

Submission to ANU SOM community consultation

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First thoughts

- ANU must first decide if it wishes to maintain a school of musical performance. If not, it should divest itself of the SOM. By nature, performance is intensive and requires individual training and thus unavoidable ongoing costs.
- Students study music to improve their skills. They seldom undertake this demanding training for the employment opportunities.
- Should SOM be separated from ANU? Probably not necessary. As well as providing an elite musical education, the SOM may be a welcome second degree course for students training for other employment.
- Any performance school, including a school of music, needs an audience so it must exist within its community. The SOM was created as an elite musical institution and it functioned effectively within the highly educated environment of Canberra. Canberra is an excellent community to support such an elite institution for performance development.

Jazz

- The Jazz school was always vibrant, over-enrolled, well-renowned and relatively cheap to run
- Jazz promoted a popular-level cultural vibrancy in Canberra (weddings, pop/funk crossovers, "commercial gigs", etc)

Classical

- I understand the classical school was under-enrolled although some instruments were well enrolled and had particularly respected teachers (keyboards, harp, double bass, cello, presumably others). All instruments of orchestra, voice, etc, were provided with dedicated teachers. This is optimal but perhaps not economically feasible
- Successful students at undergraduate music level will likely continue further study in Australia or overseas. Consider how the training provided fits within the musical path of committed students.

Musicology, non-performance

- The SOM was created as a performance school in conservatorium style. The changes of 2012 promoted alternative & popular musics, associated technologies (eg, recording, processing), musicology. Musicology remains important but is an intellectual/academic, not performance, discipline. Technologies & simpler forms of music can equally well be handled at TAFE level (as they are in ACT and elsewhere). Appropriate univ-level performance includes elite jazz, classical/baroque, some experimental, etc
- Recording and production, music management, etc, are currently taught in other locations and not necessarily at University-level (viz CIT > http://cit.edu.au/communication_media_music).
- Canberra is very unlikely ever to become a recording hub. Recording capabilities should be appropriate to a decent performance venue and to assist with performance education.

Effectiveness

- The means of judging effectiveness must be appropriate, eg, numbers of graduates in national/international orchestras, prizes won by students, etc. If this is to be a performance school, it cannot be judged by standard university ratings, eg, publications of refereed articles

Example 1: One student was denied Masters at ANU. He was subsequently accepted into Manhattan School of Music for Jazz Masters. He was advised by a world-renowned performer to study in Europe (far cheaper) and take private lessons. He has now completed his Masters and had a recent CD nominated for a jazz Grammy.

Example 2: Max McBride was long time bass teacher at ANU. When the Australian World Orchestra was convened from players across the world, he led the bass section which included ex-students now in Vienna and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestras.

Example 3: The Australian Youth Orchestra is the longest existing youth orchestra in the world and a major source of cultural pride for Australia. It meets for its National Music Camp every second year at the SOM.

Promotion

- Detrimental changes to the ANU SOM are well known throughout Australian music circles and in Canberra. Effort is required to promote any refreshed school. A simple marketing response without effective change will be ridiculed
- Consider a major competition to promote a renewed school and excellent facilities (renew the Chopin competition or other)

Facilities

- I understand the cost of Llewellyn Hall (at least maintenance or air conditioning) was allocated to SOM as part of the changes in 2012. This is a public use, expensive facility. It is not feasible for SOM to cover these costs.
- Land in the area is very expensive. Minimal digs may be adequate (jazz was originally at Manuka (now used by Artsound, PhotoAccess)). But, every effort should be made to collocate the various music streams. The current location is optimal
- Consider further development of local area as an arts/entertainment hub (Street Theatre, Band Room, Theatre 3, Wig & Pen, restaurants)
- Investigate changes to make rental cheaper for Llewellyn, Band Room, eg, increasing internal doors, changed external access to reduce security costs for any one event

Relationships

- Music is a performance art, so training requires space for performance, relationships with the various groups in the community (CSO, audience, friends, schools, etc) and specific groups relating to Canberra as a national capital (Lodge, APH, Embassies, etc).
- Relationships with community were frayed by the changes of 2012. The extent of this seemed unexpected by ANU. The SOM provides ANU with considerable good will from the Canberra community
- Relationships with local orchestras, choirs, etc. are worthy of consideration, eg, enhancement of orchestral and choral student skills through community groups

- Relationships with schools and elite music students are in place: preparatory and development programs
- Support for music in community (eg, through visiting performers, workshops, etc)
- Justifications for a music school in the nation's capital. Immediately, to provide musicians for national functions (Lodge, APH, embassies); also national representative functions (eg, AYO as "Australian youth music ambassadors")
- Relationships with embassies (touring performers, teachers, performances, etc)
- Relationship with music streams at TAFE and UCAN
http://cit.edu.au/communication_media_music/study_music_at_cit
<http://www.canberra.edu.au/future-students/courses/short-courses/uc-music>
- Relationships with festivals, workshops, etc. ANU/SOM provides superb facilities for the AYO National Music Camp (bi-annual at ANU). Consider seeking similar camp/s, esp in AYO out-years.
- Relationships for Llewellyn Hall / Band Room (as venues) with touring artists (ACO, ANU speakers, embassy-supported visits, etc). Relationships with ACT Government and Arts funding, arts establishment, other Canberra theatres (Playhouse, Royal, Canberra Theatre, Street Theatre)

Recommendations

1. Decide to maintain a school of music performance or not. If not, divest the SOM.
2. Recreate the Jazz School along similar lines to pre-2012. This was an excellent school, well regarded, oversubscribed and not particularly expensive.
3. Determine the range of "classical" music performance that can be provided and fund appropriately. Considerations are: excellence of teachers, applications for specific instruments, etc.
4. Determine the range of musicology and non-performance streams that will be actively supported. Divest as appropriate, perhaps to other institutions.
5. Separate management and costs of performance spaces (esp Llewellyn Hall, perhaps Band Room); manage as a separate but related entity. Investigate and invest in means of reducing cost of hire; form relationships with related and local institutions; consider further development of a local arts hub; seek another major music camp for the AYO out-years.
6. Ensure performance measures are fitting for purpose
7. Consider the full range of relationships available within (and possibly outside) Canberra with the intent of strengthening the SOM and relating bodies (win-win)