The Newsletter of Dalcroze Australia Inc.

# hopp!

## REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF STUDIES

### PRESENTED AT THE AGM HELD DURING THE SUMMER SCHOOL, JANUARY 2010

*Sandra Nash*

SINCE the last report in January 2009, the main focus has been on the revision of the syllabus for the proposed Dalcroze Training Centre in Singapore and preparations for the present Summer School.

The one-day workshop held in Melbourne on 29 March, 2009, has already been reported in *Hopp!* The small group was enthusiastic and it was a good opportunity to reunite with other Dalcrozians: Julia Fox, Daphne Prioetto and Margaret Bostaille. Two experienced Orff presenters also attended and we have been in contact throughout 2009 to discuss ways of our two associations working together. Unfortunately the National Orff Conference in Adelaide in January coincided with our Dalcroze Australia Summer School in Sydney in January 2010, but we will make every effort to avoid this clash in future.

Throughout 2009, Karin Greenhead and I worked extensively on the course outlines, exams and assessments for our new pre-certificate levels, Foundation and Intermediate. The first batch of Foundation exams took place with Karin and Joan Pope at the Singapore workshop held in August 2009. As reported already in *Hopp!* this yielded passes in practical exams for six people from Singapore, Hong Kong and Thailand, and revealed some teachers with potential to go far in the Dalcroze work. Two of the participants in Singapore are presently attending our Summer School as part of their on-going Dalcroze training. While there are some differences between the new courses and our old Levels 1 and 2, we are confident of a smooth transition. The Singapore course was most successful educationally, but it has proved to be unviable financially. We must thank Julie Tan for the work she has done organising and promoting Dalcroze in Singapore and neighbouring countries over the last ten years. We hope that workshops will continue to be held informally in the future but the responsibility of offering a continuous training course has had to be abandoned for the time being. While much time and effort went into planning the syllabus, this work has been beneficial for both the UK and Australian training programs.

In other news from this region, readers may be interested to learn that the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze in Geneva is now accepting auditions to its professional program using DVD. A young student from Singapore

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who participated in our workshops in Japan, Hong King and Bangkok requested an audition from me. I prepared a Level 1 exam and sent it to Nillawanna Eugamporn, Dalcroze Certificate, in Bangkok. Yumiko flew there for the audition which was filmed and sent to Geneva. She was accepted and is now working to become a qualified Dalcroze teacher. Due to the shortage of adequately trained people in the region, my role often extends beyond Australia.

The Dalcroze Australia Summer School from 4 – 10 January 2010 has been running beautifully with guest teacher Karin Greenhead. Even though we were sad to lose Dr. Christine Mearing as our regular morning movement teacher, we were heartened by the presence of Drusilla Harris who is holidaying in Australia with her young family. Drusilla has been studying eurhythmics with Karin for some years and is about to take her exams for the Licentiate. The rest of the staff comprised Andrew Davidson and myself from Sydney. Participants came from Hong Kong, Indonesia, Perth, Melbourne, Brisbane, regional NSW and Sydney. We had 18 for the first three days, and 12 for the remainder. St Scholastica's once again proved to be a most congenial and suitable venue, with several people in residence. Committee members Peter Roberts and Nadia Fried, a music staff member at St Schols, did a great job helping out with the venue, keys, equipment for classes, photocopying, solving technical problems, preparing morning teas and handling sales so a big 'thank-you' goes to them.

As regards Dalcroze training, it appears there is a lot of interest in the early levels such as Foundation and Intermediate, but there are few going on to Certificate Level. In order for the work to survive in this country, we must have people who are competent to teach at Certificate and Licentiate level. We certainly have the qualified staff, but we do need special conditions to carry out such training. We need candidates for Certificate who are already good musicians and who can move well. We need venues and money to pay for them; we need to be able to pay staff and possibly also their travel and accommodation. Such employment is necessarily part-time.

The question for us in Australia is: how can we offer continuous and progressive training to Certificate Level for interested people who are scattered across the continent? Where should these courses be held? How frequently can intensive workshops be held? In the UK at the present time, intensive weekend courses are being held for the Certificate over a two-year period. There is another set of weekend courses for the Licentiate. The difference is they have a bigger population and a smaller country so people do not have to travel so far. We have fewer people and our country is huge! Hopefully, workshops can be planned for the period 2011 to 2012 at Foundation, Intermediate and possibly Certificate levels. We also need a long-term plan which is practicable. This needs to take place alongside the proposed collaborations with Orff and Kodaly organisations which may be an ideal platform to promote widespread general awareness of Dalcroze. Anyone who then decides to pursue further Dalcroze training can slip into the 'training track'.

Apart from Dalcroze training, there is always interest in the work from Early Childhood teachers. The South Australian regional group has been offering four weekend workshops a year to this group. Reports are encouraging and it is to be hoped that the project will continue.

Plans for 2010 include travelling with Joan Pope to Thailand and Hong Kong where the Dalcroze Society is organising a workshop with two streams: one for beginners and the other for those with more experience. Some in this group may also take exams. The enterprise and enthusiasm of the Hong Kong group is outstanding – they are experts at marketing and publicity!

Meanwhile, I am working on the final stages of my post-grad work so there is limited time this year for new projects, but planning can certainly commence.

# Dalcroze Australia Summer School, Sydney January 4-10, 2010.

*From Virginia Norris, dance teacher, Perth:*

The Summer School gave me an excellent introduction to Dalcroze. I met a group of wonderful, warm people who shared a passion for learning. I think we all felt that we could get up and give things a go without feeling intimidated.

The teachers each had different backgrounds and approaches which gave me the impression that there are many ways in which the Dalcroze concepts can be woven into my own practice. I have already been busily buzzing with new ideas to give an extra dimension to some of my class activities.

As a dance teacher I felt an instant affinity with a system which places the whole body at the centre of the learning experience. I find this aspect of Dalcroze work hugely significant as it has been my experience that the role of the body and movement is generally denied in the context of any kind of 'serious' or 'rigorous' learning. Thanks to all who organized and contributed to the Summer School. It has left me inspired and wanting to learn more.

*From Cécile Michels-Thorn, Armidale NSW:*

Even though I knew the theory behind Solfege, the way it was presented was never boring. It's refreshing. I'll try to organize my day so that I can fit in half an hour of stretching, half and hour of Solfege, Improv and half an hour of Rhythmic movement… to start with! Thank-you, I feel ten years younger!

*From Greg Archer, specialist music teacher, Sydney:*

Rhythmics and Improv gave me some great ideas to use in my classroom teaching. Plastique was rewarding and challenging; I loved it. The Summer Schoolhas given me fresh inspiration for teaching in 2010. You guys are doing an awesome job. Go for it!(and the teachers say: Thanks for the encouragement, Greg).

*From Frances, violinist from Brisbane:*

The movement was all very helpful for development of awareness. It will help my teaching, my own practice and perception of sound. I am inspired.

# President's Report 2009.

Following our delight when Dr Dee Bridges agreed to become Patron, Sandra Nash and I had the further pleasure of being invited to contribute a Chapter for a Festschrift to mark her 90th year. We decided to pool the information we had gathered regarding the history of the training of future Dalcroze teachers in Australia and sub-titled it 'A *task for Sisyphus*'. We felt quite doleful as we recounted the various efforts and uphill battles that have been undertaken over the decades, as in the past eighteen years we have both tried to continue such a path with only limited success. I was able to be present at the launch of this book *Musical Dimensions*, edited by Martin Comte, at the National ASME Conference held in Launceston in July 2009. Martin has graciously given ASME any profits from the publication, a gesture he has made on several past occasions.

Another career milestone has been notified by Martine Jaques-Dalcroze from Geneva who reminds us that Malou Hatt-Arnold will be celebrating her 80th birthday early in 2010. Malou has been a dynamic teacher for Australia during her several visits to us and many will recall her admonition that we should 'eat the space!'

Sandra and I have also contributed to a proposed memorial issue of the UK Dalcroze Journal honouring the work of the late Elizabeth Vandespar. When further details are announced we hope that our Society may be in a position to contribute financially should a scholarship be

established in her name as Elizabeth was a very significant teacher and author and influenced a number of us in the 'next generation.'

A most significant issue of *Le Rythme* was published this year, marking the centenary of the journal. Excellent articles and delightful photographs made it a very special number indeed. There are only limited copies and if by any chance, a member does not wish to retain it, I know several Libraries would be pleased to be sent a copy. It would be excellent to have one for the National Library in Canberra!

As has been noted in our two issues of *Hopp!* for this year, and which we hope overseas and interstate people will access even if they are not members of our society, both Sandra and I have participated in short courses in Australia and overseas. The initial training course in Singapore required that Sandra work in great detail via e-mail and Skype, with Karin Greenhead, the Director of Studies for the UK Dalcroze Society, to blend our several courses and create a firm pattern for Foundation, Intermediate and Certificate examinations. I participated personally, with Karin, in this demanding course for some 40 people, following an intensive workshop for the Kindermusik organisation in Singapore, also with over 40 teachers. It was a great disappointment that the several Swine Flu alerts inhibited the presentation of workshops in Singapore and Hong Kong. This meant considerable disruption for both Sandra Nash and for Andrew Davidson as fares and accommodation had already been arranged. There is expected to be a workshop in Hong Kong in April 2010 instead, and a possibility of another in Bangkok on the same journey.

Although only of one day's duration, our shared event in Melbourne was well worth conducting and the presence of two energetic Orff teachers has forwarded our plans to engage with that organisation in various States of Australia in the future. In this we have the support of members of the Heather Gell Dalcroze Foundation, and also the great goodwill of Richard Gill who has written on our behalf to Biddy Seymour the National President of the Orff Assocation.

The South Australian chapter has presented a very welcome series of weekend workshops focussing on Early Childhood Teachers and Carers. This will continue in 2010 and will be reported on more fully in *Hopp!* Grateful thanks to all concerned on that committee, especially Verelle Fudge and Wendy Gumpl, for their hard work and to Ruth Saffir and Tanya Davies for their contributions to the musician ship programme for young children on Saturday mornings at the Elder Conservatorium.

We were saddened to learn of the tragic loss of life for the family of our colleague Gail Giuliano (nee Reeves) when their daughter, son-in-law and three grandchildren perished in the Victorian bushfires in February 2009. Gail had been a student of Heather Gell's in Sydney and commenced the Training course with me in 1956. She followed this to become a respected preschool teacher and offered many practical music through movement workshops and in-service courses for teachers in the ACT.

I look forward at this Annual General Meeting to having your support for two gestures of appreciation extended to Lorna Cartwright, a member since 1947, and to Julie Tan our 'Significant Other' without whom our Singapore connection would not exist.

Finally I thank on behalf of all members, Carol-ann Bentley for her communication, liaison and financial efforts for us in Dalcroze Australia and also for the Heather Gell Dalcroze Foundation and wish everyone a successful New Year.

*Dr. Joan Pope*, OAM.

AGM, January 2010.

# Around the world in 353 days: a musical journey

I have recently returned to Australia after spending an enriching year of study and travel overseas that took me from Singapore to Austria, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Romania, Ireland, Canada, and the USA. From September 2008 to the end of May 2009 I lived and studied at the Kodály Institute in Kecskemet, Hungary, completing the Diploma of Kodály Music Pedagogy; and in June-July 2009 I attended the Summer Dalcroze Institute at the Longy School of Music in Boston. Both experiences provided the opportunity to improve my musicianship, develop my understanding of music teaching and observe many different teachers in action.

## Kodály Institute

The Kodály Institute is an international school with English as the teaching language. Hungarian language classes were provided. The year began with a fascinating week's orientation, travelling around Hungary and learning about Hungarian history and culture. I finished my time in Hungary with several days soaking in the Turkish baths of Budapest – just the thing after an intense year's study.

In first semester there were 20 full-time students and in second semester 16. There were also many visitors throughout the year who stayed for anything from a few days to a few months. Most students lived in residence at the Institute, a former Franciscan monastery. Our group was very friendly and supportive and we enjoyed many pot-luck dinners and birthday cakes.

My subjects included Kodály philosophy, methodology and observation, general and Hungarian music literature, folk music, choir, choir building, conducting, solfege, voice, piano, piano methodology and chamber music. For me, the biggest highlight was working with Orsolya Szabó in piano and piano methodology. Orsolya is an inspiring teacher, a charismatic communicator who draws the music out of you, continuously deepening your musical perception and understanding. A pianist, poet, painter, sculptor and former national champion gymnast, Orsolya has a wealth of sensory and conceptual analogies to help students discover more about music and music-making.

Orsolya taught us to play with our whole person and to strive for efficiency and economy of movement, focusing the musical energy and always being present in the music. She taught us to see the piano as an extension of ourselves and to let our awareness extend to the whole space, which is also part of the instrument. We learnt to listen with our palms, the centre of energy and balance point for the hand. She asked us to read notation as a graphic, to read in emotions and physical gestures rather than notes. We often used "gymnastics" to explore gestures in our body away from the piano. She encouraged us to enjoy the pleasure of each sound. Practice became a never-ending journey of discovery as the music taught us the composer's thoughts and the composer's thoughts taught us music. We learnt to listen for each composer's distinctive voice and discovered that, when you understand the music, you can find the technique to play it. We discovered that confidence comes from humility as we seek to serve the music to the best of our ability.

Ivan Fischer's, conducting of the Budapest Festival Orchestra in The Marriage of Figaro was an inspiring example of these principles in action. We had seats behind the stage, which was perfect for observing his conducting. He worked from memory, knowing every word, every note and having a clear conception of what he wanted to create. The orchestra and singers were the instrument that shared his internal music with the audience and he played them with his whole being, skilfully communicating his intention.

## Longy Dalcroze Summer Institute

I attended the 2009 Summer Dalcroze Institute at the Longy School of Music in Boston from 29 June to 17 July. Classes ran 8:45am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday. The institute provided the opportunity to experience the teaching of a variety of teachers, the faculty comprising Lisa Parker, Adriana Ausch, Anne Farber, Ruth Gianadda, Donald Himes, Eiko Ishizuka, Ginny Latts, Vanessa Mulvey,

Louise Mattieu, Dawn Pratson, Jane Struss, Melissa Tucker and Marcie van Cleave. In addition to the core subjects of Movement, Rhythmics, Solfege, Improvisation and Methods, each week featured a choice of two electives including Plastique Anime (Louise Mathieu), Freeing the Voice (Jane Struss), Plastique Anime with children (Dawn Pratson), Teaching Eurhythmics to Seniors (Ruth Gianadda), Folk Dance (Marcie van Cleave) and Body Mapping (Vanessa Mulvey). We also observed and discussed two demonstration lessons each week.

The methods class with Ginny Latts offered a friendly environment discussion and peer teaching. We agreed that to teach is to be an inventor and that this is very personal and scary. We investigated the way the Dalcroze activities of Follow, Canon and Quick Reaction could be combined with an image and a musical subject to form a preparation, a main teaching point or a follow-up. The virtue of being musical with simplicity and clarity was highlighted as well as the importance of increasing complexity in small steps. We experimented with leading activities primarily with gestures, body percussion and our voices, rather than the piano. We were challenged to minimise talking, watch our students closely, think ahead and be in the music and in our bodies as we sought to effectively communicate dynamics, articulation and phrasing.

In Improv, we were encouraged to break through the "boredom barrier" by spending 10 minutes a day on vocal improvisation, simply listening to our music and responding without critically analysing. Another key point was the importance of simplifying, of training ourselves to take hold of what we did and use it. As Ann Farber said, "If you can't remember what you did, you can't make any sense of what you're doing."

One of my favourite Rhythmics moments was learning to throw a ball with Donald Himes. We prepared for this with Feldenkrais arm work in the Movement session. I enjoyed using my whole body and finding a timing that was crisp but not tense. It's a wonderful feeling to experience movement that is musical. I'm growing in my understanding that musicality is found in expressing the joy of being what we are, being 100% committed to it, being there, present, alive, intention giving meaning to every action. The result is beautiful both to watch and listen to.

I found the Body Mapping elective with Vanessa Mulvey helped clarify and deepen my understanding of themes that had been emerging throughout my year's learning. Developed by William and Barbara Conable, body mapping is based on the premise that we behave according to our mental conception of our body's size, shape, and function. By improving the accuracy of our mental map we can improve our function, efficiency and effectiveness. As musicians, this means we will be better able to communicate music expressively with ease of movement and without injury. In the classes we investigated the 6 places of balance in the body: the AO joint between skull and neck, the arm structure, lumbar spine, hip joints, knee joints, and ankle joints. We explored balance as buoyancy, resilience, and continuous fluid movement through the point of balance. Instead of "concentrating" and trying hard to block out distractions, which leads to tension, a loss of fluid balance and reduced expressiveness, we were encouraged to seek inclusive awareness of ourselves and our environment. We replaced the concept of "good posture," which tends to be static, with a sense of dynamic balancing, feeling supported and having readiness to move with ease.

My last stop before returning home was San Francisco. As well as admiring the redwoods and sea lions and dining sumptuously, I was particularly fascinated by a concert I went to at the Audium theatre. Audium is an exploration of space in music and music in space. Sounds are sculpted, embodied in space; space is given character, inhabited, made audible, and defined by sound. The audience sits in darkness in 3 concentric circles, reminiscent of gathering around a campfire. The composer, Stan Shaff, sits at his desk behind the audience, also in darkness, his kinaesthetic sense and muscle memory knowing just where to go to turn the knobs that will recreate and give external expression to the sound-scape experience conceived within his being. His instrument provides enormous complexity and possibility. Instead of single pitches of a particular timbre and fixed spatial location, he manipulates taped sounds of a wide range of acoustic and electronic instruments as well as sounds from the natural and everyday world. 174 speakers

of different sizes surround the listener – under your seat, above, from the centre of the room and from behind, enabling sounds to emerge and travel throughout the space, interacting with one another with varied attack, dynamic and duration. The listener is drawn into the multi-dimensional conversation-dance as the composer plays on our associations and memories of sounds. It is both a personal experience and a communal one as together we are amused or touched by what it means to be human. For the composer this is a life-work and a work in life. He writes:

*"Sounds touch deeper levels of our inner life, layers that lie just beneath the visual world. All sounds are communicative - sound as birth, life and death; sound as time and space; sound as object, environment or event. Audiences should feel sound as it bumps up against them, caresses, travels through, covers and enfolds them. I ask listeners to see with their ears and feel with their bodies sounds as images, dreams and memories. As people walk into a work, they become part of its realization."*

*"Our history is a collection of sound sensations, experiences, emotions, all uniting into an aural identity. It is this ocean of recollections, sound images, dreams, memories we share."* [www.audium.org]

It was an inspiring year that stretched me in every way imaginable. A lot of seeds have been sown in my life and I look forward to seeing them bear fruit in the coming years. I'm captivated by the ideal of embodied music communicating, of a musical quality of living characterised by wholeheartedness and enthusiasm, an expression that is self-forgetful and so without fear and by which one is serendipitously satisfied. My desire is to become a living artwork, to revel in showing forth the wonder of the God who made music and me.

*Naomi Vear*

# Dalcroze Australia – South Australian Chapter

## Professional Development Course in Music Through Movement for Early Childhood Educators

## 2009 REVIEW

During 2009 the S.A. Chapter of Dalcroze Australia ran 4 sessions for training teachers. We ran a repeat of Session 1 due to demand and have now completed Sessions 2 & 3.

In each session elements have included Movement, Improvisation (percussion and keyboard), Developmental Analysis and Vocal Work (singing, speaking and appropriate vocabulary).

In Session 1 we looked at the walk and the run and their inter-relationships, quality of sound, and use of various songs, poems and music to illustrate these elements. A comprehensive Developmental Analysis of expectations of movement possibilities across the ages provoked very interested discussion. During Improvisation the appropriate tempo was repeatedly emphasized as participants worked at portraying the elements under scrutiny, on both keyboard and percussion (tuned and untuned).

In Session 2 we looked at Pitch. We covered areas in Use of the voice, Vertical and Visual Spacing, Singing in Numbers, Pitch in Drama, Revision of Walk & Run using Pitch and Pitch Charts. Improvisation was then introduced to support these areas.

Session 3 involved a further look at Note Values and Duration, covering ta-fa-te-fi, taa-aa, ta-te-ti as well as revision of taa and ta-te. Again the inter-relationship of the note values was an important consideration – especially during improvisation. Simple rhythms were used to illustrate how to use these values in improvisation while illustrating pitch and word patterns.

In each session we have made an effort to include a wide variety of music genre so participants develop analytical skills over a broad spectrum.

There are 4 participants who are submitting assignments for assessment and being assessed during sessions and others who

intend to do their assessments at a later date. Each workshop has had between 15 and 20 participants and the tutoring has been shared between Verelle Fudge, Wendy Gumpl, Tanya Davies and Helen Haines with Ruth Saffir assisting with assessments during sessions.

During 2010 we intend to run the other scheduled 3 Sessions to complete the Training Course but probably will need to keep rolling the schedule along from Session 1 again in 2011 as people begin at different times during the course.

*Verelle Fudge and Wendy Gumpl.*

# History Feature

Pt. 2 *Our continuation of excerpts drawn from Joan Pope's doctoral thesis 'Dalcroze Eurhythmics in Australasia: the first Generation from 1918.'*

## Marjorie Hilda Bonnin (1905 – 1990)

Researching the career of Marjorie Bonnin, one of the seven Australians who graduated from the London School of Dalcroze Eurhythmics (LSDE) in the decade 1917-1927, was like completing a jigsaw puzzle. It required patience in several newspaper archives, the good fortune of coincidence, several people with splendid memories and some educated guesses. The scrap book kept by Heather Gell, the 1920's note books held by daughters of Jean Vincent (née Wilson), the assistance of Heather Bonnin, a distant relation by marriage, and my colleagues the late Lesley Cox, and Merle Walkington, allowed a picture to emerge.

Bonnin was born in Adelaide on 14 September 1905, the only child of a second marriage. Her father was a solicitor and she was the last of his eight children. Her mother was considerably younger than her father who died in 1910, at the age of 81, when Marjorie was five years old. She and her widowed mother, Mrs A. Bonnin, lived in Wayville, a suburb of Adelaide. When Marjorie was 21 she passed her LRAM (Licentiate of the Royal Academy of Music) in Aural Culture in September 1926 in London. She was very well prepared in ear-training and sight-singing and scored the highest marks in the exam, becoming the first South Australian to gain the relatively new LRAM. In July the following year she graduated from the London School of Dalcroze Eurhythmics (LSDE).

Little is known of her childhood and schooling other than that from the age of nine years she studied piano and ear-training with English teacher Agnes Sterry, a triple medallist of London's Royal Academy of Music who had arrived in Adelaide circa 1914. Sterry was soon involved in private piano coaching, ear-training and rhythmic classes for children, and teaching students at the Kindergarten College. Heather Gell, a student in her final years at this College, was encouraged by Sterry to observe her Saturday morning classes for children and later acknowledged the debt she owed Sterry for her introduction to the ideas of Jaques-Dalcroze and the suggestion to study in London. When Gell returned from her studies at the LSDE in 1924, she did not resume her role as a Kindergarten Director, but commenced private classes in Eurhythmics. Marjorie Bonnin became one of Gell's students and was encouraged to

pursue the same course in London. Gell had spotted a potential assistant teacher! Curiously, little is written by Gell about this talented young woman and her brief comments published in the 1970s are now known to be incorrect.

Early contacts between Gell and Bonnin in Adelaide are poorly documented, although there is a suggestion that Marjorie, like many another learning from Gell over the decades, did not pay fees, but assisted in various practical ways in return for tuition. She is not named in Gell's early recitals, but is listed among the nine-member committee arranging a fund-raising dance in August 1924. This event was for Dorothea Michel, of Sydney, who had been awarded a three-year scholarship by Ethel Driver of the LSDE. When Michel, on the JERVIS BAY called at Adelaide on the way to London, the stop-over presented Gell with an opportunity to raise awareness of the Dalcroze Eurhythmics course and contribute to funds for Michel. When the JERVIS BAY arrived in Fremantle, Michel was joined by West Australian Kindergarten College student Jean Wilson, who had been awarded a half-scholarship to the LSDE. Two primary school teachers, Thelma St John George and Elizabeth 'Lizzie' Demaine, from Melbourne also enrolling at the LSDE, travelled by another ship but all met in London in October 1924 for the start of the academic year. Demaine married at the end of her first year and moved to Ireland, while the three others completed the course. Michel married in 1927 and did not return to Sydney.

In Adelaide, Heather Gell, on hearing that Demaine was not going to continue with the studies, was struck by the idea of finding a replacement, preferably from Adelaide where her private practice was growing. A Dalcroze Society had been established in Adelaide in March 1924 and Gell swung it into action, organising fund-raising and pressing the possibility of Bonnin as an appropriate choice to study in London. Several months later, in December, 1925, Marjorie left for London. The Register of the LSDE confirms that Bonnin had received lessons in single subjects from Gell in Adelaide in 1924 and 1925. Her teaching practice under Gell's supervision, namely one class for children and two Girls' Clubs, for two terms, is recognised. She had attended the 1925 May Holiday Course in Melbourne conducted by Gell in conjunction with visiting British Dalcroze graduates Phyllis Crawhall-Wilson and Katherine 'Kitty' Haynes who were working in Sydney for several years. This ten-day course was a valuable opportunity for Bonnin, and Gell had their assistance in assessing Marjorie's potential during the ten-day course.

Unfortunately, no notebooks of Marjorie Bonnin have been found but Jean Wilson kept detailed precis letter-books of the mail she wrote home to parents. These reveal some information about Marjorie Bonnin. For instance, that on 14 January 1926, the day before second term commenced, Percy Ingham, Hon. Director of the LSDE welcomed everyone and said that an Adelaide woman, Marjorie Bonnin, a student of Heather Gell would be joining them. The academic year at the LSDE commenced in October, and thus Bonnin, arriving in January, had only six months to complete First Year. Bonnin, rather than Wilson, was now the baby of the group of 'the four colonials' as Wilson refers to them. They held a welcome party for Bonnin in early February and she attended Wilson's twenty-first, then Michel's twenty-fifth, birthday celebrations that year. Wilson commented to her mother that Bonnin, although rather tense, timid and a little remote, was very musical indeed, and that she and Gell should make a perfect combination.

Bonnin resumed private classes with Sterry who had returned to London also in January 1926 after a decade or so in Adelaide. The Adelaide Gossip reported that 'Miss Sterry, who at present is taking the place of Stewart Macpherson at the Royal Academy of Music, has constituted herself Marjorie's Musical Mother and has ensured that she heard all the best music available'. Bonnin received the highest marks in this exam for which 'there were scores of candidates'. Clearly Gell knew who to contact on the Adelaide papers to ensure the fund-donors were informed of Bonnin's success.

Bonnin was only at the LSDE for eighteen months, from January 1926 until July 1927. Few students were permitted to complete the certificate in such a short time, so she must have received course

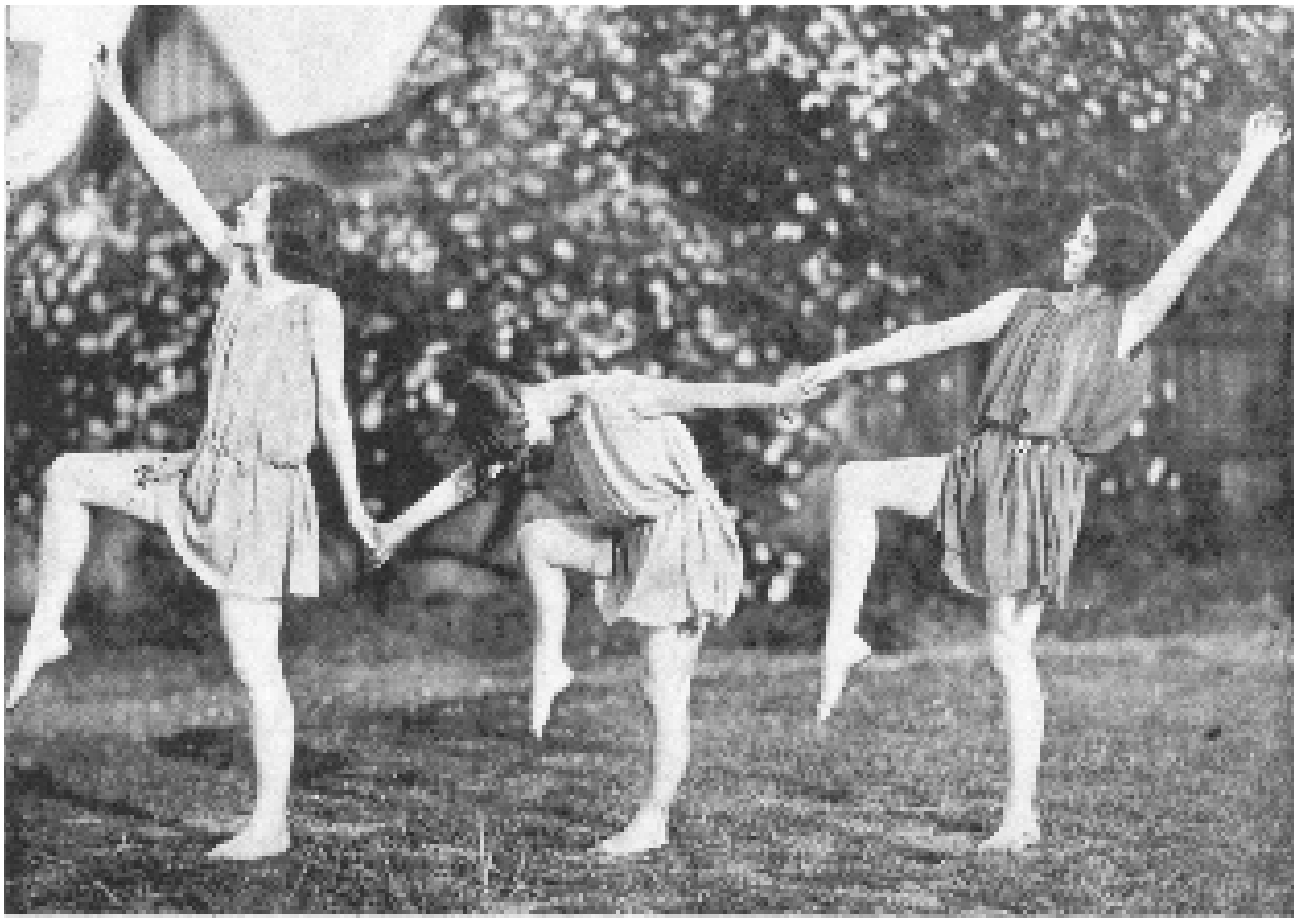
credit for her time with Gell, as well as working very industriously. Wilson, Michel and George who were considerably more experienced in teaching skills, had to do the full three years, though they had all hoped to achieve it in a shorter time. Bonnin seems to have been singularly focussed on the course despite the undoubted pressure of being obligated to the SA Dalcroze Society's fund-raising on her behalf, which continued for the entire period she was overseas. Unfortunately, LSDE records of student examination reports and much else, were destroyed during the blitz in WW II, but we know that Bonnin did conspicuously well in her first examinations and was recognized by Jaques-Dalcroze, who singled her out for a two-piano exercise with him in two successive demonstrations in March, and was quoted as saying, 'All Honour to Australia!' He warmly commended her compositions and she was obviously a fine pianist.

The SA Dalcroze Society continued fundraising, as more was required to enable Bonnin to complete her course. They wasted no opportunity of keeping Bonnin's name in the public eye, and any cable message was passed on to a press contact. Adelaide readers were told, for instance, that 'the plucky girl' had been promoted to third year. The writer continues with a paragraph about 'lightly clad woodland nymphs'! When term commenced in October, the four Australians were now together in third year and each had charge of a regular weekly class at a school for one term. There were approximately forty-five children in the classes, and the class changed with the new term. This involved a great deal of preparation, with lesson critiques as well as observation of other classes and they were involved in designing and presenting a purposeful 'Children's Afternoon' and their own demonstrations for assessment. They had lectures on psychology and were intrigued by topics such as auto-suggestion. There were visits to Moira House School and demonstrations in several cities in England, including one for the Froebel Society. Visits to conferences and attendance at related weekend events such as Folk Dance Classes were encouraged. The general spirit is well-captured through Wilson's remarks about teaching preparations undertaken, although little is written about Bonnin.

In Adelaide, Gell's work continued to grow and the prospect of a well-qualified assistant teacher working with her in the 'School of Music and Movement' in Adelaide must have been warmly anticipated. A display showing work by Gell's young pupils in May 1927, elicited a review describing 'tiny tots clashing symbols [sic] at another event in aid of Marjorie Bonnin. The public have generously supported the Fund, and Miss Gell has given several entertainments which have added considerably.' Another recital, with older students the same month, at Norwood Town Hall featured Gell's work in the first half, then a string quartet and two-piano music after Interval. Professor E. Harold Davies referred to Gell's generosity in assisting so promising a student as Bonnin in such a practical manner.

The Dalcroze Society of SA held its third AGM in early July. At this meeting Mrs C. Cave described a demonstration given by M. Jaques-Dalcroze she had witnessed in London and how impressed she had been with the part played by Marjorie. Receipts for the Scholarship fund amounted to £260-18-4, leaving a sum of £150 to complete the total required. Cave assured members that Bonnin had fully justified the interest and support accorded her and urged further efforts. Soon, a cablegram stated she had passed the Dalcroze certificate and was now a qualified teacher. With an LRAM for Aural Training, she was, Cave remarked, a teacher of musical appreciation with 'the most up-to-date' European methods.

Mrs. Bonnin and Marjorie left London for Adelaide on the BORDA at the end of July. It is assumed that Mrs. Bonnin had remained with her daughter for the entire eighteen months and it certainly would have assisted Marjorie enormously if her mother had been there looking after the domestic aspects of life. There is no listing in the Adelaide telephone directory for Mrs A. Bonnin during 1926 or 1927 but LSDE records note an address in London in Holborn. An interview was published shortly after Bonnin's return. 'Dalcroze scholar Miss Marjorie Bonnin returns: Two years of study: Bearing her blushing honours thick upon her Miss Marjorie Bonnin, South Australian



Dalcroze Scholar returned after two years study at the London School of Dalcroze Eurhythmics'.

*'M'sieur Jaques-Dalcroze is a marvellous man who simply lives for eurhythmics. His headquarters are in Geneva where I met him when I went over for a holiday course of study. I took part in three demonstrations which he organized in London and was examined by him for my certificate. My certificate entitles me to be a teacher of eurhythmics and I am going to join forces with Miss Gell. Teaching children through their ear, for music and bodily movement, is finding favour in English Schools. At Moira House, in Eastbourne, Eurhythmics is a compulsory subject and most of the curriculum is based on Dalcroze principles. The Mary Datchelor School in London has a Government grant to help in conducting the experiment of making music the principal subject, including musical appreciation and aural training. The older pupils are trained to teach the smaller ones, and most satisfactory results are being obtained. The tiny tots in the school have their own band and the whole school is an interesting study. The idea is that eurhythmics principles, applied to education, promotes concentration, self-control and self-expression.'*

Bonnin publicly acknowledged the excellent training she had received from Gell and Sterry and that this had enabled her to pass the course in a shorter time than usual.

The interstate Australian Woman's World welcomed Bonnin, especially pointing out that she, like several other young Adelaide musicians was sent Home at the instance of a Committee, The Dalcroze Society, of which Dr Harold Davies, Director of the Conservatorium, is President, and has done admirably. Indeed South Australians who have proved their appreciation of talent by sending students abroad for study have had good reason lately to congratulate themselves on their discrimination and judgment.

Clearly, England was 'Home' for the nurturing of talent.

The arrival in Adelaide of Cecilia John, from London, within a month

of Bonnin's return in 1927, occasioned another Scholarship to be awarded. Gell was named as the local organizer and candidates were advised that, as had happened several years ago, the LSDE was prepared to offer a Scholarship which would cover the tuition and entrance fees for the course. John welcomed newspaper interviews and declared that Australian children were very responsive. 'If only we could have eurhythmics taught in the state schools, in twenty years we would have a musical nation.' Speaking of Bonnin, John pronounced her 'a little genius, with something of the spirit of Jaques-Dalcroze himself.' One wonders if the modest Miss Bonnin was becoming a little alarmed by the size of the footsteps she was expected to fill. The Committee too, may have wondered if another round of fund-raising was going to be upon them almost immediately. The Scholarship winner was indeed another South Australian, Margaret Scales, a name which delighted her young music students, one of whom was Doreen Jacobs. [now Dr. D. Bridges, the Patron of Dalcroze Australia]. She was a senior student of Gell's and had taken part in all demonstrations of the past few years. In August 1928 she travelled by the ASCANIUS to the LSDE. However, in the words of her sister, Lady Mary Melville, she decided, sometime during her first year, to 'do good works instead, and took up nursing.' This was a great disappointment for Gell, but she still had Marjorie Bonnin.

A small undated brochure is thought to be the first brochure Gell issued after Bonnin returned from England, shows a photo of two children in swimming costumes, on the sands at the edge of water. The picture has been identified in the Archive of the Geneva Institut as one of taken in Lausanne with pupils of Mme Laure Wagner, not as one might have expected, of Gell's students near Glenelg! The wording is direct in the appeal to the educational aspirations of parents and teachers. Rather than repeating information about Jaques-Dalcroze, Gell ascribes benefits not only to the creative development of the child, but indeed to the entire nation:

*'Do Your Children Learn Dalcroze Eurhythmics? Why the method should be taught in every school. The adoption of a systematic rhythmic training in the regular education scheme of a nation is bound to promote not only its intellectual and physical progress but also its artistic development, both in the appreciation and the creation of beauty. The ONLY authorised teachers in South Australia are Miss Heather Gell and Miss Marjorie Bonnin at the Modern School of Music and Movement, Adelaide.'*

Gell had apparently devised a new name for her school. It is plain, descriptive and contemporary and makes it clear that she and her colleague are the true custodians of Dalcroze Eurhythmics.

It is not known if Bonnin worked for Gell exclusively, or indeed if she did any additional teaching on her own account. Newspaper advertisements indicate that classes continued at the same venue in the city as previously, and it is assumed that Bonnin may have taken some of the classes in schools which formerly Gell had conducted alone. There were several public recitals, as well as end-of-term days for parents to observe the class work, and Bonnin is mentioned in late July 1928 when '*against a background of yellow draped curtains, dozens of bare feet and legs of all ages, topped with flimsy classical draperies, personified the rhythm of musical inspiration as fostered by Miss Heather Gell. The tiny tots created the fun of the programme, however, when they had to fall on all-fours like bears at the word 'hopp' or quack and flap their wings at the word 'hipp'. Miss Gell kept them hipping and hopping at express speed and there were not many who weren't capable of mental as well as bodily gymnastics! Miss Marjorie Bonnin, who returned from overseas last year bringing with her the Certificate in Eurhythmics, assisted Miss Gell.'*

Bonnin's name is less frequently mentioned after this which, following two years of constant publicity about her, is striking.

Gell was associated in 1929 with a large-scale pageant in Adelaide. She was one of four local teachers of movement who contributed 'ballets' to Kenneth Duffield's production of The Warrior, celebrating the League of Nations. No complete programme has yet been located, so it is not possible to establish whether Bonnin was involved. Towards the end of 1929 a recital titled La Rythmique, was presented at the Prince of Wales Theatre. The

programme of music, movement and drama was arranged by Gell assisted by Bonnin and aural culture expert, Ivy Ayers who conducted choral items. Without detracting from Gell's skills it may be remarked that her years of study in London, and those of Bonnin's, were often shown by the choice of music and ideas that they had worked on with their teachers there. They were also inspired by the work of Eva Gilpin (later Lady Sadler) at Hall School, Weybridge, and Mona Swann at Moira House School.

Another undated brochure for Gell and Bonnin gives the name of the school as the *School of Musical Appreciation*. The name Bonnin is in much smaller type-font, as befitted an 'assistant' teacher. Gell gave a demonstration for the Dalcroze Society at the Australia Theatre in Angas Street on 21 August, 1930. Although no mention was made of Bonnin, within ten days of this event, Gell had set off for London leaving Bonnin, as her deputy, to take the classes and courses in Adelaide. Bonnin apparently coped with the teaching and organization needed for the last term of one teaching year and preparations for the next. She was the contact for 'The School of Music and Movement' which listed rhythmic movement, techniques of movement, creative dance, aural culture, music appreciation, class singing and pianoforte lessons for children and adults. Gell was away for seven months and their 1931 teaching commenced in late-March. By the end of that year, on 4 December, another ambitious rhythmic drama was produced by Gell, who had now added LRAM to her qualifications. Titled *Adeste Fideles*, it was the first of many Nativity plays presented by Gell. Strangely, there is no reference to Bonnin's involvement in the publicity.

The opening of the 1932 school year had several newspaper advertisements for Gell alone, emphasising her recent Aural Culture qualification and her 'Coaching for Ear Tests and University exams in Musical Perception. Training classes for Music Teachers'. In another advertisement Gell, LRAM, and Dalcroze Certificate, offered 'techniques of movement and plastic expression with adult classes for Group Rhythmics leading to dramatic productions.' What had happened to Bonnin? It appears that in early 1932 she made a return trip to England and was away for over a year. She is listed as a member of the teaching staff for the important Summer School directed by Jaques-Dalcroze himself, during August at Moira House, a mark of distinction indeed. Furthermore, she shared the teaching at the Annual Christmas Course, held at Store Street, London, in 1932 under the direction of Mme Bottard (née Joan Ward-Higgs). This was a particularly significant event as teachers there were taking the inaugural course in preparation for the Elementary Certificate, a newly accredited qualification for elementary school teachers.

An interesting opportunity came Bonnin's way earlier in 1932 when she was invited to be in the team lead by Ethel Driver and Cecilia John, through June and July, giving demonstrations in eight regional centres in England. Their presentations of the medieval *Legendes d'Oree*, translated by Mona Swann, were beautifully staged and warmly received. This highly acclaimed presentation had been devised and first shown in November 1930 at a time when Gell had been in London and it is almost certain that her *Adeste Fideles* nativity play of 1931 was modelled on it. Perhaps Bonnin now longed to be involved in such beautiful productions in London, rather than being Gell's assistant in Adelaide.

However, 1933, saw Bonnin back in Adelaide and associated with Gell. In the May school holidays they travelled to Melbourne to conduct a Dalcroze Eurhythmics course for adults, in conjunction with Thelma St John George, at Merton Hall, the Church of England Girls' Grammar School in South Yarra. An attractive advance publicity photograph in an unidentified newspaper shows three groups of young women skipping at the seaside. Another fascinating glimpse of Bonnin is in an evening recital at the tiny avant garde Studio Theatre in Adelaide called *Ab Intra*. The guiding spirits of this 25-seat experimental theatre were Alan Harkness and Kester Baruch (later Berwick) both of whom fell 'under the spell of eurhythmics' and presented a programme in collaboration with Gell in which Bonnin is not only listed as a rhythmician, but joined Gell in two-piano arrangements of Debussy's *Girl with the Flaxen Hair* and *Afternoon of a Faun*.

Little is known about Bonnin in the next few years. Her name was not in the programme of Gell's 1934 *Water Babies*.

An event at the Adelaide Oval in 1934 as a farewell to Lady Zara Hore-Ruthven, later Lady Gowrie; a 'live' garden of flowers was organized by the Girl Guides, of which Hore-Ruthven had been a popular State Commissioner. Over five thousand elaborately costumed Guides and Brownies took part, as well as senior students of Gell and other movement teachers, including May Cleggett and Dorothy Slane. Several undated manuscript sheets, signed by Bonnin, called Flannel Flowers, an attractive slow waltz with 'modern' chords in the style of Delius, were found in a collection of music belonging to Lesley Cox, and could be associated with this event.

Gell's production of *Fulfilment* in 1935 has no trace of Bonnin being involved. Nor in *Heritage*, the vast pageant-rhythmic drama devised by Walker and Gell for the Women's Committee of the Centenary of the State of South Australia in 1936, does not appear to have included Bonnin. However, Gell acknowledged the use of 'additional music by M. Bonnin' in the printed programme of her 1938 version of *Adeste Fideles*. A manuscript page titled *Bells*, signed by Bonnin, was found amongst Gell's material at the Mortlock Library, and appears to be from this production.

It has been suggested that Bonnin taught piano at Girton, but it is difficult to find records of part-time piano teachers in school records. A search of the Minutes of the South Australian Music Teachers Association reveals that a question about variable consistency in examiner's standards, was asked by her at a meeting in 1941, and a note records her resignation in 1968. Apart from that Bonnin's presence is almost non-existent. What had happened to the young woman of such promise and musicality? A hint was provided by Heather Bonnin who recalled, as a child, waiting to play at her friend's house that she had '*peeped through the window to watch my friend have a piano lesson and saw Marjorie daintily lifting her hands as if holding skirts, lifting a foot to show perhaps a step for a minuet. She caught sight of me and drew the curtain at once.' She was tall and slim, with a rather long face, gloved, genteel, precise and ladylike, with elegant ankles, and used to bicycle to pupil's piano lessons. Teaching was her livelihood and she was not well off. A thrifty maiden lady. A devout Anglican, she would go on Retreats and there was a very saintly and selfless look to her. Not quite of this world. She visited others when she later lived in 'The Helping Hand' in North Adelaide, and she seemed to look as if she was 'given to good works.' We always thought she must have had some sort of nervous breakdown in the 1930s after she came back from a trip to England. Perhaps even a broken heart. Completely different to Heather Gell, who was confident and outgoing.*

Over the next decade, there were indications of nervous break-downs, and sadly, a parting of the ways with Gell. Perhaps the pressures of Bonnin's study, arguably, contributed to these unfortunate outcomes. One might argue that undertaking an intensive physical course, at unrelenting pace in London, and her elevation to third year after only two terms, thus omitting the vital second year of teaching practice and preparation, may have contributed to problems of lack of confidence in class presentation. An Adelaide Dalcroze graduate from the LSDE of the early 1950s, a former student and at times assistant to Gell, Merle Walkington, provided an early childhood memory. She recalled a rhythmics class she was in at kindergarten age, given by Bonnin and commented that Miss Bonnin did not have good classroom management skills as Merle, usually a very 'good little girl', mischieviously hid behind the piano while other children scattered all about!

Another clue regarding Bonnin emerged from a transcript of a conversation between Leslie Cox and Shirley Pascoe. It tells how Cox met Bonnin in Adelaide in the early 1980s and asked her if she would like to go down and see Gell, who was now resident in a Nursing Home. On the way back, Bonnin said to Cox, *'One day I will tell you why I broke away from Heather.'* Cox and Pascoe continued their conversation: *Heather always made reasons for anybody who left her. Marjorie told me she was terrified of teaching movement. Marjorie was a music teacher, a one-to-one music teacher, but Heather had said to her "Oh, YOU can do this work". She did get the Licence, but when she came back to be faced with a room full of children or adults to teach them movement she just became ill. She said "It wasn't ME. I was absolutely terrified." That is why she did not go on with it. But it was such a let down for Heather. She had formed the Dalcroze Society*

*in 1924, raised money and sent Marjorie over and all that sort of thing, and she was just devastated. Devastated.*

Neither speaker indicated when this emotional break-off occurred, but it would seem to have been during the mid-1930s.

My final impression gleaned of Bonnin came during a visit to England in 2007 when I had the opportunity to interview Phyllis Stammers (née Merrifield), several weeks before her one hundredth birthday. She had been at the LSDE in 1926-27-28 and when asked about the Australian students, particularly Bonnin, exclaimed, 'Of course, I remember Marjorie. Oh! Her piano improvisation was just delightful, so very musical. Quite brilliant! Mind you, we all loved having Ann Driver for Improv! But her movement was not quite so strong. Adequate, of course, but it was not really her forte." Bonnin was undoubtedly a brilliant musician as a student with much to give to the work. That her potential was not fulfilled was a major setback for Dalcroze Eurhythmics in Australia. We offer her memory belated recognition.

*Author: Joan Pope*

# Tribute to Malou Hatt-Arnold from Australia

In celebrating Malou's 80th birthday, there are two parts to this tribute which are intimately connected: one is the official Dalcroze aspect and the other is my own personal link with Malou.

I first met Malou as a diploma student at the Institut Jaques-Dalcoze in Geneva from 1975-76. Our little trio (Ruth Alperson from USA, Louise Mathieu from Canada and I) joined the 4th year rhythmics class and her lessons were always challenging, both mentally and physically. She helpfully translated instructions for us in English, but after a few weeks this stopped and Ruth and I could no longer claim that language was the problem! She also generously invited us to her house and took a keen interest in all the foreign students.

Malou visited Australia three times: the first was in 1989 for a workshop at the University of NSW supported by Professor Roger Covell, and two years later she was invited by the Dalcroze Society of South Australia, led by Patricia Holmes, to give a major workshop in Adelaide. In April 1996 she returned to Sydney to work with adults and also teach in a children's festival. Ever alert to ways of helping the spread of Dalcroze, she offered to support Mary Brice to study in Geneva, where she subsequently gained the License and the Diploma.

Personally, Malou and I have shared many beautiful travel experiences: from the Great Barrier Reef and the bush camp in Far North Queensland, to the Swiss Alps and the wonderful sites of Burgundy, Vezelay, Fontenay and Beaune. Along with many others, I have received generous hospitality from Malou in her various houses in Switzerland at Confignon, Chandolin and Carouge. I will never forget the superb birthday party Malou hosted for me at a Carouge restaurant during a recent congress: under the plane trees on a warm summer night with arcs of coloured lights, and the most beautiful singing in harmony from my Dalcroze colleagues and friends. We are indeed fortunate to have a profession which is also so rewarding on a personal level.

The Dalcroze community in Australia wishes to acknowledge the contribution Malou has made to the spread of Dalcroze Eurhythmics in our country through her excellent teaching and enthusiasm. She has been an outstanding ambassador and her warmth and affection have been felt across our continent. Thank-you, Malou, for all you have done. You will always have a special place in our hearts.

*With love from Sandra Nash*
*12 January 2010.*

# What's hipp

**Dalcroze Workshop in Bangkok, Thailand**

*April 2 – 4, 2010.*

Teachers: Dr. Joan Pope and Sandra Nash
Contact: nillawanna_dst@hotmail.com
Workshop: 7 – 9 April, 2010
Teachers: Dr. Joan Pope & Sandra Nash

**Dalcroze Society of Hong Kong**

*7 – 9 April, 2010*

Teachers: Dr. Joan Pope & Sandra Nash

**The Dalcroze Eurhythmics Summer Institute At Longy School Of Music, Cambridge Mass. Usa**

*Week One: June 23–26, 2010*

Dalcroze Society of America National Conference
See Www.Dalcrozeusa.Org For Details

*Week Two: June 28–July 2, 2010*

Special Topic: "Taketina" Method With Fabian Bautz

*Week Three: July 5–9, 2010*

Special Topic: "Plastique Anime" With Adriana Ausch

*www.Longy.Edu/Summer/Dalcroze_inst.Htm*

**The Marta Sanchez Dalcroze Training Centre at Carnegie Mellon University Pittsburgh**

*July 8–10, 2010* Post License/Pre-Diplome Course* Designed for those seeking more advanced training as well as those preparing for the Dalcroze Diplome, this three-day intensive course will be led by Madeleine Duret (Geneva, Switzerland) and Karin Greenhead (England). *Dalcroze License or equivalent required.

*www.music.cmu.edu/dalcroze/diplome.html#4*

*4 July 12–16,* International Dalcroze Conference The International is the 1st week of our 35th Summer Dalcroze Workshops. This week will feature world-renowned faculty offering daily classes in Eurhythmics, Solfege, Improvisation, and Pedagogy. This special event is the 4th International to be held at Carnegie Mellon.

*music.cmu.edu/dalcroze/workshop.html#4*

*July 12–30, 2010* 35th Summer Dalcroze Eurhythmics Workshops Includes the International Dalcroze Conference

*music.cmu.edu/dalcroze/workshop.html#4*

***Dalcroze Society Uk* Summer School - Canterbury 2010**

*Date: 1 - 7 August 2010 (Open Day 5 August)*
Venue: Canterbury Christ Church University, Kent, UK
*admin.dalcroze@googlemail.com*

**For Your Diary:**

The International Dalcroze Congress will be held in Geneva from July 18 – 28, 2011.