

June 2015

John Harle and Dame Evelyn Glennie join Alison Balsom as OHMI Patrons



We are delighted to announce that the world renowned percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie, and composer and saxophonist, John Harle, join trumpeter Alison Balsom as Patrons of the OHMI Trust.

"Thanks to OHMI, a bright light now shines on a huge problem few people notice. They are leading the way towards full inclusion for people with disabilities." - John Harle

"OHMI are proving that disability may be no barrier to music-making at the highest level."

OHMI at work



Molly with her bespoke cornet stand designed by Michael Prestage. The main aim of the annual OHMI competition is to bring musical instruments into the hands of those who need them, whether by uncovering solutions that have already been developed but not in the public sphere, or by encouraging instrument makers, technologists and others to think outside the box to create instruments that are playable with only one hand. It was great recently to be able to link the enabling stand design submitted by Michael Prestage into the 2014 competition to a child who really wanted to play the cornet, but has a muscle weakness that prevented her from doing this. Her teacher approached OHMI and we were delighted to be able to provide a contribution towards funding and the link to Michael's designing talent to result in this happy girl.

Queen Mary University, London student comes trumps!

Media and Arts Technology (MAT) Internship student Callum Goddard spent last summer working with OHMI towards solving the difficulty of operating the trumpet tuning valves with only one hand. Here he tells the story of his experiences:

"OHMI kindly supplied a trumpet to be experimented on and modified as well as supporting development through their competition. The trumpet itself uses two linear voice coil motors, mounted via laser cut parts, to move the third valve slide of the trumpet. The use of a foot pedal allows for fine control over the third slide movement, and the speed the motors are able to move at can allow for extended techniques such as slide vibrato - if a player desired to do so - as well as fully enabling typical slide use. The project is currently being refined with upgraded electronics and modified motor mounts to allow the trumpet to be robust enough for general playing settings and not just in the electronics lab!"

Callum's adapted trumpet with electronic tuning slide controllers



Helen Rowell is next to pick up the MAT placement mantle.



Here she tells of her aspirations for the project this summer:

"I am working with OHMI Trust as part of the Media and Arts Technology PhD programme at Queen Mary University of London. As a music technologist with a background in orchestral percussion, working with OHMI appealed to me because of their focus in allowing the full virtuosic and resonant musical spectrum of an instrument to be unlocked for disabled performers. For me the technology is secondary to this. I hope to achieve knowledge and insight enough to design adaptations for a one handed percussionist to experience the satisfaction of creating full impact with such a physical instrument group. Focusing on timpani drums initially, my hope is that the research will open up potential for many other percussion instruments to be played with the same flare and control as an able bodied performer." *"I am working with OHMI Trust as part of the Media and Arts Technology PhD programme at Queen Mary University of London. As a music technologist with a background in orchestral percussion, working with OHMI appealed to me because of their focus in allowing the full virtuosic and resonant musical spectrum of an instrument to be unlocked for disabled performers. For me the technology is secondary to this. I hope to achieve knowledge and insight enough to design adaptations for a one handed percussionist to experience the satisfaction of creating full impact with such a physical instrument group. Focusing on timpani drums initially, my hope is that the research will open up potential for many other percussion instruments to be played with the same flare and control as an able bodied performer."*

2015 Competition

We have already heard from many people keen to submit a 'playable' instrument, a 'concept' for further development by yourself or someone else or some 'enabling' equipment or adaptations into this year's competition. It is not too late for you to join them as the deadline this year is on **30th June 2015**. Please see:

<http://www.ohmi.org.uk/the-competition.html> for full details and rules. We are particularly lacking in progress towards accessible string instruments.

Last August we told you of a man, filmed around the 1920's playing the fiddle with one hand and the bow operated by a pedal. Today I discovered the Octobass. This ridiculously large instrument has a system of levers to control the pitch of the strings. Perhaps the lever concept

could be transferred to a pedal board similar to an organ then place a double bass/cello on a stand to be bowed/plucked with one hand?!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9BSs3FYQm5E>

See what your imagination and technical ability can come up with and show us by the competition deadline. We have a fantastic panel of judges lined up to consider them all!

OpenUp Music Amazes Brighton

Doug Bott from OpenUp Music demonstrating a variety of accessible instruments



We were delighted to see so many of you in Brighton for the OpenUp Music event that Music of our Time (MOOT) and OHMI sponsored as part of Brighton Science Festival. The venue was packed with an eclectic range of interested parties including those with obvious physical and learning disabilities, but also music students and teachers who had taken advantage of the half term date to come and see the progress that has been made by the OpenUp team. The most delightful point of the afternoon was watching people interact with the technology, particularly those who had clearly never experienced such equipment before. It made the goal of trying to find ways for people with disabilities to take a full and active participatory role in music all the more urgent.

Want to participate but limited by disability?

We are always seeking to drive the work of OHMI forward, but are keen to hear the views of those our objects are aimed at helping. If you have a disability and have not been able to participate fully in music, or used to play but then circumstances now mean that you cannot physically play the instrument any more please get in touch by email rachel@ohmi.org.uk.

We would like to form a group of those with disabilities to act as consultant to our projects and ideas for the future. This would probably take the form of email discussion but could involve meetings if circumstances permit.

A new staff team at OHMI

In January two new members of staff joined the OHMI office. Rachel Wolffsohn has taken the role of full time General Manager and Georgie Farrow the role of administrator, initially as a part time position. We hope her role will expand as OHMI does! Both of them have considerable experience as musicians and in working with disabled people. They are looking forward to widening the reach of OHMI.

www.ohmi.org.uk

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