



March 2015

# NEWSLETTER

[www.mpuma-music.org.za](http://www.mpuma-music.org.za)

*Dear Friends,*

A warm welcome to this newsletter and an enormous thank you!

Thank you to those donors and friends who continue to support our efforts. In 2014 our founding donor, the Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation, again made a grant of R300,000 to CMDA and we are thrilled to announce that the Department of Arts and Culture have recently decided to adopt us as their official Mpumalanga incubator. They will provide a grant allowing the CMDA to employ 4 qualified full-time music teachers for three years who will operate in our hubs and develop music content for 2Enable. We anticipate that this initiative will raise the standard of our music coaching, as well as taking the calibre of our orchestra to new heights.

With a grant by the National Lottery of R2,900,000 of which R1,900,000 has been released in part payment, the CMDA is now expanding its hub structure and will be opening hubs in Nelspruit, Pienaar, Masoyi, Hazyview and Mashishing. Exciting details of these *new hubs* are on page 3 of this newsletter!

In addition, we have been supported again by Seasons in Africa, the MacKenzie Foundation, HCI Foundation, Fintax and several private contributors have made either once off or recurring donations. Each and every donation is valuable to us, enabling us to do our valuable work and to bring into reality our vision and dreams for both the CMDA and 2Enable, and we are very grateful indeed!

*Thank you to each and every one of our donors who make our work possible...*



## News Snippets from the last few months of CMDA activity

### Workshop on Social Media

On a Saturday in February youth band members were invited to attend a workshop on Social Media. Alex Matthews presented the workshop which detailed how a budding musician could best make use of social media platforms, in order to promote a career in music.

Some youngsters had no experience of Facebook and they were taken through the steps of setting up a personal profile, as well as a page for their band, and were shown how to keep their page active and interesting, and how to attract fans and friends.



### A new Band on the Block, the Pink Avos

The dance studio at the Casterbridge Theatre is now being used as a band rehearsal room, and during the holidays it reverberates with the enthusiasm of one of our newest youth bands—the Pink Avos. Aggi, our head coach, has devoted hours of coaching and mentoring and hopefully in the near future this band will have the opportunity to perform in public. Their genre is soul rock!

### Sibahle serenades Sandton

One of our budding stars Sibahle Chauke was given the most amazing opportunity—she was invited to perform with Elvis Blue and the Mzansi Youth Choir, at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg. This was a huge privilege and a challenge for Sibahle as she had to learn and sing a song in Afrikaans while Elvis accompanied her on the piano. She managed it masterfully! Here is a link to the dress rehearsal:

[Sibahle sings 'Hillbrow' with Elvis Blue](#)



### Spontaneous Jam Session at Kabokweni Hub

When we can we love to organise jamming sessions for our students. This provides a wonderful opportunity for young people from different backgrounds to come together and make music.

This session took place late last year and was great fun!

### Donna joins the CMDA

The CMDA runs on a very small, dynamic team of people and we're very pleased to have recently welcomed Donna Dillon to our group. Donna has previous experience in the fashion industry, has managed a design studio in Nelspruit and is now the Project Manager for the CMDA. Donna will be overseeing the development of the hubs around Mpumalanga and open more when the opportunity arises. She is also in charge of organising events for our youth bands to perform at.





We are super-psyched about our new Hubs! Things are unfolding amazingly well and this is largely due to the sizable donation we received from the National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund. Our two existing Hubs have had a boost of new equipment, and we're busy getting our new Hubs ready for action!

### Zwelisha Hub:

Zwelisha is an existing hub, one of our introductory hubs. New equipment was placed in Zwelisha on the 14 January including lead guitars, bass guitar, keyboard and djembes. They then had the opening of the year's auditions on Saturday 7 February that was nicely attended and Spar the Grove generously sponsored 5 large sandwich platters. There was great potential seen in the new drummers and keyboard players as well as the young vocalists.

### Our new Hubs



New equipment is installed in Zwelisha hub



### Kabokweni Hub:

Kabokweni is also an introductory hub, and is still very active. Auditions were held for new registrants at this hub on 28 February; the attendance wasn't large although the kids that did show were promising.

We will hold another round of auditions for Kabokweni and Zwelisha hubs during the school holidays to increase the attendance and draw in some budding new musicians.

### Hazyview Hub:



The Good Work Foundation has agreed to host our Hazyview hub at their venue, which is very beneficial for us as there already school kids attending their classes that can be streamed into our music program.

This hub is going to be Primarily Marimbas and Djembes, focusing on traditional music with a modern twist. We are just waiting for the hub to be painted and made ready for its new purpose. We are hoping that this takes place at the end of March.



The Hazyview Hub



## Masoyi Hub:

Due to funding being pulled from the music program in Masoyi at the start of the year, things have moved along a bit slower with this Hub. We are being hosted by K3 Youth Skills Development Centre that is well situated next to a secondary school. We moved the marimbas and djembes drums into the Hub on the 12th March and have arranged the coaches who will commence work with an initial group of 20 new members.

We are still to arrange our audition day but we thought 'Well the equipment is there, the students are ready, and the coaches are lined up so we may as well get started!'



Coach Aggi and his team deliver marimbas to Masoyi Hub, and fine-tune them in preparation for use.

## Nelspruit Hub:

Our Nelspruit Hub is stationed at the Methodist Church, where they have allocated us a room for musical instruments and work stations in their youth centre for the 2Enable computers.

We have appointed a lovely gentleman named Franklin as Hub Manager and are in the process of finding coaches. We held an audition day at the Jock and Java on Saturday 7 March, where a small number of young people came and performed for us. The Jock generously supplied us with pizza and refreshments for the day.



**WANTED**

**QUALIFIED  
MUSIC TEACHERS!**

A graphic designed to look like a 'Wanted' poster. At the top, the word 'WANTED' is written in large, bold, black letters on a piece of aged, yellowed paper. Below this is a photograph of a man with long dark hair, wearing a dark patterned shirt, standing in front of a chalkboard. The chalkboard is covered in musical notes and diagrams. At the bottom of the poster, the words 'QUALIFIED MUSIC TEACHERS!' are written in large, bold, red letters.

The CMDA has a vacancy for four full-time music coaches who will be pivotal in running a music program in 8 community hubs in Mpumalanga. If you have a B.Mus (minimum qualification), a driver's license (essential) and are keen to develop courseware, train and develop your students into top performers and then have them perform alongside top musicians such as Vusi Mahlasela, The Parlotones, Elvis Blue and others, please send your CV to Donna at [admin@mpuma-music.org.za](mailto:admin@mpuma-music.org.za).



Early December 2014 saw the CMDA once again stage and host the Route 40 Music Festival. In contrast to our initial Festival we decided to keep this one smaller and more intimate, and all performances took place in the Casterbridge Theatre. Several big names shared the stage during the weekend with our CMDA youth bands, and the schedule included a spectacular corporate evening with The Parlotones, and special workshops with live distance lectures via Skype with Carol Restivo in Los Angeles.



Vusi Mahlasela, The Parlotones, and The Shaun Jacobs Band were the three guest bands and they had a fabulous time performing for some very appreciate festival-goers. They mingled with the audience, danced with them and got to know our CMDA staff and youngsters. Vusi Mahlasela spent a lot of time talking to, coaching and jamming with our young musicians and others, which was a wonderful experience for all who participated.



A live Skype link to Los Angeles was organised by Neil Clarke, and many young people and members of the public attended the virtual workshop in which Carl Restivo of Rock School spoke about the ins and outs of making it in the music industry. It was a worthwhile lecture and very engaging despite being a 'virtual' discussion. The wonders of modern technology! The time difference was tricky for Carl as it was very early morning for him but that didn't deter him engaging with the audience.





The CMDA youth bands did us proud at the Festival. Weeks of rehearsals including many all-nighters went into preparation, and the excitement was electric! Our students are privileged to have the opportunity to perform alongside, and to mingle and jam with, some well-known South African musicians. Some students had to fit in their practice with Matric examinations and they managed amazingly well.



The youth bands performing included Ozone, Saving Superman, Township Roots, Zebra X-ing, 7 Day Weekend and Nhyelete. Outcry, previously with CMDA, were guest performers. The response from the audience to all our bands was super positive! The Festival over all was a great success, and financially far more successful than last year. It's safe to say that the Festival is now a fixed item on the Lowveld, and national, music festival calendar.



The picture above shows Vusi jamming with Zebra X-ing, such a memorable treat for these young musicians. You can watch their session by *clicking on the picture*. As a thank you gift to Vusi, a portrait of him had been sketched by artist Samantha Matthews. He was thrilled with his picture! Sam also did a portrait for The Parlotones, which was presented to them on stage, also as a thank you from the CMDA for their participation in the Festival.



2Enable is the CMDA's initiative to develop a **School in the Cloud** providing free curriculum aligned academic and other meaningful educational content for the benefit of all South Africans.

2Enable is our management and educational application developed to work specifically in our hubs, which are based in rural locations. On the evidence of the data collected from assessments performed in 2013, the Mpumalanga Department of Education entered into an agreement with the CMDA that required the CMDA to aggregate, develop and align educational resources with the CAPS curriculum in all major enrolment subjects.

Consequently, the CMDA employed 15 full time teachers who have during 2014 aligned over 12500 resources with the curriculum in the following subjects:

- Mathematics
- Physical Science
- English First Additional Language
- Accounting
- Economics
- Geography
- Life Orientation
- Mathematical Literacy
- Life Sciences
- Natural Science
- Business Studies
- English Home Language
- Creative Arts (Dramatic Arts and Music)

This was a substantial undertaking and we are pleased to report that we are nearly complete with the process!

We are now in the process of handing this over to the Department for them to moderate the work that has been done. As a result of this project, there is significant interest developing in the CMDA and 2Enable.

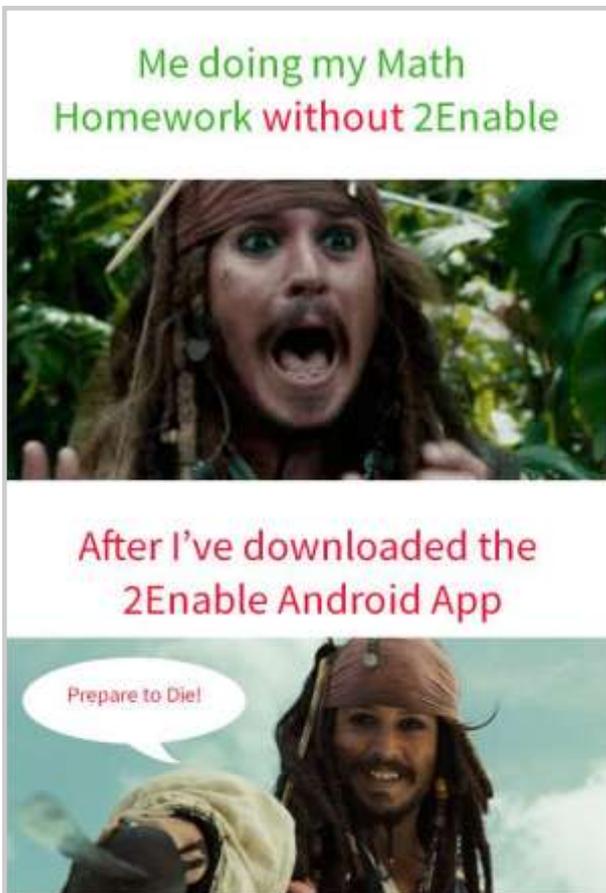
What has been achieved in a very short period has piqued the interest of many important role players in education in South Africa and beyond.

### Android Mobile Application:

The CMDA recently developed the 2Enable Mobile App for Android devices. This application is available for free download from Play Store. The application is unique in that it can operate on-line where users have a good internet connection and it can operate off-line allowing users to download many of the resources from a local server on to their device.

This means that the application can be used by rural schools to deliver meaningful educational content to any user regardless of internet availability and regardless of the physical location of the school.

To learn about downloading and operating the app please click on the pic to the right



## Windows Mobile Application:

Microsoft (South Africa) has kindly agreed to fund the development of a Microsoft mobile application that will operate on all devices running Windows 8 and above. The functionality of the Windows application is identical to that of the Android application and will allow the device to operate in an on-line and off-line environment. This application will be available from 1 April from the Windows and Windows Phone Store.



The additional benefit of a Windows device to a user is that they can access the Enterprise version of 2Enable that provides the user access to additional functionality, including recommended revision, help from mentors, a selected learning circle and general web users via instant messaging and many detailed reports.

Microsoft has also agreed to fund the integration of Office 365 into the online version of 2Enable Enterprises. This will allow all users to access their suite of O365 applications directly from the 2Enable Enterprises desktop and allow reports and teacher resources to be saved directly into the users O365 OneDrive account.

## 2Enable Pilot:

In addition to the development and alignment of content, planning is underway on a pilot project to begin 1 April 2015. The pilot will include all Grade 10 learners in eight schools spread across all four Mpumalanga school districts. This will involve over 100 teachers and 1000 students based in rural locations. The pilot will be managed by the Mpumalanga Department of Education and will include the training of all teachers in the use of ICT, training teachers and learners in the use of 2Enable and importantly, teachers on how to use ICT tools in a classroom environment. The key role players in this project include the Department of Education, CMDA, Mustek, Microsoft, Intel, SchoolNet and Mindset.

## Partnerships:

Already the CMDA has a formal partnership agreement with the Mpumalanga Department of Education.

Furthermore, Microsoft is funding the development of additional software, upgrades to existing software and training courses all focussed on education in South Africa. However, the agreement with Mindset Learn is possibly the most exciting recent development.

Mindset manages several television channels, including channel 319 on DStv. They are an important content developer and can deliver content via satellite to any one of their 'Mindset Devices', a satellite receiver that is in fact a fully functional computer.

Any mobile device running the 2Enable Mobile Application can connect directly to this Mindset computer via Wi-Fi and can download content directly to the user's mobile Windows or Android device.

This means that the Mindset Device is effectively a digital library of thousands of resources from which any teacher or student can download a selection of resources using 2Enable with a simple swipe of the finger.

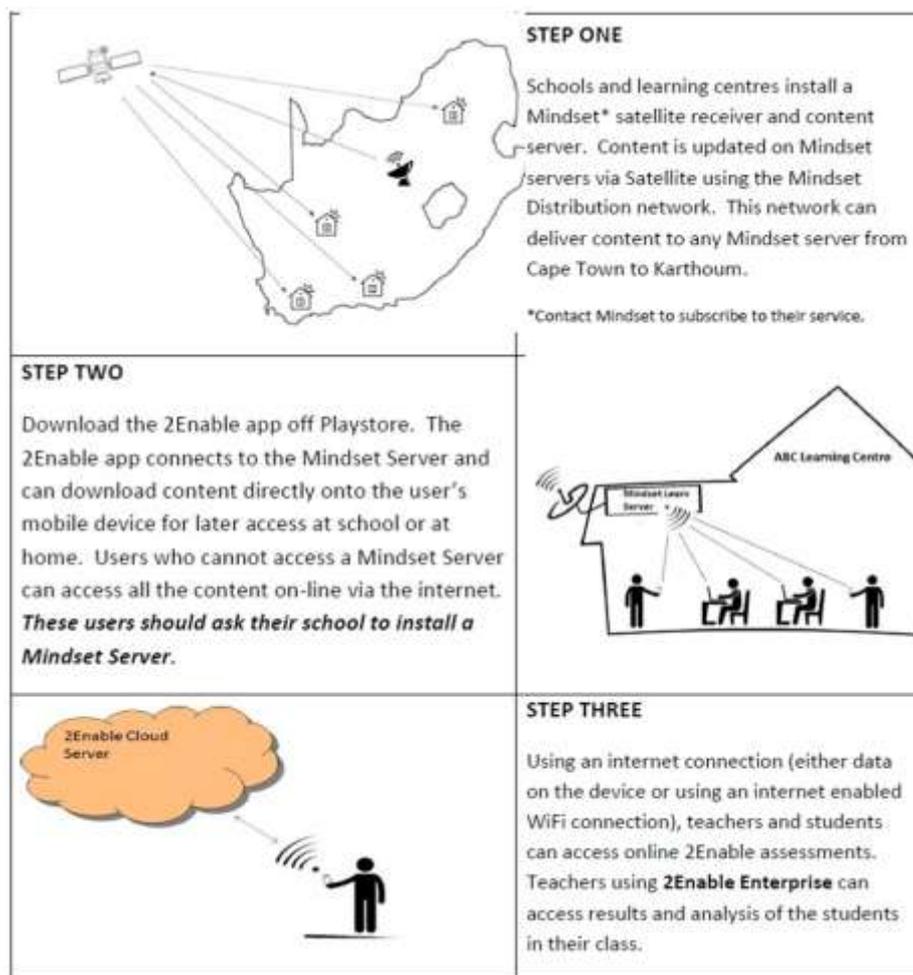
Mindset can deliver this library of resources from Cape Town to Khartoum (i.e. to the most rural school anywhere in their satellite footprint) and any user in these schools can download curriculum aligned content on to their personal device which they can then later access at their own convenience in class or at home.

This is a significant step in delivering e-learning to rural and disconnected communities.

The graphic on the following page illustrates how this delivery works:



Introducing 2Enable to the SMT and SGB's of two schools where we will start our local pilots. They seemed to love it and more importantly were using it after about 5 minutes.



We are approaching 2000 registered users on the 2Enable platform of which 348 are members of the CMDA i.e. they have joined the music program. Of the 384 registered members, 102 are actively engaged in the music program and make regular use of our hubs and programs. 89% of registered members are previously disadvantaged. With the establishment of our new hubs in rural locations, we expect this number to increase.

### Plans for the near future:

Requests for grant funding have been submitted to the Department of Arts and Culture to fund the development of arts based training content for schools country-wide. In addition, a substantial grant request has been submitted to the National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund to fund the aggregation, development and alignment of education content of major enrolment subjects for 2Enable from Grade 1 to Grade 12.

Private donors have been approached to fund the establishment of a school that will be connected to the CMDA music program. This will allow us to develop educational excellence using 2Enable whilst improving utilisation of our existing music resources. With these resources, we will demonstrate the value of music to education, become leaders in blended learning and developing a pathway to flipping the African classroom. Blended learning involves using e-learning as an important tool to the educational process improving teacher productivity and learner results. The flipped classroom is a concept where students learn the educational basics out of the classroom, and the classroom is a space where their minds are challenged with relevant and meaningful topics.

	<p style="text-align: center;">Nervous for your Matric Year? Don't you worry, 2Enable is here!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Head to <a href="http://2Enable.org">2Enable.org</a> or download our Android app from the Play Store today!</p>
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## Did you know we had overseas interns at the CMDA?

With our continued affiliation with Performing Arts Abroad we were happy to have 2 'intern's with us in December, both from the UK. Danielle Toop is a dancer, and Timothy Kraemer, a cellist. Both had wonderful experiences with us, and brought great added value to the youngsters and others involved in our program.

### Volunteering in South Africa, Where do I begin?

The month I spent here can be described as no less than the best month of my life! I was teaching a whole variety of people who are all so talented, the experience was amazing for them as well as myself and I felt so rewarded because they were all so appreciative to have me over there teaching and they showed their gratitude by always being so enthusiastic in my lessons and not only making it enjoyable for themselves but for me too! I fell in love with each and every person that I taught, they were always so happy and cheerful and an absolute pleasure to teach.

Outside of teaching I also got to meet the loveliest people ever who made my trip even more worthwhile and I really wish them all the best and hope to see them again in the near future.

I am surprised that I am even able to write about my experience because words really do not describe just how phenomenal an opportunity this was and I really urge other people to do the same as you will not regret it! Thank you so much for the opportunity that you gave me! I really could not be more grateful and I am sure that you will be seeing me again very soon! - *Dannie Toop*



I wanted to go to a place where I had never been before, but a country where English is the main language. South Africa was the answer; I already had a close association with the Buskaid Soweto String Project, writing and arranging music for them, but I had never actually visited them to see the music school that my friend Rosemary Nalden set up, about fifteen years ago.

However the main part of my visit to South Africa was to volunteer in the Casterbridge Music Development Academy. After an inspiring time in Soweto working with those amazingly talented young string players, I moved onto White River, Nelspruit, coinciding with the Route 40 Music Festival at the CMDA. This turned out to be a dream placement for me!

Although I am a classically trained cellist I love playing other genres, including jazz and rock. Long ago I was in a Prog Rock band in the 70's called Esperanto. Yes I am getting on a bit, that's why it was time for travel and new horizons!

The Festival was a very relaxed affair and I found it was up to me to get involved, so during a band rehearsal with 7 Day Weekend I made my presence known, and asked them if they'd like a cello for a couple of numbers. "Yes please!" was the response. The band was impressive, and keen, a group of energetic 15 year old girls and an 11 year old boy on bass guitar. We had a really good rehearsal and played in the evening which was slightly disappointing as we couldn't hear ourselves!

A couple of days later I was asked to join another band, Outcry, a very talented and focused group. Their coach and mentor Aggi was a very inspiring and no-nonsense leader who didn't pull any punches when it came to guiding the young musicians if they wavered at all in their dedication and pursuit of musical integrity! It was a real privilege to play with these young musicians and their mutual respect was very apparent.

One of the moments that I cherish is the day Vusi Mahlasela came with his incredible band. I joined them with my cello in the informal rehearsal and sound check, jamming along with his lovely rhythmic songs, but I was proud and honoured when Vusi approached me and asked me if I'd like to share the platform for a number in the evening performance. I'll never forget that.

Another memorable day was with Alex Matthews and her friend Nic who drove us to Kruger National Park where we saw the big 5 in one day! A special moment was when Alex spotted a leopard. No one else was around and we had it all to ourselves! - *Timothy Kraemer*





*The LCO is a musical gem, bringing together musicians of all ages from many corners of the Lowveld community*



The Lowveld Community Orchestra is generously supported by the MacKenzie Foundation and HCI

Members of the Lowveld Community Orchestra continue to gather regularly at Uplands College for rehearsals. At the moment they are preparing for the Uplands Festival which is only a couple of months away.

The Orchestra Director, Anneke Coetzer, has recently had a baby - big congratulations to her! In her absence Lorraine Kirk has been ably conducting and managing the orchestra's rehearsals.

The Lowveld Community Orchestra (LCO) was generously supported by the Mackenzie Foundation and HCI in 2014. With these grants, the CMDA funded the costs of the conductor and the travel costs of the brass section from Pienaar and a string section from Mashishing (Lydenburg) for a monthly rehearsal in White River. With the grant from the National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund, we will be opening a string hub in Mashishing to grow the developmental string section and a brass hub in Pienaar to grow the brass section of the orchestra. We expect that the orchestra will benefit dramatically from these investments and we expect to see great things in their upcoming performances.

The orchestra is one of the CMDA's flagship programmes. It includes around 45 members from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and ages ranging from 12 years in age to 55 years, all of whom participate in an activity that is enriching for the community as a whole.

### Christmas Carols Concert

The Orchestra was well received just before Christmas when they provided the musical backing as part of the Hospice White River Christmas Carol Concert.

The LCO and Hospice worked together creating a wonderful festive treat for locals, and all income was split between the two charities. The event was well supported and great fun was had by all. The event is set to be come a regular on the Lowveld calendar. Thanks are due to the Casterbridge Theatre for providing such an awesome space for the event.



To follow the Orchestra on Facebook:

[DONATE ONLINE NOW](#)

### *As al ways, our heartfel t thanks...*

Just to say it again, we can never express enough gratitude to all of our supporters and private donors - the individuals and businesses in our community and those further afield who encourage us to keep going with our valuable projects. There are so many of you, and from your ongoing support we know that we are onto a good thing, and we will keep doing it!

Until next time, make music, learn well and have fun!



*The CMDA team*

