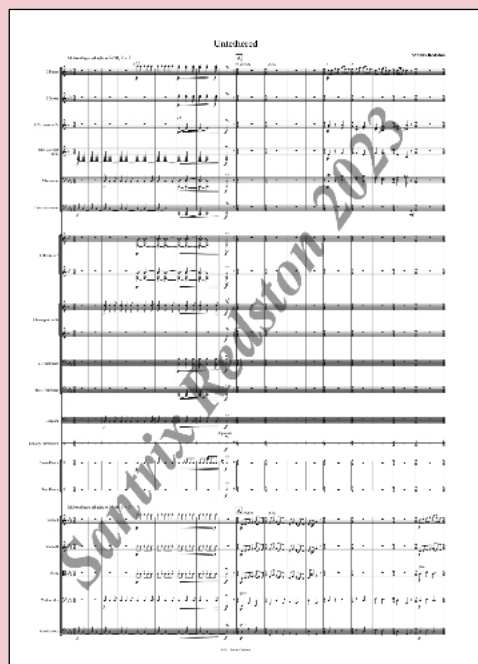
Given the large scale and difficulty of the piece I wrote, I am grateful to be showcased in Top Class. I've worked closely with the manager, Amy Holley, to organise the performance which will consist of a playing of high quality VST audio of "Untethered" followed by myself and Hoang Pham playing a piano 4-hands reduction of the piece I arranged myself.

I am proud to share this story because I want MAGA members to know how much difference they can make to a student's life by being their mentor, and the value of having youth competitions and zoom events which add so much to networking and education.

Next year, I would love to go on and study composition at university.

Kind regards,

Santrix Redston
(they/them)



[Click to listen to "Untethered" mockup by Santrix Redston](#)



Who's Doing What?

PERTH ICON MACE FRANCIS RELEASES 10TH ALBUM WITH HIS LONG-STANDING ORCHESTRA



From big band jazz to funk, rock, noise guitar, ambient sounds, and dark country influences, you'll hear it all on the new contemporary jazz album 'No Postcode' - the fourth studio album (and 10th album release) from the Mace Francis Orchestra (MFO) out on April 12th.

Perth icon Dr Mace Francis is no stranger to Australia's jazz community. Artistic Director of the Perth International Jazz Festival and WA Youth Jazz Orchestra, current Churchill Fellow, and composer and band leader of projects including Mace Francis Plus 11 and New York Nonet - but it's with the MFO, where you'll hear the true Mace Francis best.

"It's so nice to be able to write music that is me, rather than having to bend the music into a style," says Mace.

"MFO is my main creative vehicle where I can really express what I'm feeling or thinking at the time of composing - more so than in any other band."

Mace started the band in 2004 to experiment with big band composition after graduating from university and the project continues 20 years on. It's featured a long list of up to 13 revolving musicians, with five original members remaining including Ricki Malet (trumpet), Ben Collins (saxophone), Mark Sprogowski (saxophone), Catherine Noblet (trombone) and Greg Brenton (drums).

Over the years, MFO have toured and recorded regularly achieving four national tours, performances with international jazz artists including Jim Pugh (USA), Jon Gordon (USA), John Hollenbeck (GER/USA), Satoko Fujii (JAP), Natsuki Tamura (JAP), Theo Bleckmann (USA) and Ed Partyka (Austria), released four studio albums and 10 albums, and commissioned 30 new pieces.

'No Postcode' by Mace Francis Orchestra will be released digitally and on CD and LP on 12th April 2024. The album is being launched on Saturday 13th April at The Ellington Jazz Club, Perth.

[TICKETS](#)



[DOWNLOAD LEAD TRACK 'NO POSTCODE'](#)

Who's Doing What?

Vice President Jessica Wells has had great success in re-orchestrating Bruce Rowland's famous score from "The Man from Snowy River", with audiences all over Australia delighting in the live-to-picture concerts and hearing the insights of filming from Sigrid Thornton and Tom Burlinson at the shows!

Upcoming performances will be happening in Adelaide 22-23 March, Brisbane 20 April and Perth 26-27 April.

<https://manfromsnowyriver.au>



MAGA Patron, Sean O'Boyle, was invited by the BBC to orchestrate and conduct Delta Goodrem and the BBC Concert Orchestra as part of BBC 2 Piano Room Month. Gary Barlow joined Goodrem to perform her cover of "Rule The World" by the band Take That. The performance was broadcast on February 20, 2024.

[Watch and listen here.](#) Sean has had a spot as orchestrator/conductor on BBC 2 Piano Room Month since its inception.



Michael O'Donnell is arranging 7 pieces of music for a 40-piece string orchestra at the National Folk Festival this Easter at Exhibition Park, Canberra.

<https://www.folkfestival.org.au>



Who's Doing What?

Leigh Summers and Robert Smallwood are President and Vice President of Coffs Harbour Music Society. They had a successful launch of the 2024 season recently. They are busy promoting and working towards their next concert, Louise Johnson, harp.

You can find pictures and information at: <https://coffsmusicsociety.com.au/>

2024 Concerts



- [Louise Johnson harp – Friday 5 April](#)
- [Elena Kats-Cherin composer/pianist – Friday 26 April](#)
- [Simon Tedeschi pianist and George Washingmachine vocalist/violinist – Saturday 3 August](#)
- [Roger Woodward pianist – Saturday 21 September](#)
- [Jeonghwan Kim pianist – Sunday 20 October](#)
- [Claire Edwardes percussionist – Friday 29 November](#)

View upcoming concerts



2024 Season

≡ MENU



Back Page

DO YOU KNOW YOUR MUSIC SYMBOLS?



THE ALWAYS HAPPY ONE



THE CLEVER ONE



THE ESPECIALLY QUIET ONE



THE ONE WHO WON'T LET GO



THE ONE WHO SWEARS A LOT



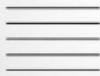
THE ONE WHO SINGS ALL THE TIME



THE NATURAL BEAUTY



THE ONE THAT ALWAYS FITS IN



THE ONE WHO'S EMPTY INSIDE :(



THE DEFLATED ONE



THE ONE WHO'S ALWAYS REPEATING THEMSELVES

pianote

A CELLO PLAYER WAS FOUND DEAD YESTERDAY. POLICE SUSPECT FOUL PLAY.



THEY THINK THE CRIME WAS ORCHESTRATED BUT COULD NOT RULE OUT A RANDOM ACT OF VIOLINS

MAGA

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CONTACT US

GPO Box 1647
Sydney, NSW, 2001, Australia

Email: admin@magainc.org.au



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