



YAMAHA MUSIC EUROPE

Yamaha Music Schools & Yamaha Music Points
in the UK

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YAMAHA
YAMAHA MUSIC SCHOOL

Welcome to the October issue of the YME - UK newsletter:

In this issue we bring you the latest reports and updates from around the UK.

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Please contact Nigel Burrows, Dave Savage or Natasha Homer if you would like to include a news item or publish a photograph of your local YMS/YMP activities.

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Strum A Chord For A Good Cause - The Ricoh Arena Rocks!



On Sunday 14th October the Ricoh Arena at Coventry was invaded by hundreds of enthusiastic Guitarists, Bands and Rock stars to take part in the very first "Strum A Chord For A Good Cause" event to raise much needed funds for ChildLine and the NSPCC.

The original idea was the brainchild of Nigel Dutton, tactical marketing manager of 02 Telefonica and senior ChildLine fundraising committee member.

Yamaha offered their support and provided Guitar Ace Soren Anderson who is both a Yamaha Artist and a member of the prestigious Glenn Hughes Band known so well to many Midlands and UK musicians.

Soren led the Guitar challenge after the show was opened by 'Stoneway', under 18 winners of Rock The House 2012.

Other sponsors and helpers included Planet Rock, Futurenet, Marshall, Kerrang Radio, Armen Max and many other bands and helpers.

This event will have raised between £15-£20,000 directly for ChildLine once all the sponsorship money is collected. In addition nearly 2 million people will have seen or heard the message broadcast via radio, magazine and online.

As a special treat Dave Hill, from Slade, joined Soren and the tribute band "Hats Off To Led Zeppelin" for the guitar challenge which could well make a Guinness World record.

The final words go to Nigel - "I hope we can update the website, create a Hall of fame for the guitarists and run an online auction in the next few weeks to extend our reach and fundraising capabilities. Thanks again for your support and patience".



Photo top left - The Guitar challenge; - far left - Soren with Dave Hill ; - middle left - The Yamaha stand - thanks to Steve Williamson and Express Music.

Octaves Of Walsall Stage Yamaha Music Point Concert!

On Sunday 14th October, Octaves Yamaha Music Point held two concerts at Walsall Academy to showcase keyboard and guitar students of all ages and stages.

For the fifth year running students were given the opportunity to play as a live band and the standard of playing was higher than ever!

250 parents, relatives and friends attended each concert which took place in the Academy theatre.

The theme for this year was centred around the Olympics with the teachers and staff taking to the stage to perform a medley of 'Chariots of Fire', 'We Are the Champions' and 'Gold'. All of this to a video backdrop showing Music School Manager Brett in training for Rio 2016. It was a great comedy moment (anyone who knows Brett will understand) which the audience thoroughly enjoyed.

A flawless keyboard arrangement of 'The Muppets' accompanied by live drums and bass kicked off the student performances and set the scene perfectly for the rest of the concert.

Students went on to perform a variety of songs including a student arrange-

ment of 'Just the Way You Are' (Bruno Mars), 'Paradise' (Coldplay) 'Shake a Tailfeather' (Blues Brothers) 'Hit Me with Your Best Shot' (Pat Benatar) 'Moves Like Jagger' (Maroon 5) and even another Olympics reference with Whitney Houston's 'One Moment in Time'. The Grade 8 Keyboard piece 'The Sweeney' was also arranged as a band item and proved to be a total success.

Each concert saw a fantastic Solo Guitar performance from 16 year old Mike Swift, who played and sang his own song 'Dear Kath' to an amazed audience. The Junior Play for Keeps students were also included and performed 'Popcorn' from Book 2. To add further variety a Keyboard Duet of 'Big Cake with Candles' and a Grade 5 Piano Piece 'Vendetta' were included. The concerts closing with a rocking performance of the 1980's Classic 'We Built The City'.

The concerts were the culmination of many months of hard work and preparation by teachers, staff and students. Both were a huge success, with many of the parents being held 'spellbound' by the talents displayed. Thanks to all involved.



Saltaire Expands Studio Capacity And Launches Drum Course!



At a time when many Music school operators are looking to consolidate and retain as many students as possible the Yamaha Music Point at Saltaire is bucking the trend and going for out and out expansion.

Rino Grice explains: - "As we approached our fifth year I knew we had to either expand or remain as we were. We have had a successful first five years having re-located to the World Heritage Centre at Saltaire, during which time the school has seen growth of over 150%. Last year we entered negotiations into acquiring more space in order to expand and after several long months of talks we gained two new studios".

So what of the future?

Rino continues: "A plan for the next five years was formulated, expanding the courses offered to include Drums and to update other studios".

The result so far means that the school now boasts 6 teaching studios which include a new soundproofed studio for Drums, Guitar, Keyboards, Piano and Vocals as well as an additional space which doubles up for Vocal, Piano and Acoustic Guitar.

We have to applaud Rino's decision to go for it when so many others are being totally cautious. Not that we should throw caution to the wind in these challenging economic times, far from it, this new phase of development has involved some major investment in studio space, new stock and marketing - all of which has been funded by YMP Saltaire.

However we are delighted to report that so far it all seems to be working with the school reporting a 30% increase since the beginning of September.

Our final question to Rino was how has this been achieved in so short a space of time?

He answered: "To advertise and market this new facility we have: a) Created a new interactive website; b) Involved local press with all our expansion plans, showing that we were bucking the trend and expanding in a time of recession; c) Carried out a school roadshow featuring a band made up of teachers from the school; d) Carried out a 7000 letter campaign to all schools not visited by the roadshow; e) Produced a new brochure, and delivered it to local addresses" - **very impressive we say!**

George Michael's Keyboard Player Opens New Keyboard Studio!

Nick Murdoch, professional pianist, organist and keyboard player, who is currently appearing with George Michael on his Symphonica tour, took time out of his busy schedule to launch the stunning new Yamaha Keyboard studio at Music Gym Watford.

Nick who has worked with Amy Winehouse & Mark Ronson (on hit single Valerie) Duffy & Michael Buble among many others showed his support at the launch, "this is a wonderful facility, we need to support children and their musical education and give them the very best foundation possible". Councillor Ian Brown followed with a speech saying "we are proud to have a Music Gym in our community and to have a facility of such high quality on our doorsteps".

Just nine months ago Music Gym opened its Electric guitar teaching studio and thanks to the huge success of the Guitar Encounters course they are now able to launch the impressive keyboard studio which will ultimately provide students access to 'Play For Keeps' and 'Junior Play For Keeps' courses.

The keyboard studio has 8 top of the

range Yamaha keyboards for each student together with a PSR S910 for the Teacher.

This Yamaha Music Point facility is the only music school offering classes like this for rock and pop in Watford and indeed Hertfordshire, providing fun classes and (accredited) graded examinations.

Alan Johnson and Jo Stevens, the joint operators, are a married couple having enjoyed notable careers in the music industry as well as sharing a passion for motivating and inspiring kids to learn music.

Jo said "this is a vocation and we strive to provide excellence in teaching in a tremendous environment- the quality of musical education of every child who is enrolled is of paramount importance to us and we want to help nurture the musicians of the future".

We wish Alan and Jo every success as their Yamaha Music Point gathers momentum.

Photos: Top left to right: Ian Brown; Nick Murdoch and Alan Johnson - Middle: Keira Hayer, Shaan Hayer, Bela Hayer - Bottom: Group photo at launch.



News In Brief...

Vocal Seminar At Milton Keynes!

On Monday 22nd October we held a further Vocal seminar at our offices in Milton Keynes. This was part of the annual CPD for Vocal teachers and was led by Joanna Walling (YMP Newton Abbot). Teachers from Coventry, Altrincham, Derby and Newton Abbot were in attendance and this was hailed as a great success in reviewing the activities that had taken place over the last 12 months following last year's workshop. Currently we are working with Rockschool on a new Vocal syllabus. **Pictured right 3 of the teachers with Joe. Left to right: Rosie Le Caz, Hayley Yau, Emma Wycherley and Joanna Walling.**

Drum Workshop At Solihull!

On Wednesday 24th October we held the second of our advanced Drum workshops at the Yamaha Music Point, Solihull. The session was led by senior Drum Encounters instructor Ken West, with teachers attending from Solihull, Milton Keynes, Derby, Warwickshire and Newton Abbot. One of the main topics of this Workshop was to focus on the new Level 3 Drum syllabus which is part of the Yamaha- Rockschool partnership.

Photo right middle: From left to right - Ken West- DE Instructor; Lloyd Daker Solihull YMP; Duncan Lee and Chris Davy Milton Keynes; Dave Jones Warwickshire Music Service; Dave Amar Derby and Alex Smith Newton Abbot YMP.

New State School Partner In Redditch!

Following discussions earlier this year and a Keyboard presentation to the whole school in September by Nick Fisher, St Bedes Catholic Middle School in Redditch has now opened its doors to a Yamaha Keyboard facility which is in a permanent space within its music classroom. Over 300 children experienced the Yamaha presentation in September and almost 60 students have now enrolled on the Yamaha Play For Keeps course. Rowena Eastwood, the head of music at the school, is delighted at the take up and is now looking forward to offering this facility to feeder schools within the area. **(Photo - St. Bedes Keyboard students)**

