

The Roof Falls in at ANAM!!

Ten years after nearly closing down and being saved by a public campaign, the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) is steering its way through another disaster.

On the morning of Thursday 18 October, ANAM experienced another catastrophic event. In the office at its South Melbourne Town Hall home, the roof directly above the desks of two administration staff members collapsed, causing three levels of ceiling to come down followed by extensive flooding from a burst water pipe in the ceiling. City of Port Phillip staff pumped 12,000 litres of water out of the building. Thankfully no one was injured or any of the many precious instruments housed there, damaged.

The entire building, which ANAM leases from the City of Port Phillip, was evacuated, and is currently closed. While the recitals scheduled on the day had to be cancelled, all performances and masterclasses since that week were relocated, as arts organisations rallied around to help in the crisis. From that day through to the end of the year, ANAM has relocated and is presenting 36 public concerts.

On a smaller scale, individual donors and supporters of ANAM have helped by offering their living rooms and pianos to enable musicians to practice and have lessons.

General Manager Nick Bailey said: "I want to pay sincere and deeply felt thanks to the staff who managed this extremely traumatic event. To both coordinate events on the day and then, the next day, turn around and reschedule this week's activities into alternative spaces around Melbourne and keeping information flowing, is something of a Herculean task.

"We have also been heartened by expressions of assistance and offers of support from our friends at Musica Viva, Melbourne Recital Centre, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Australian Youth Orchestra, Orchestra Victoria, BalletLab, City of Port Phillip, NIDA, the Australian Ballet, St Silas, the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, and the individuals who have opened their homes to our musicians and faculty.

"We are determined to ensure that the music never stops at ANAM, and it is through the generous support of many, many people – not least, the commitment of our fearless young musicians – that we have been able to keep the music sounding through these difficult times"

It is a busy time for ANAM which launches its 2019 Season on 1 November, and has just confirmed the 70 brilliant young musicians who will attend ANAM in 2019, so the music will not stop anytime soon.

In late 2008, ANAM received the news that its Federal funding would be removed and it would be closed down. A public campaign spearheaded by prominent Australians such as its then Artistic Director Brett Dean and Richard Tognetti ultimately resulted in a reversal of the decision, and ANAM has gone from strength to strength since then, with alumni taking up professional roles in orchestras and chamber groups around the globe.

General Manager Nick Bailey is available for interview.
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