

St Mary's College Music Department

Alumni



Emily Degg

Class of 2019

**Royal Northern
College of Music**

Emily studied music at St Mary's College between 2017 and 2019. She is currently holder of the prestigious ABRSM undergraduate scholarship at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. She is studying for a BMus (Hons) in Clarinet Performance, having achieved the top grade of a **Distinction*** for her BTEC Music Level 3 qualification whilst at St Mary's.

Emily says:

Even before starting at St Mary's, the Music Department were very supportive of my studies, offering me the chance to attend their SMArts Festival in 2017 to perform with Jess Gillan. At SMC I had the opportunity to perform in both the orchestra and the choir as well as in the band for the annual musical theatre production. I was also very fortunate to perform a movement of the Mozart Clarinet Concerto with the visiting Danum Camerata, an event which was arranged specifically to give advanced students the chance to perform concertos alongside an orchestra. I also had chance to develop my leadership and teaching skills, often being able to lead rehearsals, which enabled me to develop my conducting skills too. Additionally, I arranged some of the pieces that were performed as part of the annual 'Music Caravan' which led me to develop skills which I have been able to carry forward to my degree.

On applying for Music College:

The process of applying and auditioning for a Conservatoire was made so much easier because of the continual support of Music Department staff; whether this was supporting my application with references, accompanying me in practice sessions, arranging extra tuition or just being on hand to talk things through, there was always someone there to support me every step of the way. Their experience and wisdom really helped to put me at ease during what can be a very stressful process.

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Jack Rudd

Class of 2019

**Royal Marines
Band Service**

Jack studied Music at St Mary's College between 2017 and 2019. He completed a BTEC Level 3 in Music Performance and achieved the top grade of a **Distinction***. As well as being a talented performer Jack also developed skills in composition, analysis and music theory throughout his time at St Mary's.

Jack says:

I have been a musician-in-training with the Royal Marines Band Service since September 2019. After basic training at the Royal Marines Commando Training Centre, I moved to Portsmouth to begin my music training. I am continuing to play the trumpet whilst also beginning to learn the violin. My day includes things such as practicing with the world-famous parade bands that the Marines are known for, as well as receiving tuition from some of the best players in the UK, all whilst being paid as a full-time member of the Royal Marines. As of September 2020 I have been a part of the Royal Marines band service for a year and it is definitely something I would recommend. It is one of the best military music careers in the world and absolutely worth the hard work. My training so far has pushed me beyond where I thought I was capable, both physically and mentally and has wholly improved me as an individual.

On St Mary's:

St Mary's has a very good Music department. There is space for private practice and the IT facilities provide everything that you need, such as Sibelius and Logic Pro. The supportive learning environment means that teachers are able to help, guide and nurture you as much as they can. The music courses allow you to progress and definitely set you up for a career in Music.

St Mary's College Music Department

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Campbell Masson
Class of 2020

**Guildhall School
of Music and Drama**

Campbell studied at St Mary's College between 2013 and 2020. He now attends the prestigious Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, studying Jazz Performance. Campbell made a huge contribution to the Music Department at St Mary's, developing skills in conducting, composing and arranging alongside achieving the top grade of a **Distinction*** for his BTEC in Music Performance.

Campbell says:

Moving to London and the Guildhall has been life-changing. I've had the chance to watch and play with some of the big names in the industry as well as receiving tuition from world class educators. My usual day involves 3+ hours of private practice alongside classes, rehearsals, recording sessions and attending gigs. My advice to anyone considering pursuing Music seriously would be to trust your gut and go for it. The greatest thing I've learnt over the last year is to trust myself and commit fully to whatever I do. It may seem scary but if you have a passion for any creative practice then invest in yourself and you will go far.

On St Mary's:

I really feel like SMC gave me an environment in which I could discover the deeper workings and meanings of Music, a 'safe space' where mistakes and wrong turns were simply treated as part of the learning journey. I felt like my teachers really invested in me personally and gave me the confidence to trust my instincts and pursue my dream.

On the Associate Artist programme:

Working with Rob Barron (acclaimed jazz musician and SMC alumni) was an incredible opportunity which really kickstarted my move down to London. Rob is an amazing musician and brilliant educator and the experience of working with him was invaluable.