



**THE MENUHIN FOUNDATION**  
Bermuda Registered Charity #118

# NEWSLETTER

**March 2023**

**Welcome to our latest Menuhin newsletter! In this edition we bring you the usual news of recent and upcoming events and offer some history and perspective on ABRSM exams.**

## LATEST NEWS

The Menuhin Foundation Spring Concert was held on March 18th and it was awesome!! All of our Orchestras played exceptionally well and we had three wonderful soloists with Euan Forster, violin, Prince Domingo, viola and Oliver Leverock, cello. Chairperson Laura Davis commented on how wonderful it was to see the Menuhin Foundation's programmes returning after the pandemic with student numbers growing. It was very much in evidence at the concert - well done everyone!



Our introductory Primary 4 Programme is up and running in 20 schools, with 105 students. We are looking forward to having all of these students come together for our Annual Concert in June. Here are the students from St. George's Preparatory getting ready...we can't wait to see them play!



Did you know that some of our students are seasoned buskers?! Bella Correia was caught on camera by the Royal Gazette while busking in front of Victoria Park and appeared on the front page. Looking good Bella!

Keep an ear out for Menuhin students as you stroll through the city...



# ABRSM EXAMS

**BY ALISON JOHNSTONE**

The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) was formed in 1889 with the first syllabus produced in 1890. Today, over 650,000 candidates take exams in more than 90 countries worldwide.

In 2020 the ABRSM launched a new exam, a Performance Grade exam. This performance exam is assessed online via a video recording and is marked entirely on the performance of pieces. This is the exam currently offered to students in Bermuda.

For the Performance Grade Exam, students prepare four contrasting pieces, three from the ABRSM syllabus and one own choice piece. Time restrictions apply so not all pieces in the syllabus can be used, for example pieces may not be long enough in length to use or the overall programme may be too long. Thought has to be given to the musical style and the order of the pieces performed to achieve a balanced performance.

Once a student feels confident and ready, the pieces are recorded as one continuous performance without breaks. No editing of the video is permitted. The exam can be recorded anytime or anywhere, making it a convenient exam for students in Bermuda. The video submission is then uploaded to the ABRSM website and the exam is assessed externally.

There are eight grade levels from Grade 1 to Grade 8. Students must have passed the ABRSM Grade 5 theory exam, or equivalent, in order to enter for the Performance Grade 6, 7 and 8 exams.

More information can be found at [www.abrsm.org](http://www.abrsm.org) or speak to your teacher.

Good luck to all Menuhin students taking the Performance Grade exam this year!



## **Practical Grades**

Not being offered face-to-face during 2023.

## **Performance Grades**

Available on demand. There are no booking periods and exam sessions. Instead, you can book, pay and submit the exam video when you are ready. You can submit the video when you book or at any time during the following 28 days.

## **Music Theory**

Now online and available on demand. Exam dates are dependent on the grade of the exam being taken:

Online Music Theory (Grades 1 to 5)  
These exams can be booked at any time. The Candidates then have 28 days to take the exam online.

Paper-based Music Theory (Grades 6 to 8) – These exams happen at public and private venues.

# THE "METRICS" SYSTEM

**BY ALISON BLACK**

The ABRSM puts a great deal of effort into creating a consistent set of evaluative metrics. Examiners must produce grades and reports for a multitude of students whom they have never heard or met before. This is a daunting task. These metrics are effective - a note is in tune or it isn't, a rhythm is correct or it is not - but it's impossible to make these evaluations within any context of a child's general development and ability.

All the in-person examiners I have met (if I can remember back to in-person exams) have been unfailingly kind with students. We all know it is a challenging experience and want to be helpful and encouraging while giving an honest assessment. For some, exams can be a nerve wracking but good learning experience, for others, it can be disheartening. Children vary in how they respond to a testing situation (whether in person or online), maintain steady focus and feel confidence. The adult world demands consistency, but at a formative stage it's important for a child to learn context. It very much affects how they evaluate themselves. There are other equally important markers of learning aside from exams. What follows are some general thoughts on what to look for as success as your child learns music.

## **Are they enjoying the process?**

It's important that a child enjoys lessons and learning. The joy of music comes first. If you have questions or concerns, please let your teacher know.

## **Are they developing good work habits at home?**

Perseverance is a learned skill. Improvement in a child's 'stick to it-ness' is a great sign that things are working. Developing practice habits early on is essential and can only happen with help at home - it's just that simple.

## **Are they proud to show what they've accomplished?**

A sense of achievement is key to motivating students. Believing in what they can do is very important to a child's development. If they are happy to show you what they are up to it's a good sign. Always, always be encouraging.

## **Are they developing a peer group in music?**

Orchestra is great for this and it's fun! Music can also be a non-threatening way for children with varying degrees of social comfort to find context with others.

## **Do you see a difference in their learning, whether in music or more broadly?**

This can be anything from understanding larger concepts, becoming more dextrous manually or learning how to show up on time. It all counts. Music has huge proven benefits to a child's learning process across the board.

In conclusion, the next time you hear an errant note from the practice room, take heart. Your child is improving and you are giving them a wonderful opportunity. Students can celebrate good exam results and learn lessons and determination from those less than hoped for, working with their teacher. Above all, remember to always take an exam result in context; it really is just a snapshot in time.

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IN HOW THEY  
RESPOND TO A  
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## STUDENT PROFILE

### PRINCE DOMINGO, VIOLA

I was in Primary 4 when Menuhin came and to teach us String Instruments. I was 9 years old then and excited to audition for viola. The moment that I touched the viola and played the basic notes, I found a connection with the music. I felt a sort of magic I never felt before. Instantly, I became drawn to the viola. The more I practice the viola, the more I am amazed with the sounds. It is something magical. Viola helps me to develop patience, determination and discipline.

I am so grateful to Menuhin and all of my teachers for giving me a chance to discover my newly found talent. Ms Black has helped me to grow musically and has supported me through my journey. She keeps reminding me to believe in myself and never give up. Ms Johnstone helps me to grow in my quartet and challenges me to improve my skills. This gives me confidence to apply for scholarships to be able to reach my dream and develop my passion. I have been playing Viola for 3 years now and I still love it. With the opportunity that the Menuhin has given me it makes me inspired to bring out the best in me. It changes my life . . I'm always thankful for my teachers and Menuhin Foundation for molding me into what I am now.

With much appreciation,  
Prince Domingo  
Whitney Institute M2



## NEW STRING QUARTETS

### 'THE MOST PERFECT EXPRESSION OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IS A STRING QUARTET'

*Jeffrey Tate*

We are pleased to see the formation of two new string quartets! We will be hearing from our new groups at the Annual Concert and wish them lots of fun and learning on their musical journeys! The quartets comprise:

Ava Gibson, violin	Bella Correia, violin
Oscar Regan, violin	David MacDonald, violin
Dylan Jeffrey, viola	Prince Domingo, viola
Mia Baccaglio, cello	Caelon Scott, cello



## A CONVERSATION WITH...

### **KATE (COLLINS) ROSS**

*University Admissions Counselor at BHS  
Former Menuhin Foundation Violin/Viola Teacher*



#### **When did you teach for the Menuhin Foundation?**

1983-1986

#### **What age did you begin to learn an instrument(s)?**

I started piano at 6 and violin at 7

#### **Who were your teachers?**

My piano teacher was Mr Hurst and then Mrs Gill Jackson. My violin teacher was Mrs. Jean Bridge until I went to the University of York, where I was taught by Mr. Jonathan Sparey of the Fitzwilliam Quartet. I then went to the University of Cambridge where my teacher was Nannie Jamieson.

#### **Do you play any other musical instruments?**

I play viola, a bit of guitar and elementary organ.

#### **Did you play in any orchestras growing up?**

I was leader of my school orchestra and also the Cumbria County Youth Orchestra. I played in the West Lakes Orchestra. At York I was leader of the 2nd violins in the University Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra. At Cambridge, I was in the Cambridge University Music Society First Orchestra (CUMS I) and in the Cambridge University Chamber Orchestra (CUCO).

#### **What is your favourite memory from learning the violin?**

I loved playing with the Cumberland Morris Men and for ceilidhs. I also loved playing in shows in the orchestra pit - I still do!

#### **What do you feel are the benefits of learning a musical instrument?**

I have met so many lovely people and shared in music making together. It also brought me to Bermuda!

#### **What advice would you give to current Menuhin Foundation students?**

Keep practising and take your instrument with you when you go to college or leave the island.

#### **Which type of music do you enjoy listening to?**

I love most music and listen to baroque, classical and romantic as well as some pop music. I love Elton John, David Bowie, Dire Straits and the Beatles to name a few!

#### **Do you still perform or play for pleasure?**

Yes. I still enjoy playing with friends and the occasional gig!

## UPCOMING EVENTS



**WINE & STRINGS**  
COMMEMORATE THE  
**BIRTHDAY**  
OF OUR FOUNDING PATRON  
*Yehudi Menuhin*  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 22**  
6:00 - 8:00PM  
BERMUDA NATIONAL GALLERY, CITY HALL  
TICKETS \$90 PER PERSON

## JOIN US AT OUR FUNDRAISING EVENT: APRIL 22ND

**Tickets are selling fast - get yours now at [www.menuhin.bm](http://www.menuhin.bm)**

This promises to be a fun evening of wine tasting with a professional vintner! While tasting you will be serenaded by the fabulous trio of Menuhin Foundation teachers and the Adult Orchestra with carefully selected music to match our wine regions.

This is an event not to miss and great way to help us continue to support Bermuda's children. We hope to see you there!

## ANNUAL CONCERT: JUNE 11TH

The Annual Concert showcases all of Menuhin's students, including the introductory Primary 4 Programme students. Please mark you calendar for Sunday June 11th and look out for more information. We will be looking for volunteers to help on the day with student supervision, ticket sales and tuck shop. Please keep an eye out for more information!

## TERM 3 DATES

**Tuesday 11th April**  
Term 3 Starts

**Saturday 15th April**  
Orchestra and Quartets resume

**Friday 26th May**  
Bermuda Day  
No Classes

**Sunday 11th June**  
Annual Concert

**Tuesday 20th June**  
Teacher's day off in lieu of  
National Heroes Day (June 19)  
No Classes

**Saturday 1st July**  
Term 3 Ends

**4th-8th July**  
Make-up Week

# PHOTO GALLERY

## PRIMARY 4 PROGRAMME

Meet some of our happy Primary 4 Programme students from around the island!



## SUPPORT US

### MENUHIN MERCHANDISE

Treat your musician! We have polo shirts, hoodies (either front or back design) and music bags (small and large sizes) available to order at Bermuda Blue Printing (link below). Click, order and collect! It's easy!



[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/MENUHINSHOP](https://tinyurl.com/menuhinshop)

