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We Need Each Other. We Need Music.

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The current pandemic has forced us to step back and take stock of what we value. More than ever, we are reminded how important friends, family and colleagues are in our lives. Maybe my social media feed is slightly biased, but one activity stands out as continuing to bring people together and assist even in a time of crisis: music.

Across the world we have seen music used as a universal response to connect, celebrate, show gratitude and grieve. At its core, music is an educational and community building tool that can transform the lives of those involved. The current pandemic has put a spotlight on music's power as a social activity to bring people together and as a resource for positive mental health and well-being.

We have seen examples of music sounding out over neighbourhoods all around the world uniting strangers and thanking front line workers. International media first spotted Italians singing and playing instruments from their balconies and rooftops during their national lockdown. Spanish police sang and played guitar to families from the street. There have been numerous flash mob style neighbourhood singalongs in New York City. One community organisation in NYC has established weekly city singalongs. If you are a fan of the musical, *Les Misérables*, you have to check out this British family's lockdown version of *One Day More* which has gone viral!

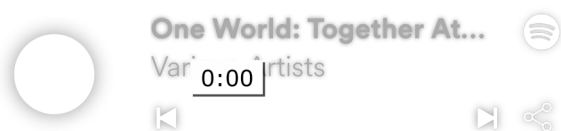
Back home in Australia, a pair of opera singers performed a moving rendition of I Still Call Australia Home from their balcony. The lyrics "someday we'll be together once more..." strike me as applicable in this situation.

Opera singers perform 'I still Call Australia Home' o...



Recently for ANZAC Day, the trumpet virtuoso James Morrison ran a national campaign encouraging everyone to perform the Last Post in their driveways in honour of those who have served their country. ATC can be proud of the many boys and staff who were involved in this initiative.

In addition to community music making, we have also seen international artists perform from their own homes in a show of support to those who need it most. The recent One World: Listening at Home 24 hour event was globally televised and streamed concert presented by the World Health Organisation and Global Citizen. Lady Gaga led the initiative which drew attention to those affected by COVID-19 and to celebrate healthcare workers. Four hours of the concert have been made available on Spotify for everyone to listen to.



- 1 Smile - One World: Togethe... 1:46
- 2 Lean On Me / Love's In Nee... 2:30
- 3 Lady Madonna - One World... 2:00
- 4 Rainbow - One World: Toge... 2:22
- 5 I'm Still Standing - One Worl... 2:29
- 6 Safety Dance - One World: ... 1:10
- 7 Carnival - One World: Toge... 2:22
- 8 What A Wonderful World - ... 2:29
- 9 River Cross - One World: To... 3:08
- 10 A Change Is Gonna Come - ... 2:46

You would know Andrew Lloyd Weber as the composer of musicals such as Phantom of the Opera, Jesus Christ Superstar, Evita and Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. In addition to daily social media performances and singalongs, he has teamed up with Universal Studios to create The Shows Must Go On. Every weekend at the moment, you can watch one of his

full-length musicals for free online!

Concerts and festivals might have been cancelled, but music lives on as professional, community and church ensembles embrace online engagement. Zoom rehearsals have become the new normal and the current situation has been a great opportunity to delve into the archives and release previously unreleased performances and photos! There are also a great number of "iso" performances floating around online. The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra had over 260 community submissions for their online choir performance of *Waltzing Matilda*.

Waltzing Matilda Virtual Choir Performance



Our ATC music co-curricular staff recently made one as well! Despite appearances, each audio track in all of these videos has been individually recorded and manually edited together. The creative genius and often generosity of video editors behind the scenes must be acknowledged.



ATC Music Staff Jam Session
Ambrose Treacy College

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If you are keen to get involved in some "iso" music yourself, an easy and meaningful way is through Pub Choir, now Couch Choir. This concept initially began in Brisbane and has gained worldwide attention. Recently, 6000 strangers from 45 countries submitted videos to perform *Heroes* by David Bowie. The performance promotes people staying home and saving lives: "We can be heroes, just for one day". Dare I say this performance is one of the most profound I have ever seen and viewing it will make you believe in the power of community music making.

Couch Choir sings Heroes (David Bowie)



While music in the community is flourishing at the moment, it would be remiss of me not to mention the hardship being felt by our local Australian music industry. The music world is often called upon in times of crisis to assist, such as the recent bush fires, and now Australian artists and their teams need our support. The current cancellation of thousands of events has threatened the livelihood of an entire sector who provide the soundtrack to Australian life. This is particularly the case for casual and church musicians who are often young people without regular full time work. If possible, I encourage you to donate ticket refunds to Support Act who are a charity providing crisis relief services to artists, roadies and music workers who have been directly affected.

At this time more than ever, we need each other. We need music.

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