



L-Università ta' Malta
School of Performing Arts

Department of
Music Studies



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History

The Music Studies Department was set up in 1988 as one of the programmes of study within the Mediterranean Institute of the University of Malta. From the beginning, music students were encouraged to establish connections with the community through their involvement in concerts held both on campus and in other performing venues around Malta. Since then, the Department has trained students for a range of careers in music, including music education, professional orchestral performance, composition, studio production, and academic scholarship. In 2012, along with Dance Studies and Theatre Studies, the Music Department was integrated into the School of Performing Arts within the University of Malta, leading to staff members and students from all three Departments collaborating with each other across disciplines.

Opportunities in Music and Beyond

A degree in music is the key to a range of career opportunities. Teaching and performing are two of the most popular careers for those with a music degree. Other opportunities include jobs in the recording industry, in orchestral playing and management, freelance composing or performance, work in cultural management and administration, in the media and entertainment industries or in libraries and archives, to mention a few. In addition, a degree in music is often seen as an asset by employers seeking formal certification of professional training in creativity from prospective employees.



What We Do

Composition

The teaching of composition at undergraduate level is designed to encourage students to compose in diverse styles and media. The programme aims to help students learn to compose music that inspires and interests them without preference towards any particular 'house-style'. Teaching in this area is tailored to equip aspiring composers with proficient skills in the techniques of musical composition. Throughout their studies students are exposed to the application of computer technology and electronic music.

Postgraduate studies in composition lead students to create a professional portfolio of compositions, supervised by a tutor in regular one-to-one meetings. They are expected to develop a project with strong critical insights through practice-based research methods. All composition students have opportunities to hear their works presented in a variety of performance settings including collaborations with ensemble classes, visiting professional ensembles, and during workshops with the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra. Compositions by various members of staff are regularly performed by international ensembles, by the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra and various international orchestras of repute.

Musicology and Ethnomusicology

Specialist teaching is offered in musicology and ethnomusicology at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, covering a wide variety of topics. Broadly viewed, both musicology and ethnomusicology are interested in the study of music in all its manifestations, by individuals and groups, at different times and places. Both disciplines are interested in key concepts such as aesthetics, identity, culture, theory, history, biography, genre and many more, with different methodologies adopted according to the particular research topic. Staff members in the Department have carried out research in various areas including among others: nineteenth-century instrumental and operatic music, new music and the avant-garde, Mediterranean music of the oral tradition, and Maltese popular music.

Our research interests connect us to both local and international networks and institutions which support our research in diverse ways and which also provide opportunities for our students to carry out their research and related practice. Further assistance for research is provided by the University of Malta library facilities and performance spaces, as well as through collaborations between the UM School of Performing Arts and other musical institutions. Our research has been published by leading academic publishing houses including Routledge, Cambridge University Press and Boydell & Brewer, as well as in peer-reviewed scholarly journals. Moreover, Departmental staff members have contributed extensively to various musical reference works such as the New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, the Continuum Encyclopaedia of Popular Music of the World, the SAGE Encyclopaedia of Music and Culture, and Cambridge University Press Encyclopaedias.

Performance

For the third year of their study programme, music students have the option of choosing performance as their main area of study, although several study units offered in the first and second years are already aimed for students who plan to major in performance. This area is for students who wish to pursue a career as professional performers or, in the case of the B.Orch, orchestral musicians. Specialisation in performance, which will include regular individual sessions with professional tutors, is offered in piano, voice and a wide range of orchestral instruments. Students taking performance are trained in technique, aspects of interpretation related to different styles of music, and to deal with the issues of public performance, all of which are enhanced by the study of a varied repertoire encompassing solo pieces, chamber music and orchestral works. The undergraduate courses also include studies in basic conducting, as well as repertoire studies. Staff and students can participate in the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra's rehearsal sessions and concerts as observers, orchestra members, soloists in concertos, and conductors. Post-graduate students can also opt to focus on particular areas of performance, such as historically-informed performance or contemporary music.

Research Specialisations

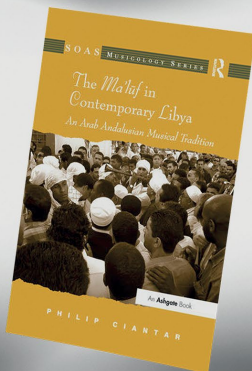
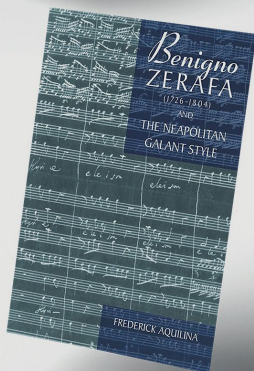
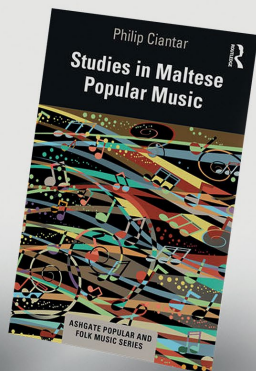
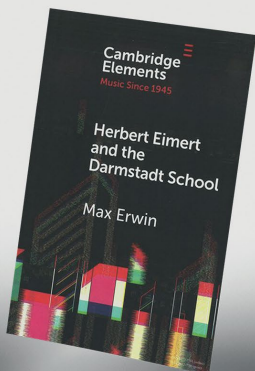
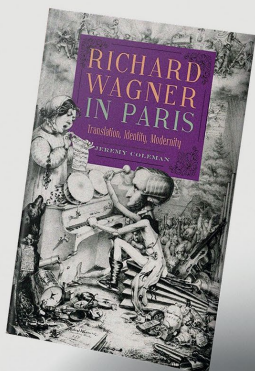
Current staff research includes performance practice in various styles and the production of performance editions, in particular editions of music by 18th- and 19th-century Maltese composers. We also offer specialisation in the study and performance of contemporary music.

Areas of Study and Research:

- Maltese music
- Historically informed performance practice
- Improvisation and compositional techniques
- Vocal music
- Instrumental performance
- Contemporary music
- Music editing
- Music technology
- Jazz performance and improvisation
- Music in society and culture
- The role of institutions in musical life
- Oral music traditions of the Mediterranean
- Popular music
- Opera and music theatre



A look at some of our music and research



Studying in Our Department

The Music Studies Department offers a range of Bachelor's programmes that match the particular interests and aspirations of students. During their first year, music students enrolled on a Bachelor's degree follow two areas of study – music studies and another subject chosen from an approved list of study areas. In the third year, students may opt to either continue following two areas of study for the BA, or concentrate on music studies for the BA (Hons). In 2017, prospective students will also have the possibility to enrol for the BMus (Hons), which will be a new undergraduate single honours degree programme entirely focused on music.

All our teaching and supervision is delivered in a dynamic environment that encourages mutual learning and a sense of community; moreover, it builds on a shared passion for music. Our teaching, which is all delivered in English, varies from class lectures to individual tuition, small group tutorials and departmental seminars. Students in our Department are encouraged to benefit from the diverse research interests of its academic staff members as well as from other academics within the School of Performing Arts. All students are also encouraged to participate actively in one or more of the ensembles supported by the Music Department, namely, the Vocal Ensemble, the String Ensemble, and the Wind Ensemble.



Programmes of Study

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

Bachelor of Music (Honours) (B. Mus (Hons))

Bachelor in Performing Arts (B. Perf. Arts (Hons))

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) (B. A. (Hons))

Bachelor of Arts (B. A.)

DIPLOMAS

Diploma in Wind Band Studies

POSTGRADUATE DEGREES

Master of Music in Performance (M. Mus)

Master of Music in Composition (M. Mus)

Master of Music in Musicology (M. Mus)

Master of Music in Ethnomusicology (M. Mus)

Doctor of Music in Performance (D. Mus)

Doctor of Music in Composition (D. Mus)

Doctor of Philosophy in Musicology or Ethnomusicology (Ph.D)

During the three-year study programme in music undergraduate students will follow a range of theoretical, historical and practical study units. In their final year, they will also be required to write a dissertation.

First- and second-year music students can follow study-units in the history of music, keyboard proficiency, music technology, musicianship, harmony, and singing, as well as practical tuition on their respective instrument (subject to availability).

In the third year of the course, students whose main area of study is music will have the opportunity to major in one of the three areas of specialisation offered by the Music Department, that is, composition, performance, musicology and ethnomusicology. Study units from the area of specialisation must be taken along with other build-up courses continuing from the first year, such as history and musicianship.



Postgraduate Study Programmes in Music

The Music Studies Department also offers postgraduate study programmes in composition, performance, historical musicology, and ethnomusicology at both master's and doctoral level.

The research-based Master's programme leads to an M. Mus degree in one of the above areas. At doctoral level, we offer two degrees: (a) D. Mus in either composition or performance, and (b) Ph.D in musicology or ethnomusicology. International students with the relevant qualifications are welcome to apply; each application will be considered on its own merits.

Beyond University



ALBERT GARZIA

Music Educator, Composer and Performer

I work as a music educator in state schools, but I am also a composer and performer. I will always keep my student experience at heart as a memorable and defining period of my career development and personal life. Music students have the chance to work together and learn from each other's musical experience which, due to the nature of our field, is often very diverse.



MICHELLE SCICLUNA

Sub-Principal Double Bass with
the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra

Music has always been my passion so it felt the right thing to do to enrol myself at UM to read for a Masters in Music Performance. Apart from advancing in my musicianship, I grew a lot intellectually. Reading for a specialised course such as this opened my mind to new and vast musical horizons whilst enhancing my perspective on life in a holistic way.



YLENIA VELLA

Educator, Singer and Pianist

Turning my passion for music into a career was a pivotal moment in my life. Enrolling into a B.A. course in Music introduced me to collaborations with inspiring musicians. Upon graduating, I read for a PGCE, which enabled me to become a music teacher. Apart from teaching the subject, I perform daily as a singer and pianist on various occasions. Studying at the UM has been a gratifying experience and it led me to the career I've always wanted!



ALEANDRO SPITERI MONSIEUR

Composer and Arranger

I could summarise my experience as a B. Mus student as an expansion of my sense of what's possible. It was a time of self-discovery, experimentation and consolidation of ideas, driven by tutors who are not only experienced, but are also able to understand the particular needs of each student and to adapt to their learning process. I very often find myself tapping into the knowledge gained during those three years and applying it to my daily tasks.



EDWARD MIFSUD

Performer, Composer and Educator

Studying within the Music Department at UM has challenged me to develop my craft and given me opportunities to showcase my work. There is a strong sense of community among students and staff, and I always felt welcome and supported. The lecturers are experts in their respective fields, which creates an atmosphere in which questions are encouraged and answered based on their own professional experience. I am grateful for the time I spent at UM and will cherish all the connections and memories I have made there.





MARIA BLANCO

Head, Malta School of Music

My years of studying Music at UM were quite literally life-changing for me! It was the first time I experienced professional music education from some of Malta's best and well-respected musicians, and I was lucky to have been part of a very strong cohort of like-minded students many of whom went on to successful careers in the music profession. The course also opened doors for me to study abroad through the Erasmus exchange programme, and later at the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest.



Collaborations and Networks

Mdina Cathedral Archives (Malta)

Various Church Archives in Malta and Gozo

The National Library, Valletta (Malta)

Malta Philharmonic Orchestra (Malta)

Malta School of Music (Malta)

Conservatorio di Musica Antonio Scontrino, Trapani (Italy)

Malta Society of Arts (Malta)

St. James Cavalier Centre for Creativity (Malta)

Manoel Theatre (Malta)

Malta Band Clubs Association (Malta)

University College Cork (Ireland)

Conservatorio di Musica Antonio Scontrino, Trapani (Italy)

Conservatorio di Musica Benedetto Marcello, Venezia (Italy)

University of Ostrava (Czech Republic)

Conservatorio di Musica Luigi Cherubini, Firenze (Italy)

Conservatorio di Musica Santa Cecilia, Roma (Italy)

Istituzione Musicale Città di Noto (Italy)

Università di Tor Vergata, Roma (Italy)

Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Israel)

International Council for Traditional Music (Slovenia)

...and many others!



Our Strengths

- › An interactive and inclusive environment that encourages musical creativity and practice
- › Undergraduate study programmes with a balance between theory and practice
- › Regular visiting musicians and scholars from a wide range of teaching and performance areas
- › Opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration with the two other departments within the school of performing arts
- › Strong postgraduate research programmes in the above areas of specialisation
- › A strong network with both local and international institutions
- › Placement opportunities with various entities
- › Ongoing workshop opportunities with visiting ensembles and artists



How to Apply

- ① Check entry requirements on the website for your desired course on the Department website:
 - um.edu.mt/performingarts/music/students/courses

For undergraduate programmes:

- ① Go to ➤ esims.um.edu.mt/esims/ipp/appindex.html and apply for your desired course.

For postgraduate programmes:

- ① Contact either the postgraduate secretary (SPA) or a potential supervisor from the academic staff and create a project proposal for your study.
- ① Go to ➤ esims.um.edu.mt/esims/ipp/appindex.html and apply for your desired course.

Contact us

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DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC STUDIES

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