



24 July 2014

## 2014 Founders Concert Address from the Head of Music

On the 13th of September 2001, I left for a school tour to Europe. I remember, on the morning of the 12th, after the horrific attacks in New York the night before, having to rehearse the Faure *Requiem* with the girls at MLC. Earlier this week, I found myself in a similar feeling position, as I was rehearsing the Rutter *Gloria* with the boys in our beautiful chapel. '*Miserere nobis*' we sang, 'have mercy on us'. I stopped and spoke about this; about the relevance of a text so old that still had currency today. No matter what your faith system I said, no matter what you hold sacred or dear in your hearts, *have mercy on us* as human beings that we still do such dreadful things to each other. I spoke to them about this in the hope of helping them engage with the emotion in the music and use experiences that they could feel or imagine, that were real to them, to help convey what the composer was intending.

Personally, as with many people, I was so deeply moved by the actions of a mindless few last week. I let myself embrace some moments of melancholy and have taken time each day since this happened to be still with this emotion - out of respect, I guess. I actually love melancholy, it's one of my favourite emotions because it has a friend. As Keats says *She (melancholy) dwells with beauty. Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine.* Every day I experience beauty, every day I get to balance the ugliness in the world with that which is glorious - because I have the best job in the world. I'm not just a teacher, I'm a music teacher and music is one of the things that communicates across cultures, ages, social groups and centuries, in an incredibly powerful way. Music reminds us that there is there is definitely beauty in the world even in times when ugliness seems to take the lead.

All the boys in tonight's concert and all the boys beyond these ensembles who engage with music at Newington are truly blessed. They are able to play music, they have the strength to be committed to the practice of music and they are able to work together to move the hearts of their listeners, move hearts on a number of levels from deep spirituality to a place of fun, laughter and entertainment - not everyone has that gift. Many of you here tonight will be thinking just that.

As we say a long, slow, painful, Melba-esque farewell to our Year 12s, I'd like to start the goodbyes by saying 'thank you'. Thank you for walking alongside us on the wonderful road that is music making; thank you for all you have given to the soul of our College; thank you for all that you have taught us along the way. Don't let Newington be the end of your musical journey. Listen, create, analyse and perform until there is no breath left in your bodies. I promise that it will give you more richness in your lives than you can know.

Dr Mulford, I am honoured to present this year's Yr 12 musicians to you to receive their certificates of appreciation for their commitment to Music throughout their time at Newington.

Mr Mark Scott  
Head of Music

