

TESTIMONIAL TO A TROUPER!

By Dr. Steve Stanton

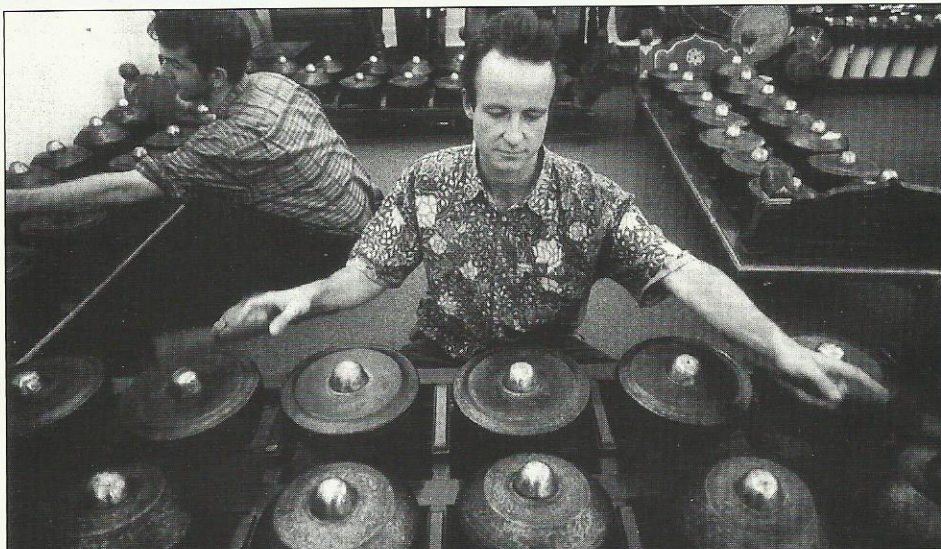
Director of Undergraduate Music Studies

THIS YEAR, City University celebrates one hundred years since the founding of the Northampton Institute in 1894. Originally a thriving centre for the local community, the Institute trained local people in trades such as engineering, jewellery making, furriery and horology. In 1966 the institution was awarded a Royal Charter to become The City University, over which the Lord Mayor of London would preside as Chancellor. To celebrate its centenary, City is offering a programme of public lectures, music and arts, displays and ceremonial occasions reflecting the diverse range of activities embodied by the University in the 1990s.

City's Department of Music is also celebrating eighteen years since the inauguration of the first BSc Honours Music degree in British higher education and whose aim, from the very start, was to help bridge the gap between music as 'art' and music as 'science'. Starting as a small and modest section of a Centre for Arts, alongside Arts Administration and Journalism, with an initial intake of just twelve students, it soon grew to become an independent academic department and today boasts 80 undergraduate students and nearly 60 postgraduates. The course was the brain-child of Liveryman Professor Malcolm Troup who, prior to his appointment at City, was Head of Music at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. The link continues today with Performance being given prominent status through our valuable collaboration with the Guildhall School who provide instrumental and vocal tuition for our students.

The BSc course, in contrast to the majority of music degrees offered elsewhere, is concerned essentially with the study of the position and role of music in society, rather than with providing the more traditional historical survey of European art music. The course addresses music in today's multicultural and technological society by adopting a 'global' approach - interpreting music in its widest cultural sense as part of our general environment. Graduates from the course have gone on to become music administrators, sound recording engineers, music computer technologists, composers and teachers serving the community's special needs, executives in the commercial music industry and performers in various fields of the performing arts. For many years the Worshipful Company of Musicians has generously donated an annual prize for the outstanding dissertation by a final year undergraduate in Music Technology. This is presented every November at a musical prize-giving soirée by the Master or his representative.

The study of music at postgraduate level has been developed alongside the



The resident gamelan ensemble in rehearsal.

BSc course and its scope naturally reflects the breadth of musical aspects found within this unique course. A flourishing MA programme offers courses in the department's main subject areas - composition and performance, ethnomusicology, the psychology of music and music therapy. Again the department broke new ground in 1986 by pioneering the first Diploma and MSc courses in Music Information Technology, bringing together the skills of the musician with the newest technological development in the computer field.

As the department grew in size it was relocated in purpose-built premises opened in 1991 by HRH the Duchess of Gloucester. The facilities include a performance theatre, a suite of professional recording studios with computer workstations and an Early Music room which houses a large collection of Baroque instruments including a 1632 Grancino cello and a fully restored piano of 1799.

The City University Symphony Orchestra gives at least three public concerts yearly in various London venues and has a growing reputation for presenting premières, which have included Peter Sculthorpe's Piano Concerto, Sir Harrison Birtwistle's revised *Gawain's Journey* and the world première of Elgar's unpublished opera *The Spanish Lady*. Composition in the department is predominantly active in electronic music and several students have won international prizes, most notably at the Bourges Festival in France and at the Ars Electronica in Austria. Works from the Studio are regularly broadcast and several now appear on Compact Disc.

The department's Research Fellow in Music Therapy, launched in 1980 with support from the Music Therapy Charity, is unique amongst UK universities. Research projects have included the use of music therapy with handicapped children, adult offenders, in the treatment of AIDS patients and, most currently, in

relation to sexually-abused children. This work is enhanced through the university's validation of the diploma course offered by Nordoff-Robbins Centre for Music Therapy and of the Laban Centre's MA in Dance Movement Therapy. A well-equipped experimental studio is the focus for our work in the Psychology of Music, which features strongly in the department's research profile.

Ethnomusicology and the study of non-Western music is a vital feature of our work at all levels, with courses being offered in the classical music of Asia and the Far East, as well as the folk and traditional music of African, American and East European cultures. Indonesian music is perhaps the most popular with practical studies on our two Javeneze gamelan orchestras being offered daily. Students are encouraged to undertake fieldwork and recent expeditions have included Zaire, Transylvania, Mongolia, Ladakh and Morocco. This work is extended by the recently established Joe Loss Research Fellowship in Jewish Music supported by the Jewish Music Heritage Trust, and is the first and only one of its kind at any secular institution in the UK. We will be hosting the First International Conference of Jewish Music in April. A further international link is fostered by the department's close collaboration with the Centre for Intercultural Music Arts (CIMA) and we will be hosting its third biennial conference also this April.

With Malcolm Troup having resigned his headship and parental role at the outset of the department's eighteenth birthday, it might well now be described as having come of age and entering adulthood. Joining us in April will be Dr Dennis Smalley, from the University of East Anglia, and who will assume the leadership of the department at the end of the year with the task of steering us into the next century and through the next eighteen years.