

The second term at Trinity is typically busy. Within the first two to three weeks after returning from the Christmas break, the entire college is greeted with minor technical assessments. Depending on your year you may have to play a piece, scales, studies or orchestral excerpts. Many of the violas tackled Don Juan, Shostakovich No 5 and the Mendelssohn Scottish Symphony.

On the 6th of February, the viola department had the pleasure of welcoming violist Fiona Bonds for a masterclass in the afternoon. This is what first year postgraduate violist Harry Mak had to say about his experience:

“I played the first movement from Hoffmeister’s Viola Concerto in D major, and the beginning of the second movement. Fiona was a fascinating and inspiring violist from whom I learned a lot. She described the first movement as operatic, with each phrase depicting different characters. This approach enabled me to better visualise and understand the structure and phrasing of the piece. Practically, she demonstrated the effect of sound projection in relation to the use of bow, and the wrist-elbow interaction in cross-string movements. With her kind and patient instructions, I managed to pick up the techniques she taught. I found the masterclass very useful as it provided me an opportunity to examine the same piece of music at a different angle, as well as a chance to perform in front of an audience. I felt more confident in performing and had more thoughts about my practice and playing.”

Currently Trinity Laban is in its busiest performance month, as we enter our CoLab weeks. CoLab is a two-week venture where all academic studies halt for studies of music, dance and musical theatre programs combined to create performance pieces. These range from 30-minute operas to travelling abroad to learn how to play proper salsa music.

A popular project which makes a re-appearance every year is led by viola professor Rivka Golani, who organizes a concert filled with chamber music tailored for the viola repertoire from Bartok duos to a large viola ensemble. This performance will take place on Friday the 22nd and, like all CoLab projects, is a free event.

Peter Fenech

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