

Welcome to our latest Menuhin newsletter! In this edition we bring you the usual news of recent and upcoming events.

ANNUAL CONCERT

We all gathered on June 11th for our big end of year concert at Ruth Seaton James Auditorium - the first one we've been able to have since 2019. It was wonderful to see all the students on stage after such a long hiatus. First were the performances of musical selections from the students who had participated in our Primary School P4 Programme this academic year. Students represented 20 primary schools from across the island, and it was inspiring! Then we heard from our First, Intermediate and Youth orchestras who did themselves proud. There were many comments from the audience about high the level was for these groups. In between the larger ensembles we had an entirely new addition to The Menuhin Foundation concert programme with performances from two string quartets, 'Sempre' and 'Vivace', who both played beautifully. Our Master of Ceremonies for the concert was John Dale who navigated us smoothly through the programme. Well done everyone!



BMDS "Summer Showcase"

On June 17th the Bermuda Musical and Dramatic Society held a concert featuring young performers. Two violin students of The Menuhin Foundation performed - Ava Gibson and Bella Correia. They both played beautifully and really wowed the audience! It was a night of fine performances. And well done to student Euan Forster who sang on the night, too!

To read a review of the concert, please [click here](https://bernews.com/2023/06/review-bermuda-musicals-summer-showcase/).

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FAREWELL

It's always hard to say goodbye to students. Over the years they become a part of The Menuhin Foundation family and, though we feel their absence, we are glad to see them move into the next chapter of their lives and thrive.

For this edition we thought we would highlight Ava Gibson. Ava is a long time student of The Menuhin Foundation and has studied with Charles Knights, Jonathan Kightley and most recently Kerry Haslam. She has come up through our orchestras and this year and last she was the Concertmaster of the Youth Orchestra. Ava has now set her sights on a law degree. She will be attending Exeter University in the U.K. We know that Ava will continue to play beautiful music and that her skill as a violinist will bring her many joyful experiences in her life. Here are some reflections she has written on her time with The Menuhin Foundation. Good luck Ava!

AVA GIBSON

Throughout my life, music has acted as an outlet for creative expression, teaching me how to communicate with other students and an audience without words. This is a powerful tool, which has necessitated an attention to detail: a skill which has aided me significantly throughout my high school career. Furthermore, music has connected me with other like-minded students, particularly through The Menuhin Foundation's First, Intermediate and Youth Orchestras. Joining the The Menuhin Foundation at age 7, I always looked up to the oldest students who led their sections, giving feedback and suggestions to younger players. As I have improved, it has been incredibly rewarding to guide younger students through difficult passages, as leader of the Youth Orchestra. More recently, The Menuhin Foundation has helped me to gain exposure to the wider musical community within Bermuda, giving me the opportunity to play in chamber music groups and the Bermuda Philharmonic.

After completing my Grade 8 ABRSM exam in 2021, I have been able to work to improve my musicality and performance skills. As I was not simply focussed on exam pieces, I had the opportunity to expand my repertoire, and now have a solid understanding of how to interpret and shape a piece of music. These skills have been instrumental (quite literally!) in working with other students within ensembles, understanding how our different parts fit together and interact with each other. I am so thankful for all of my teachers who have pushed me to improve, and have acted as outstanding role models throughout my time with The Menuhin Foundation.



IN REMEMBRANCE

This Spring we lost one of our most cherished members of our Adult Orchestra - Diana Mahoney. Diana was always unfailingly upbeat and enthusiastic about playing her violin and being part of a group. She had a great zest for life and we will miss her greatly.

Below is a piece that she wrote about her experience with The Menuhin Foundation, which we publish in fond remembrance of her.

MY MUSICAL JOURNEY **by Diana Mahoney**

My journey began in middle school in Ontario, Canada - and no, I won't say the year! All students had to take instrumental music lessons, and I chose the violin which I continued playing while in high school. I tried the cello at one point, but it was very awkward carrying that home through the snow, so I stayed with the violin.

After high school, there were decades when I didn't play. Fast forward to the early 90's in Bermuda. My daughter took piano lessons every Saturday morning and I would sit in and listen, which helped me to brush up on some of the music theory.

Once both of my children left for university, I decided that I would like to play the violin again. In 2002 I purchased a well-loved (cheap) violin in NYC and carried it home with great care. I began taking lessons with The Menuhin shortly after. I would dash from my job to make it in time for my lesson with Ros Hanson, who was extremely brave to "take me on" and I was her first adult student. This was the beginning of the second part of my "musical journey".

I have been most fortunate to have had wonderful Menuhin Foundation teachers: Ros Hanson, Karen O'Brien, Charles Knights, all of whom have encouraged me to stick with it. Adults are often afraid to make mistakes and I struggled a lot with this. My teachers pushed me to take some of the Associate Board of the Royal Schools of Music exams and I am very proud to have completed the Grade 5 Practical. That was terrifying, but I did it! It was at this time that I decided I was ready for a real violin, and I purchased one from Kate Ross, which was hand crafted by her father. I felt so privileged to own this beautiful instrument, and it is the one I still play today. It is the first thing that I carry to safety when a hurricane is coming!

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There are times when I've found it challenging to find the time to practice - especially while I was working two jobs and running a household. I remember laughing as I logged my practice hours in my little book - I often came up short! My dog would sit beside me and howl when I practiced, and my husband made me close the door so he would not have to listen to the "noise"! Years later when one of my former teachers was married and had two small children, I asked her how her practice time was going. She had a laugh too!

In 2010, I was invited to join the Adult Ensemble with Alison Johnstone as our conductor. How daunting - or so I thought. It was a very friendly group of just nine musicians, where there was no pressure, just enjoyment, and nobody cared if you played the wrong note (or the wrong piece of music!) and nobody ever was reduced to tears! Our first piece of music was Eine Kleine Nachtmusik. Somehow, Alison got us to play that piece well.

This was my first experience with an orchestra. We performed at several venues over the years, including a seniors residence, a seniors tea party, The National Trust Walkabout, The Royal Bermuda Yacht Club, and Dockyard . One of my most memorable venues was the National Trust Walkabout in St. George's, wearing Christmas hats and with tinsel on our violins!

The journey just kept getting better and better and so did our ensemble, gathering more adult players with everyone enjoying it immensely. Then we were all invited to join the Bermuda Philharmonic Orchestra to play along with them. Wow - what an opportunity! At my first practice there was a lot of trembling that occurred, and it wasn't vibrato!

It wasn't just the music we played. It was the whole experience: wearing the long black dress, sitting in the middle of the orchestra and feeling the vibrations off the other instruments, the attentive audience, the huge butterflies in my stomach, the pride in my heart. I loved every minute of it, and I still do!

Another highlight was being invited to play with members of the English Chamber Orchestra that came to play at The Bermuda Festival. Imagine being coached by a professional player, for over an hour. This was part of their outreach program. How fortunate we were!

My journey has been a long one and when I look back, I feel a real sense of accomplishment. I find that my brain is constantly being challenged to learn new things, and I have made so many new friends through music. I recommend anyone to take up the challenge. No matter your age, come back to music, and push yourself outside of your comfort zone. It is SO worth it. You are never too old to learn new things. No regrets here!

Diana Mahoney, 2nd violin

ABRSM EXAMINATIONS

Congratulations to all of our students who passed ABRSM exams in the 2022-2023 academic year!

GRADE 1

Violet Leverock, Violin, Distinction
Emanuella Iaxx, Violin, Distinction
Kennedy Seymour, Violin, Distinction
Juliana Gakundi, Violin, Merit
Bram Wiseman, Cello, Merit

GRADE 2

Alisa Lightbourne, Violin, Merit
Lucy Leman, Violin, Merit
Owen Grasso, Violin, Merit
Aiva Brown, Violin, Pass

GRADE 3

Euan Forster, Violin, Distinction
Luciana Fischer, Violin, Distinction
Nicholas Correia, Violin, Merit
Oliver Leverock, Cello, Merit

GRADE 4

Ahmya Peets, Violin, Merit

GRADE 5

Lindsey Scarth, Violin, Merit
Oscar Regan, Violin, Merit
David MacDonald, Violin, Pass
Nadia Gibson, Theory, Pass

GRADE 6

Bella Correia, Violin, Distinction



QUARTETS

We are so pleased to see our students in small ensembles! Playing chamber music is one of the greatest joys of being a performer and is an essential part of a musical education. The string quartet is the quintessential string ensemble and consists of two violins, a viola, and a cello. The form was principally developed by the composer Franz Joseph Haydn, who wrote sixty-eight quartets over his lifetime, establishing the form's structural and musical hallmarks.

Since Haydn, many composers have written string quartets, even up to this day. Beethoven wrote sixteen quartets! His first ones are very much in the classical style and his last ones are utterly different and point the way to the romantic and even 20th century period. Some more modern works include vocalizations and even added percussion, to be played by the members! There's no end to the variety of this ensemble.



Mia Baccaglio

Bermuda Youth Film Festival - On the 21st of June, Saltus Grammar School was pleased to host the second annual Bermuda Youth Film Festival at BUEI. Our very own Mia Baccaglio entered her film Star Land... and won Best Film!

We are so proud of Mia who is clearly a talented film maker, as well as an accomplished cellist! Her film is captivatingly beautiful. You can watch it on [YouTube](https://youtu.be/5vRFaR_ZBko) (https://youtu.be/5vRFaR_ZBko)

STUDENT NEWS

SUPPORT US

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!

MERCHANDISE

ORDER NOW

Click, order and collect!
It's easy!



2023/24 TERM DATES

TERM 1

Tuesday 5th September
Term 1 Starts

Saturday 9th September
Orchestras begin

24th - 28th October
Half Term
No Classes

Saturday 11th November
Remembrance Day
No Classes

Saturday 2nd December
Christmas Concert

Saturday 16th December
Last Day of Term

TERM 2

Tuesday 9th January
Term 2 Starts

Saturday 13th January
Orchestras resume

13th - 17th February
Half Term
No Classes

Saturday 16th March
Spring Concert

Saturday 23rd March
Last Day of Term

TERM 3

Tuesday 9th April
Term 3 Starts

Saturday 13th April
Orchestras resume

Friday 24th May
Bermuda Day
No Classes

Sunday 9th June
Annual Concert

Saturday 15th June
National Heroes Day observed
No Classes

Saturday 29th June
Last Day of Term

2nd-6th July
Make-up Week

JOIN US!

We're Hiring!

Our Administrator, Villa Dill, will be retiring in the new academic year, and we are looking for her replacement! This is a part-time role, and if you know of someone who has an interest in working with us, please ask them to contact our Chairperson, Laura Davis, at ldavis@menuhin.bm to learn more. The hours are flexible, and the successful candidate will be expected to work from home. Deadline July 31st for interested applicants.

Join our Board of Trustees!

We are looking for volunteers to join our Board of Trustees who are responsible for the strategic direction and programming of The Menuhin Foundation. If you have an interest in delivering opportunities to all of Bermuda's schoolchildren, please reach out. Our Board meetings are held once a month. It is an exciting time to join as we continue to rebuild teaching capacity after the pandemic and look ahead to our 50th anniversary!