

What is human musicality and why it is important: Daniel Barenboim, Willie Wonka, Billy Connolly, jazz bastards and the universality of improvisation

Thursday 23rd April, 5.30-6.30, Studio Theatre (FREE)

This presentation outlines a number of different perspectives investigating the relationship between music and health while presenting evidence to support the assertion "We are all Musical". Possible reasons relating to why music may have beneficial effects on health are explored; these include a discussion of social, cultural neurological, medical, developmental and education issues. The contrasting but related contributions of music therapy, community music and music education will be discussed and research examples will highlight various ways in which music and health can be studied. Different types of methodologies will be presented and here the emphasis will be on comparing and contrasting the ways in which we utilise quantitative and qualitative methodologies both separately and together. Experience from diverse projects will be presented highlighting some of the key findings, methodologies used and ways in which funding has been secured.

Freedom is just another word for nothing left to lose: exploring the relationship between composition and improvisation

Thursday 23rd April, 1.00pm - 5.00pm Rehearsal Room 3 (FREE)

Workshop: This workshop will presents ideas and practical examples for merging composition and improvisation techniques when working with a wide range of participants including professional musicians and individuals with no previous experience of making. I will explore the notion of musical freedom as a relational concept (eg what is musical freedom, why is it important) and also discuss the use of graphic scores, conventional notation and specials conduction techniques. The workshop is suitable for all levels of experience and all instruments.

Biographical Note: Raymond MacDonald is Professor of Music Psychology and Improvisation and Head of The School of Music at University of Edinburgh.

Prior to this position he was a Professor in the Psychology Department at Glasgow Caledonian University where he led the Glasgow Caledonian Music Psychology Research Group for 12 years.

As a saxophonist and composer he has released over 50 CDs and toured and broadcast worldwide. He has written music for film, television, theatre, radio and art installations and much of his work explores the boundaries and ambiguities between what is conventionally seen as improvisation and composition. Collaborating with musicians such as David Byrne, Evan Parker, Jim O'Rourke and Marilyn Crispell his work informed by a view of improvisation as a social, collaborative and uniquely creative process that provides opportunities to develop new ways of working musically. He is a key player and a founding member of The Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra.

After completing his PhD at the University of Glasgow, investigating therapeutic applications of music, he worked as Artistic Director for a music company, Sounds of Progress, specialising in working with people who have special needs. He runs music workshops and lectures internationally and has published over 60 peer reviewed papers and book chapters. He has co-edited four texts, Musical Identities (2002) and Musical Communication (2005), Musical Imaginations (2012) and Music Health & Wellbeing (2012) and was editor of the journal Psychology of Music between 2006 and 2012. He is an associate editor for The International Journal of Music Education, Jazz Research Journal, Research Studies in Music Education, Musicae Scientiae and The Journal of Music Therapy.

His on-going research focuses on issues relating to improvisation, musical communication, music health and wellbeing, music education and musical identities. He studies the processes and outcomes of music participation and music listening and has a particular interest in collaborative creativity.

His new coedited text with David Hargreaves and Dorothy Miell "The Oxford Handbook of Musical Identities"

is due for publication in 2015 . A recent Creative Scotland Award has allowed him to develop an innovative collaborative project with Turner Prize winning artist Martin Boyce and film Director David MacKenzie that experiments with new forms of performative work that adapts to gallery, concert hall and cinema spaces.