

# RCM JUNIOR DEPARTMENT

## Musicianship classes 2024-25

Course descriptions

June 2024

*Please note that the inclusion in 2024-25's timetable of all elective and additional classes is subject to student and staff availability, and also to there being sufficient interest in each elective/additional class to make it viable.*

### **Dalcroze Eurhythmics**

#### **Content**

In Dalcroze Eurhythmics, musicianship is experienced through active listening, connecting the body, mind and emotion in a fun and engaging way. Classes are taught barefoot.

In Dalcroze classes, rhythmic equipment and whole body movement are used to increase musical expression, concentration, coordination and posture. Aural perception, body awareness and cooperation with others are developed through a range of listening games, songs and repertoire. Musical concepts such as meter, tempo, phrase, form, rhythm pattern, accent, and others are explored through creative movement, ear training, improvisation and composition. Studying physically, in a group with others, increases self-confidence, leadership skills and communication, refines the ability to sense and analyse music, and develops auditory memory/creativity.

#### **Suitability and Progression**

This course is suitable for our youngest students, including those who are new to the JD. Students will typically study Dalcroze alongside, or move on to, a Foundation Musicianship Class upon the successful completion of this class. Some students taking Core Musicianship (Fundamentals) are also eligible.

### **Foundation (F and FS)**

#### **Content**

This one or two-year course will equip students with the skills they need to successfully move through the JD Musicianship programme. In this class, students will listen to a wide range of musical works and they will follow the JD Foundation aural and musicianship syllabus. To develop essential analysis skills, they will study one or more representative examples of:

- a movement from a Classical sonatina/sonata
- a Bach Invention
- a Baroque chorus
- a Classical opera aria

#### **Suitability and Progression**

This course is suitable for students who are new to the JD. Students will progress to Core Musicianship (Fundamentals), although other options may be available for older students. Additional Grade 5 Theory classes will be available, timetable permitting, for those who have successfully completed this course.

## **Core Musicianship (Fundamentals) (CMF)**

### **Content**

This one or two-year course is designed for students in curriculum years 5 – 7. Students will follow the Fundamentals aural and musicianship syllabus, where they will begin to explore and practise higher-level skills. In order to develop essential analytical skills, and to learn about important musical conventions and developments in the period of common practice, students will study at least one representative example of:

- a movement from a Baroque keyboard suite
- a movement from a Classical string quartet
- a Classical song
- a symphonic poem

### **Suitability and Progression**

Students taking this course will have already demonstrated a good understanding of the core skills covered in ABRSM Grade 5 Theory. They will also have demonstrated a good level of aural perception (through their completion of the Foundation class **or** their responses at audition). Upon successful completion of this class, students will typically move on to Core Musicianship (Level 1).

## **Core Musicianship (Level 1) (CM1)**

### **Content**

This one or two-year course is designed for students in curriculum years 8 – 10. Students will follow the Level 1 aural and musicianship syllabus, where they will explore and practise higher-level skills. To develop important analytical skills, and to learn about compositional and harmonic conventions in the period of common practice, students will also study a range of musical works, typically including:

- a Baroque aria
- a movement from a Classical sonata
- a movement from a Classical symphony
- a nineteenth century overture

### **Suitability and Progression**

Students taking this course will have demonstrated a secure understanding of the skills covered in ABRSM Grade 5 Theory, and they will have demonstrated a good level of aural perception (through their completion of a Foundation class or CMF Class, **or** their responses at audition). Upon successful completion of this class, students will typically move on to a Level 1 elective class or, if they are moving into Year 10 or Year 11, Core Musicianship (Level 2).

## **Core Musicianship (Level 2) (CM2)**

### **Content**

This one or two-year course is designed for students in curriculum years 10 – 12. Students will follow the Level 2 aural and musicianship syllabus, where they will explore and practise high-level skills. To develop advanced analytical skills, and to learn about stylistic developments during the period of common practice and the early twentieth century, students will also study a range of musical works. These will typically include:

- a movement from a Baroque trio sonata
- a Baroque fugue
- a movement from a Classical concerto
- a nineteenth century song
- a twelve-tone composition

### **Suitability and Progression**

Students taking this course will have demonstrated higher-level aural, theory and analysis skills in CM1, and many will have completed Grade 6 Theory. Upon successful completion of this class, students are eligible to study Level 2 electives, subject to timetabling and availability.

## **Core Musicianship (Short Course) (CMS)**

### **Content**

This one-year course is intended for students who enter the JD in Year 11 or above, and who have passed a Grade 5 level theory qualification. Students will follow the Level 1 aural and musicianship syllabus in the first term, before moving on to Level 2, when ready, to explore and practise high-level skills. In order to develop advanced analytical skills, and to learn about stylistic developments during the period of common practice and the early twentieth century, students will also study a range of musical works. These typically include:

- a movement from a Classical sonata
- a movement from a Baroque trio sonata
- a Baroque fugue
- a Romantic Lied
- a twelve-tone composition

### **Suitability and Progression**

On the successful completion of this course, students are able to progress to Level 2 electives, subject to timetabling and availability.

## **LEVEL 1 ELECTIVES**

Level 1 electives are intended for students who have successfully completed Core Musicianship Level 1 (CM1). Note that all students are expected to complete at least one year of **Core Musicianship 2** by the **end of Year 11**.

### **Composition and Arranging (Level 1 Elective) (CA)**

#### **Content**

A composition class gives students the opportunity to apply knowledge of theory and experience of practical musicianship to the practice of composition. Students will be encouraged, under the guidance of their teacher, to experiment (in terms of how to develop musical ideas and in finding new sound possibilities). Although the emphasis of this class is on creativity and discovery, continued aural and musicianship training (Level 1) remains a fundamental component.

### **Improvisation Class (Level 1 Elective) (Imp)**

#### **Content**

An improvisation class gives students the opportunity to develop improvisation skills and techniques in a variety of styles from Baroque embellishment to jazz and beyond (eg intuitive group improvisation) both on their principal study instrument (where this is not the piano) and at the keyboard. Though the emphasis of this class is on creativity and discovery, continued aural training (Level 1) remains a fundamental component.

### **Music Theory and Analysis (Level 1 Elective) (MTA)**

#### **Content**

This class will enable students to develop their understanding of higher-level theory and analysis skills, with a specific focus on the ABRSM Grade 6 Music Theory syllabus. Content will, however, be broader in scope, and there will be a significant aural component in each lesson. This will combine with practical work to provide a holistic understanding of the syllabus content. Students will have an opportunity to sit the Grade 6 theory exam at RCM towards the end of the summer term.

### **Practical Musicianship (Level 1 Elective) (PM)**

#### **Content**

In this class, there will be a particular emphasis on supporting and developing the work covered at Grade 6 level from a practical perspective (score reading skills, transposition, clef reading etc). Exercises will be completed on the student's first study instrument and at the keyboard. An introduction to keyboard harmony and figured bass will be included in this course. Students can take this class before, after or alongside a Core Musicianship (Level 2) class.

## **LEVEL 2 ELECTIVES**

In most cases, Level 2 electives are available to students who have completed **either** Core Musicianship, Level 2 (CM2) or Core Musicianship, Short Course (CMS).

### **Advanced Theory Grade 7 (Level 2 Elective) (T7)**

#### **Content**

T7 prepares students to take the ABRSM Grade 7 Theory Examination in the Summer Term. Core topics include figured bass, chorale realisation and analysis. Students in a T7 class will continue to develop complementary aural and practical musicianship skills.

#### **Suitability**

Students opting for a Grade 7 Theory class must have passed Grade 6 Theory **or** have successfully completed a CM2/CMS course.

### **Advanced Theory Grade 8 (Level 2 Elective) (T8)**

#### **Content**

T8 prepares students to take the ABRSM Grade 8 Theory examination in the summer term. Students in a T8 class will continue to develop complementary aural and practical musicianship skills.

#### **Suitability**

Students opting for a Grade 8 Theory class must have completed the Grade 7 Theory course **and** CM2/CMS.

### **Advanced Analysis (Level 2 Elective) (Analysis)**

#### **Content**

These classes are intended for students in Year 11 and above. Students will complete in-depth studies of a range of works, drawn from across the period of common practice and the twentieth century. Work in this class will provide opportunities for students to consolidate their understanding of historical, analytical and theoretical studies and to utilise advanced aural skills. This class will be particularly useful for those preparing for Conservatoire/University music study.

### **Advanced Composition (Level 2 Elective) (Comp)**

#### **Content**

An advanced composition class gives students the opportunity to apply knowledge of theory and experience of practical musicianship to the practice of composition. Students will be encouraged, under the guidance of their teacher, to experiment (in terms of how to develop musical ideas and in finding new sound possibilities). Rehearsal skills, which may involve conducting, will be developed. Although the emphasis of this class is on creativity and discovery, continued aural training remains a fundamental component.

### **Advanced Harmony & Stylistic Techniques (Level 2 Elective) (AH)**

#### **Content**

This class has been designed for students who are in Year 11 and above and who have completed a higher-level theory course (Grade 7 or 8). In this class, students will learn about important harmonic and compositional styles through analysis and the completion of stylistic composition exercises. Topics will include Bach chorales, baroque counterpoint and fugue, classical quartets and sonatas, nineteenth century miniatures and lieder.

### **Advanced Improvisation (Level 2 Elective) (Imp)**

#### **Content**

An improvisation class gives students the opportunity to develop improvisation skills and techniques in a variety of styles from Baroque embellishment to jazz and beyond (eg intuitive group improvisation) both on their principal study instrument (where this is not the piano) and at the keyboard. Though the emphasis of this class is on creativity and discovery, continued aural training remains a fundamental component.

### **Aesthetics (Level 2 Elective) (Aesth)**

#### **Content**

Students will explore academic discourse on themes including music and meaning, the value of music, music and beauty, and music's relationship with the other arts. This class is intended for students in years 12 and 13 who are preparing for undergraduate level study. Continued aural training remains a fundamental component.

### **Keyboard Harmony (Level 2 Elective) (KH)**

#### **Content**

This course gives students the opportunity to explore advanced harmony from a practical perspective. It is intended for students who have completed an advanced music theory course (Grade 7 or 8) and who can demonstrate a higher level of proficiency at the keyboard (Grade 7 level or above). Students will work through a more complex range of keyboard harmony exercises that will help to prepare them for undergraduate level courses.

### **Keyboard Skills (Level 2 Elective) (KS)**

#### **Content**

This class is designed for older students who are not first study pianists, but who play to at least Grade 5 level. It will include an introduction to keyboard harmony and there will be a particular emphasis on supporting and developing the work covered at Grade 6 and 7 Theory from a practical perspective (score reading skills, reading figured bass, transposition etc).

### **Collaborative Piano (CP)**

#### **Content**

This interdisciplinary class has been designed for pianists and singers. Art song will be a focus, with students performing and analysing set repertoire. The class will provide pianists with further opportunities to develop their accompanying skills.

(continued overleaf)

## **ADDITIONAL CLASSES**

### **Grade 5 Theory (Foundation Level, Additional Class) (T5)**

#### **Content**

This class is a continuation and consolidation of Foundation level work; students will be expected to take the ABRSM Grade 5 Theory examination in the Summer Term. This class is offered as an additional Musicianship class (typically 45 – 55 minutes) if timetabling and availability allows.

#### **Suitability**

This class is available, as an additional Musicianship class, to students who have completed a Foundation class and who have demonstrated that they are ready to benefit from this theory course.

### **Grade 6 Theory (Level 1 Additional Class) (T6)**

#### **Content**

This class is a continuation and consolidation of Level 1 work; students will be expected to take the ABRSM Grade 6 Theory examination in the Summer Term. It is taken as an additional Musicianship class (typically 45 – 55 minutes), if timetabling and availability allows.

#### **Suitability**

This class is available, as an additional Musicianship class, to students who have completed Core Musicianship Level 1 and who have demonstrated that they are ready to benefit from this higher-level theory course.

### **Conducting Class (Additional Class - limited capacity) (Cond)**

#### **Content**

These classes, taught by Robert Hodge, provide students with the opportunity to develop their conducting skills in a small group context.

#### **Suitability**

The class is open to applications from students in Years 9 and above, although priority is given to students in Years 12 and 13.

### **Sight Singing (Additional Class) (SS)**

#### **Content**

These classes, taught by Christina Lawrie, provide first study singing students with the opportunity to develop their sight-singing skills in a small group context.

**Andrew Williams**  
RCMJD Head of Aural and Musicianship  
[andrew.williams@rcm.ac.uk](mailto:andrew.williams@rcm.ac.uk)