



AMP 2021

NEWSLETTER

Despite the challenges currently being faced worldwide, AMP was proud to have run a full and consistent programme this year, without making compromises to lesson time, assessments or learner support. Our young learners are flourishing and have shown a great deal of commitment during this time of adversity.





A grant for digital access from ABRSM enabled us to purchase a set of tablets to facilitate access to virtual learning opportunities and alternative learning tools which has been a great support after the dramatic plunge we have all had to take into the virtual realm. Having given us exciting new possibilities for theory and aural teaching, the tablets also became a practical necessity for recording our learners' digital exams and university music auditions. We were excited to have 4 of our seniors applying for tertiary music studies this year, and wish them all the best for their results!

Early Access Programme

One of the favourite experiences which AMP staff shared this year was having a buzz of new faces and characters joining us. While overwhelming at times, we are always excited to welcome new learners to the student body and get to know their musical personalities. AMP's Early Access Programme is the foundation year at AMP, and this year we had an opportunity to really develop and strengthen this programme through the support of the Ukusekela Small Projects and Support Fund. Watch these groups performing in our [virtual concert](#)!



In addition to learners' weekly lessons on marimbas, marching drums and strings, we held regular Saturday morning workshops: Applied Theatre practitioner, PJ Helleman, conducted a series of wonderfully engaging self-awareness workshops, and we had visiting musicians from both near and far introducing new worlds of music to our young budding creatives – exposing them to styles ranging from Ugandan traditional music to electronic music production, to the timeless art of song-writing.

Albert Bisaso Ssempeke presenting on Ugandan music



Venancio Mbande Junior introducing Chopi timbila music



Songwriting with Nombasa Maqoko



Self-awareness workshops with PJ Helleman



Highlights of the year

12 AMP learners enjoyed an exciting full-day composition workshop via Zoom, organised by Commonwealth Resounds, and sponsored by ABRSM. Professional composition teachers and instrumentalists in the UK helped our learners to write their very own fanfares, inspired by learners' own musical interests and important people/events in their lives. These compositions were performed by the professional trio and published on YouTube – [click here to watch!](#) Congratulations to Lihlumile Nyengane and Sesethu Mtshelu whose compositions won the 'Starters Category' in the Commonwealth International Composition Competition!

'Go Compose'



Their pieces will be played in London, UK, at the Grand Final in February 2022, and the event will be live streamed. We'll keep our audiences posted!



Rhodes University Community Engagement Awards

On 12 October, AMP was honoured as one of three finalists for the Community Partner of the Year Award at the Rhodes University Community Engagement Awards Ceremony! Also honoured at the ceremony was AMP's long-serving volunteer Asakhe Cuntsulana, who won a Gold Award for Excellence in Community Engagement as one of the Top 10 Finalists!



Project Manager Shiloh Marsh and Music Facilitator Asakhe Cuntsulana at the RUC Awards

Internal concert



The AMP internal concert is an establishment of AMP's annual programme.



We had many learners this year performing for their first time in front of an audience. We also were surprised and delighted to see performances by AMP learners who had been working on pieces independently without tuition from AMP. Nothing gives a better sense of a healthy music academy than musicians actively learning from each other and through their own mechanisms.

AMP Annual Concert

Many of our supporters have enjoyed attending AMP's annual concert over the years. In 2021 we took our annual concert to the next level! With a grant from Concerts SA, and in collaboration with the National Arts Festival, we were able to perform live on a professional stage in the Guy Butler Theatre and produce a virtual concert from the recording, which is currently being streamed on the National Arts Festival's vFringe platform. We are delighted that for the first time ever we can share performances with our supporters far and wide. Don't miss out – [watch the AMP virtual concert](#) – online only until 31 December!



Marimba partner project



Good Shepherd marimba band

This year, with assistance from the National Lotteries Commission and the MAID Foundation, AMP worked with marimba bands at 7 partner schools, providing facilitators for the bands. All of these groups had been dormant in 2020, due to the impact of coronavirus, and AMP played a big role in revitalising the music at the schools. Naturally, the learners were so enthusiastic to be playing once again! The overarching aim of the project was to push the bands

to reach a higher level of musical playing, and we ended the year in a competition to motivate the bands, and to make band members aware of important musical elements of ensemble performance. Congratulations to Archie Mbolekwa Primary School, Ntaba Maria Primary School and Ntsika Secondary School respectively for winning the top 3 places, and to Yola Nonxuba for winning best player! Watch these 3 bands performing in our [virtual concert](#).

A huge thank-you to our facilitators in 2021: Asakhe Cuntsulana, Jason Speckman, Praise Mathebula, Yolanda Bonani, and Ongezo Skiti; and to our partner schools: Archie Mbolekwa, Good Shepherd, Fikizolo, Ntaba Maria, Ntsika, Samuel Ntsiko, and St Mary's.



Fikizolo marimba band



Yola Nonxuba
— Best Player



Archie Mbolekwa marimba band



Ntaba Maria marimba band



Ntsika marimba band

Play Mzansi update



In 2020, AMP announced the launch of the [Play Mzansi Project](#) – which is developing a set of accessible and exciting sheet music resources using iconic South African music, to be delivered through an interactive app, so that music learners can study repertoire from the South African canon as part of their formal music studies. This is made possible with funding from the National Arts Council. The project is making headway, with over a thousand individual instrument parts produced, and the app development almost complete. Watch this space!

Learner support

Last year the effects of the coronavirus pandemic shone a light on the critical vulnerabilities in our society at large, and especially among our learner body. This year AMP continued to connect learners in need with psychosocial assistance, and organise food support for learners by providing meals at every lesson and food parcel deliveries to relevant families. Anyone wishing to make a donation to AMP learner food security may make a payment into our [bank account](#) with the reference 'Food security', can drop of dry goods at the Joza Youth Hub, or contact us to organise a collection.

Internship



AMP intern: Ongezo Skiti (aka Sharka)

AMP gratefully recognizes our 2021 intern, Ongezo Skiti, better known as 'Sharka', for contributing so much to AMP this year. While continuing to further his piano studies, Sharka was a critical member of the AMP operational team – responsible for implementing and managing the coronavirus screening on a daily basis, overseeing learner catering, organising AMP's venues and equipment, attending to repairs and maintenance, managing learners on our campus, and helping out with office tasks. Sharka gained experience through his

roles as an assistant teacher in the junior piano lessons, and serving as a marimba facilitator at some of our partner schools. He gained exposure to a variety of creative industry work through shadowing at African Musical Instruments (AMI), Kunjani Sound Company (KSC) and Acoustic Café. We wish Sharka well as he embarks on the next chapter of his journey! You will always be a part of the AMP family, umfowethu.



Alumni news!

We recently caught up with a few of our alumni to ask them to share their experiences of 2021:



Siyabulela and Bulelani Mfuku

CHECK THEM OUT ONLINE

Since **Sabz and Bulelani** left AMP, the music has never stopped. Always hungry for learning, in 2021 they embarked on creating their own YouTube channel, together with another AMP alumnus, Sisipho Mangete—[click here to watch!](#)

Both Sabz and Bulelani have remained involved in AMP activities, notably this year helping out as teaching assistants and as session musicians for our AMP concert. "It's been exciting helping out at AMP, and seeing the young talent and personalities enjoying music."



Anam Fulatela

Anam is currently performing, and working on his own music-writing. In 2021 he began working on his first hip hop album, and by next year he wants to get working on his first pop mixtape. "Music means a lot to me because I feel like I was born to be a singer, guitarist and I'm also a rapper. Music is my life that's why I always feel like I'm home when I'm stage." Check out some of Anam's recent work on [Sound Cloud](#), and watch his beautiful performance in the [AMP concert](#).



STUDYING IN THE MOTHER CITY

Sine has just completed his first year studying a Diploma in Jazz at UCT's College of Music. This is what he has to say about his experience of studying music this year: "It was great because I had to adapt to a new environment and meet new people. At first I struggled a lot with my instrument because I was behind with jazz

but for me it was a wake-up call that I should practice more in order to reach where I needed to be. Music means a lot to me because most of the time I share my feelings through playing an instrument, and I'd like to thank AMP for the chance and opportunities which it gave to help my talent and dreams grow bigger."

Sisipho is in his second year of jazz studies at UCT, on trombone. "The best part about this year is that I've made a big improvement on my instrument compared to previous years. Talking about tone, embouchure, and being able to understand and how to approach jazz language in an appropriate way."



Sisipho Mangete



Sinesipho Geelbooi

FROM STUDENT TO TEACHER

Sethu is completing her Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) at Rhodes University, in Life Sciences and Natural Sciences. One of her highlights of the year was the AMP end of year concert: "I was mind blown by the amount of talent and dedication that both the AMP learners and staff possess. It was evident that a lot of hard work was definitely put to produce such an amazing show. I'm really proud of everyone."



Siphosethu Twani

'MY THERAPY IS MUSIC'

Thamsanqa (aka **Pani**) is working in Rosebank, Johannesburg as a sales consultant at an insurance company. "This pandemic has taught me a lesson to know that there's a light at the end of the tunnel, as long as you chase it you will get out of the situation you're in, and I did. "Trust", "perseverance" and "persistence" are my mottos. When I'm sad or not feeling OK, I sing, and create beats, even though my colleagues shout at me for such. My therapy is music, and AMP is the reason for my therapy. To go is to see, and AMP has peeled away the layer that covered the beauty of life."



Thamsanqa Madubela

Oyisa Ralo



SOUND FOOD...

Oyisa, an alumnus of AMP's teaching programme as well as the AMP internship, is a sound technician and performing musician. Look out for his brand: *Sound food*. It was a great pleasure for us to have Oyisa's involvement with AMP this year as he generously provided valuable expertise with our stock-take and concert production, as well as musical assistance in the band.

You can [catch Oyisa on YouTube](#), playing a beautiful rendition of Bruno Mars' *When I was your man*, as well as his stunning performance in the AMP [virtual concert](#).

How can YOU get involved?

Here are a few ways in which you could play a part in AMP's work:

Donate



AMP is running a crowdfunding campaign through BackaBuddy. Small donations from ordinary people all add up to a significant contribution. Donate to AMP this Christmas and help us to reach our target. See <http://backabuddy.co.za/charity/profile/amp>.

YOU can raise funds for AMP by plugging into our BackaBuddy campaign and pledging your birthday, climbing a mountain or dedicating an upcoming event to AMP. Read more here: <http://accessmusic.org.za/champions>

Dedicate your birthday to AMP



Get a MySchool card



Get a MySchool card FOR FREE. When you spend at one of MySchool's many partner stores, a percentage will be donated to AMP on your behalf, at no cost to you! Read more here: <http://accessmusic.org.za/myschool>

AMP welcomes volunteers in the following capacities, and more: Teaching (music theory/aural, sound technology, instrument lessons, marimba bands); Administration; Marketing and publicity; Fundraising; Career guidance for learners; General assistants on camps / tours; Media support. Contact us for more information.

Volunteer



Sponsor a learner / group



Music tuition

External exam

Sponsor an Ensemble

Sponsor a learner's instrument tuition or theory tuition per annum, or a learner's external theory or practical exam. You could also choose to sponsor one of AMP's ensembles. See our website for costs per annum.

Donate a new or second-hand musical instrument to AMP. Donated instruments will belong to the programme itself, but are allocated to particular learners for the duration of their time at AMP. Learners take the instruments home to practice. Contact us to find out what instruments we need. We also use PA equipment (speakers, amplifiers, etc) and are in need of music stands.

Donate/sponsor an instrument



Make a contribution to catering, transport or materials



For more details on all of these, visit: <http://accessmusic.org.za/donate/>



AMP BANKING DETAILS
Acc. name: Arkwork for Art
Bank: First National Bank
Branch code: 210717
Cheque Acc: 6236822099
SWIFT code: FIRNZAJJ

Thank-you! - Siyabulela!

Thank-you to all our teachers in 2021: Julián Arenzon, Yolanda Bonani, Tessa Campbell, Asakhe Cuntsulana, Jayson Flanagan, Devon Florence, Yoliswa Gusha, Susan Kunju, Elijah Madiba, Praise Mathebula, Virgil Matrass, Francois Mentoor, Athenkosi, Nelani, Jason Speckman, Gareth Walwyn, Clifton Williams, Mrs Joba, Mrs Makubalo, Mr Mata, Mrs Oosthuizen, Ms Soxujwa, Mrs Papu; our staff and colleagues: Shiloh Marsh, Thozì Ngeju, Xolelani Matsamko, Sivenathi Mbilane, Ongezo Skiti, Jason Speckman, Carol Poole, Michelle Weyl; and our volunteers: Jobst Bodenstein, Anelisa Calu, Susan Kunju, Xolelani Matsamko, Sivenathi Mbilane, Siyabulela Mfuku, Bulelani Mfuku, Sinovuyo Sam, Gareth Walwyn and Michelle Weyl. We are grateful to the Arkwork for Art board of directors for their service and support: Sebastian Jamieson, Sylvester Appollis, Katlego Gabashane, Corinne Knowles, Susan Kunju, Elijah Madiba, Xolile Madinda and Etienne Walters. Well done to the AMP learners for all their perseverance this year. Congratulations especially to those who received Distinctions and Merits in the practical and theory results!

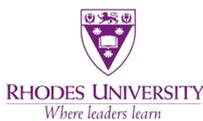
Our work would not be possible without our many sponsors and partners (logos below) as well as the many individuals who have supported AMP financially and in kind (see website for full list).

HOW CAN YOU BE A PART OF AMP? AMPlify us! There are many different ways you can get involved with the exciting work of our young musicians – for detailed information see:

<http://accessmusic.org.za/donate/>.

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