

GRACENOTES

Autumn 2021

*Welcome to the latest edition of **Gracenotes**, the newsletter of Haberdashers' Adams Music Department. Find out about what has been happening in the Music Department this term.*

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Music by numbers

Music is flourishing, with 27 studying GCSE Music in Year 10, 22 in Year 11, 10 studying AS Music and 8 studying at A Level. This year, we have been able to reintroduce the instrumental programme into Year 8 as well as Year 7. Over the year, all students in these years will have the opportunity to learn an instrument as part of their class Music lesson. This programme was set up several years' ago, thanks to a generous donation from the Haberdashers to purchase class instruments, and a number of students go on to have individual instrumental lessons. Our peripatetic teachers are offering around 170 individual lessons each week. Sadly, we have said goodbye to Mr Clive Rainbow after four and a half years. We have recently appointed a replacement guitar teacher, and Mr Dan Jones will join us in January.



Our Instrumental Programme in progress



Folk Group

We are delighted by the success of our new Folk Group, run by Strings teacher, Mrs Beverley Beynon. We are still looking for a bass guitarist and one or two acoustic guitarists, so if you are interested in finding out more, come along on Tuesday lunchtimes.



Introducing Dr Upton

Dr Upton joined us from the University of Nottingham, where he worked as a Teaching Associate, having graduated with a PhD in Music. Alongside lecturing to undergraduates, Dr Upton worked as a Music Tutor and School Liaison Officer with Nottinghamshire County Council, taught piano and drums to private pupils, and has worked in musical theatre as musical director for various productions. Until recently, he was also an examiner for RSL Awards. Dr Upton plays a variety of instruments: piano, guitar, bass, percussion and saxophone. As an Old Novaportan, Dr Upton is delighted to have returned to his old school and is looking forward to the challenges of running this busy and successful department.

Taiko – Japanese Drumming

Our previous Head of Music, Malcolm Brown, has not cut his ties completely with Haberdashers' Adams. On Wednesday afternoons, he can be found in Hamilton Hall teaching the Senior Taiko group, and in October, he started Junior Taiko as an after-school activity and was amazed by the response. Around 30 pupils in Years 7-10 take part each week in this high-energy, hands-on, fun activity. Previous Senior Taiko groups have played for Prince Edward, when he came to open the Coach House, led the parade in the Lord Mayor's Show in London, playing on the top of a double-decker bus, and taken part in the National Taiko Festival. Haberdashers' Adams is one of the venues for Taiko West, and classes open to the community take place once a month on a Saturday. For more information, please contact: malcolm.brown@adamsgs.uk



PARENTS & GUARDIANS – YOU CAN ALSO TRY JAPANESE TAIKO DRUMMING AT HABERDASHERS' ADAMS!

We run monthly Saturday hands-on adult workshops for beginners and for more experienced musicians.

At these classes you can learn a new skill, release stress, socialise, perform and most importantly have fun!

Classes are led by highly-experienced, qualified teacher and pioneer of UK Taiko, James Barrow.

If you are looking for a new high-energy activity to try out in 2022, come and join us for a Try-Out session on Saturday January 8th 2022.

Beginners 11.00am to 12.15pm - £10.

Non-beginners 1.00pm to 3.15pm - £20

You can sign up at <https://www.taikowest.com/west-midlands-taiko-centre/>



TAIKOWEST
JAPANESE DRUMMING IN THE UK

House Music 2022

The annual House Music Competition takes place on Thursday 17th February 2022. This is always one of the highlights in the school calendar. After having to record all the performances in advance last year, we are delighted that this year, performances will be live. The Competition will take place during the school day and all students will get the opportunity to watch some of it live in the Sports Hall, which will have been transformed for the day into an auditorium with a stage and lighting. Those not in the Sports Hall will watch in Hamilton Hall and Paddock Hall. A decision will be made in January regarding whether we are able to put on a showcase for parents in the evening. The independent adjudicator is booked and all five Houses are already busy arranging music and auditioning their potential soloists. The set song this year is *Feeling Good* by Anthony Newley and Leslie Bricusse, and as always, it will be interesting to see how the different Houses arrange this so that their arrangement stands out from the rest. We are looking forward to a wonderful day celebrating the musical talent of our students. May the best House win!



Adams' FM – friends of the Music Department

No, it is not a radio station - Adams' FM stands for 'friends of Music', a group of parents (past and present) and friends of the Music Department, who volunteer to support music at Haberdashers' Adams. They provide bars and refreshments at music events, raise money to benefit the students, repair costumes, and volunteer whatever other help they can to promote music at Adams. With no concerts and no show over the last two years, Adams' FM have been unable to do what they do so well to raise funds. However, they are ready to get going, as soon as we are allowed to perform to an audience of parents, and they would really like to welcome some new parents to join them. You do not have to join the committee unless you would like to do so. We need parents we can call on to come along and help for an hour or so at specific events. If your son or daughter is involved in music at Haberdashers' Adams, do consider joining this friendly group.

If you would like to get involved in helping the Music Department and the students, Adams' FM would love to hear from you. Please speak to Dr Upton, Mr Wysome or Mrs Coomer and they will pass your details on to the Adams' FM committee.

A new year, a new show.....

Our shows are usually planned a year in advance, but the arrival of Covid delayed our scheduled production of West Side Story by two years – by which time, the majority of the students taking part had left Adams (a number of whom have gone on to study Drama or Musical Theatre). We have, therefore, chosen a different show with the current cohort of thespians in mind, and our production in July 2022 will be Sweeney Todd – the Demon Barber of Fleet Street. Based on the well-known story, this is a dark and dramatic production, with some great music. Described as ‘a dark and witty tale of London, love, murder and revenge’, Sweeney Todd has music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, one of the most famous figures in 20th century musical theatre, who died recently at the age of 91. Rehearsals for our production are already underway, directed by Dr Upton and Mr Hickey.



Christmas 2021

Plans to hold the annual Family Carol Service in St Nicholas Church have had to be cancelled for the second year, so once again, the Music Department has put together *Virtually Christmas!* We have progressed from last year in that we have been able to record our ensembles and readers in the Church rather than at school, and we hope this gives a more festive feel to everything. This is the first time for two years that our Orchestra has performed, and it is so good to hear them again! We have also included pieces from both our Choirs, as well as several of the ensembles. Our programme features both traditional carols and some well-known Christmas songs, interspersed with Christmas poems. As a finale, the staff say Happy Christmas to all our students in their own unique way.....!!

Virtually Christmas will be played to all students on the last day of term and will then be made available to parents, so look out for the link.

Groups & Ensembles

Mondays	13.00	Chamber Choir
Mondays	16.00	Show Band
Tuesdays	13.00	Mixed Choir
Tuesdays	13.00	Folk Group
Tuesdays	16.00	Sweeney Todd rehearsal
Wednesdays	16.00	Junior Taiko
Thursdays	12.45	Flute Choir
Thursdays	16.00	Orchestra
Fridays	13.00	CCF Marching Band
Fridays	16.00	Sweeney Todd rehearsal

For more information about any of the ensembles, please speak to Dr Upton, Mr Wysome or Mrs Coomer.

***Rehearsing and
recording for
Christmas.***

