ASME 2015 Conference Report

Bob Martin

I would like to say thank you for giving me the opportunity to attend the ASME conference. It was an excellent conference and one of the best conferences I have had the opportunity to attend. Its keynote speakers were excellent and the session leaders were well qualified and professional in their approach to their sessions which were informative and well researched. There were very good presentations of the use of computers in music.

The sessions I attended were:

**Wednesday**

*Plenary 1 Graham Welch.*

Graham Welch spoke about the way music is helping Autistic children to communicate and express themselves and how their developmental progress is being recorded and assessed. It was interesting to learn that music is multi-sited in the brain and that sound recognition starts in the womb before birth.

*Astro Cobalt - Folk music bridging the gap*

This was about how folk music meets the requirements of the Australian Curriculum and its melodic form and call answer call tag. They gave a web site address for free music [www.traditionalmusic](http://www.traditionalmusic).

*Live looping on the iPad Katie Wardrobe*

This was an excellent presentation with Katie doing a complete recording using a beat rhythm then doing overdubbing with various vocals. She used the app Loopy HD.

*Music for all ages: 25 years of Making and playing Marimbas*

An interesting program where we all got to play a marimba or drum and next year there will be a program run in Victoria in men’s sheds to get men to make and play them.

*Green Crocs Eat Ants - Nathan Cahill*

This was about a program to get students to engage more readily in learning the Ukulele, with a more exciting use of language that was aimed at younger students.

*Flipping the music classroom – Katie Wardrobe.*

This session discussed students using self-paced learning with modern technology.
Thursday

Diversity in Unity - Richard Gill
Richard Gill is an inspirational speaker who wants the ASME to be the pre-eminent leader in musical education. He believes we should abolish standardised testing, pay music teachers properly and that good teachers test all the time. Memorable quotes include "You do not get good teachers by following standardised testing," "Education is about working on the child's mind" and "Education does not make you happy."

Garage band for iPad - Katie Wardrobe
A very informative session with ideas for getting students to write essays for English then add sound effects which I believe would be a real winner for reluctant students.

Ideas for teaching indigenous Australian music - Jane Nicholas
I did not enjoy this workshop that much. It used a photo of 10 birds in flight to learn that scales go up and down and a photo of people of different heights to introduce beat patterns. I could not transfer the content to general teaching the same way as other sessions.

Musical conversations - Adam Starr, Anthony Schulz.
This was about musical improvisation. This is impossible when orchestras are following set scores like Mozart and the like.

How relevant is your music in and out of the classroom - J. Kuzmich Jnr
Well thought out and presented work. Great internet resources together with how and why to access them, and the benefits of using them.

Cappella ear Training - Helen Russell
A bit out of my depth here but it was interesting.

Friday

Simple, creative & practical technology integration in music education. - Katie Wardrobe.
A good overview of the advantages of digital programs and ideas on how to implement them.

High school drum corps - Rob Boundy.
An amazing group of talented young people played numerous types of drums extremely well.
Beat on the cheap - Neville Talbot
A good practical lesson on techniques to teach beat when you have limited resources. I decided that I was a klutz when it came to doing these exercises a bit like the person with two left feet.

Music education for life - Anita Collins
This was about what Neuroscientific research has discovered about how music affects the brain and how it enhances a child’s development and the rest of a person’s life.

I plan to give a talk during a school staff meeting about what I saw and learnt at the conference. I will also hand out some notes on different parts of various courses. Thank you again for the chance to have a wonderful learning experience which I would recommend to anyone. Moving out of your own comfort zones can be very rewarding.