About Musicum20 2026

Greg Whateley

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On the eve of the twelfth (12) symposium of Musicum20 in August in Sydney, Australia - at the Australian Academy of Music and Performing Arts - Join Australia's leading provider of music and dance degrees. Courses in Sydney - Academy of Music and Performing Arts - it seems appropriate to share a bit of the history of Musicum20 – now in its fourteenth (14) year – and perhaps provide a hint of future developments and initiatives.

Genesis

In October 2004, the Perspectives of Music in the 21st Century: Music Schools between Tradition and Renovation Conference was held at the *Nagoya University of the Arts*, Japan. Amongst the presenters at the Symposium were - **Professor Greg Whateley** – Sydney (*Australian Institute of Music*); **Professor Yutaka Nakagawa** – Nagoya (*Nagoya University of the Arts);* and **Professeur Michael Wladkowski** – Paris (*Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris*).

Greg presented a paper 'Navigating New and Innovative Directions in Global Music Education' written and developed with the late **Dr Peter Calvo**, Founder of the Australian Institute of Music. Part of the paper and conference presentation talked about the importance of the emergence of online learning *(Whateley and Bofinger had already created The Virtual Conservatorium)* and the need to develop a worldwide network of friends and informants (benchmarking). The presentations met with strong applause and support – and then nothing.

In the meantime – **Professor Ian Bofinger** and **Greg** commenced a national (Australia) initiative of benchmarking that provided valuable data and reference points. In 2011 the newly established TEQSA (Tertiary Quality and Standards Agency) urged AIM to expand the exercise to include some form of international sharing – a noble concept.

As fate would have it - In mid-2012 Music Philosopher **Yutaka** Nakagawa made contact with **Greg**. He suggested, after lengthy consideration (*of some 8 years mind you – remember he was a philosopher at heart*) that we should rekindle the friendship and thus **Musicum20** was born. After rallying **Michael** and **Ian** to the cause - The first symposium in 2013 was in fact held at the *Nagoya University of the Arts* - Nagoya 2013 | musicum20

A humorous note – Greg had suggested Musicum6 as a worthy title for the project – Ian dismissed it as short sighted and proposed Musicum20.

Vision

Musicum20 is an international co-operative venture that brings together a range of adjunct personnel from a range of institutions – music, music education, business, arts management, corporate management, academic management, arts law, dance, theatre, IT and higher education compliance – to mention some. These partners are not in direct competition with each other - this achieves a relationship and dialogue of complete trust and transparency. Most importantly, it is person based (rather than institution) initiative which provides maximum portability and speed and provides the necessary champions for a project of this kind to fly and survive – and indeed continue if individuals move from Institution to Institution (as has been the case on a number of occasions). Clearly the model was a good one - Musicum20 is now in its fourteenth year and growing and diversifying each year.

The goal was to have 20 partners/members worldwide that work co-operatively at a number of levels. There are *currently twenty-two members* (22) from Australia, France, South Korea, Hong Kong, Germany, Macau, Singapore, Thailand, United Kingdom, and China - Home / | musicum20

Goals

The initial goals of the project were multilayered and included –

Initiative	**Status/Achievement**
Initiative Status/Achievement An annual international symposium	Sydney 2026 is the 12th annual symposium - Sydney 2026 | musicum20
International exchange and visits	Ongoing
An eJournal	Established and active – 8 editions to date - eJournal | musicum20
Cross institutional enrolments	AIM (Sydney, Australia), AMPA (Sydney, Australia) and Pop Academie (Baden-Wurttemberg, Germany) and KNUE (Seoul, South Korea) have hosted students
Benchmarking	Ongoing
Moderation	Used with regard to grade distribution across multiple institutions
A common postgraduate award	Not yet achieved – but advanced standing has been granted on a number of occasions

In addition –

In 2022 a **book series** was initiated – currently there are **12** in the series - Books | musicum20

In 2022 a repository of **podcasts** was initiated – there are currently **19** in the series - Podcasts | musicum20

In 2024 a student Masters' level **research papers** repository was established – there are currently **7** in the series - Master's Research | musicum20

In 2024 a **blog series** commenced – there are currently **239+** in the series – 2024 Blogs | musicum20/ 2025 Blogs | musicum20/ 2026 Blogs | musicum20

Symposia

The annual symposia are significant – the twelfth being held in Sydney in August 2025. The program was disrupted by COVID 19 in 2020/2021 – but resumed in 2022 back in Singapore. The number of papers/presentations has been maintained (and even intensified) over the years –

2013 - Japan - 15 presentations - Nagoya 2013 | musicum20

2014 – Hong Kong - 13 presentations - Hong Kong 2014 | musicum20

2015 - South Korea - 16 presentations - Korea 2015 | musicum20

2016 – Germany - 9 presentations - Mannheim 2016 | musicum20

2017 – Australia - 11 presentations - Sydney 2017 | musicum20

2018 – France - 7 presentations - Paris 2018 | musicum20

2019 - Singapore - 11 presentations - Singapore 2019 | musicum20

Pause for COVID

2022 - Singapore - 14 presentations - Singapore 2022 | musicum20

2023 - Vietnam - 14 presentations - Vietnam 2023 | musicum20

2024 - Macau - 26 presentations - Macau 2024 | musicum20

2025 – United Kingdom – 23 presentations - London 2025 | musicum20

A total of 159 papers to date – with a further **27** in Sydney 2026 - Sydney 2026 | musicum20

Papers/Presentations are geared to worldwide issues including developments in technology, transnational education initiatives, AI, academic and corporate integrity, trends, funding, music production and composition, and futures.

The format has changed over the fourteen years. What began essentially as F2F events (with the odd online presentation) has now morphed into hybrid conferences with as much (sometimes more) presentations online than F2F. *Arguably, the world has changed* – and the COVID 19 pandemic changed the way we meet and confer.

The real power, though, of symposia is the meeting on location and the exchange of updates, ideas, theories and visions – best shared out of symposia schedule often over meals and drinks. No doubt Sydney will prove useful to all involved.

The Sydney 2026 symposium is proudly sponsored by – The Australian Academy of Music and Performing Arts (AMPA) - Join Australia's leading provider of music and dance degrees. Courses in Sydney - Academy of Music and Performing Arts

From a personal perspective I have been proud to serve as president of Musicum20 since its inception. I have had the immense privilege of 'being there' as it stepped through a range of challenges and morphs – it is with great pleasure that I will moderate/chair the Sydney 2026 event. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the founders – ***Yutaka****,* ***Michael*** *and* ***Ian*** *– for their ongoing support.*

Emeritus Professor Greg Whateley is currently President, Musicum20 - Emeritus Professor Greg Whateley | musicum20