

STUDYING PERCUSSION

The Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music and Performance is a thriving hub of diverse musical practices in performance, composition, research, teaching and industry engagement. We are home to an exciting community of undergraduate, postgraduate and professional musicians, performers, and researchers working across classical, electronic, experimental, jazz, interdisciplinary and popular music.

Collaboration, creativity, excellence, inclusivity, diversity and community are at the heart of what we do. Our students are innovative, forward-looking and internationally informed, and celebrate Australian performing arts and its place in the world.

PERCUSSION AT MONASH

The Monash Percussion Studio offers a wide range of performance focus areas including solo, chamber, orchestral, contemporary, and experimental percussion, as well as options to study global music traditions, electronic music, artistic research, and composition. The percussion curriculum is designed to produce exceptional musicians who are also articulate thinkers and collegial collaborators. Each student's study program is designed according to individual goals and interests. Our concerts champion Australian percussion music alongside significant works of the international percussion canon and interdisciplinary collaborations. Students develop professional skills in interpretation of notated repertoire, improvisation, arranging, and recording, and regularly engage with national and international musical luminaries on campus for performances, workshops and special events. Recent guests include Sammy J (Aus), Eric Whitacre (UK), Kuniko Kato (Japan), Thomas Meadowcroft (Aus/Germany), Claire Edwardes (Aus), Fritz Hauser (Switzerland), as well as organisations Speak Percussion (Aus) and Clocked Out (Qld). Monash Percussion Studio is diverse and welcoming to all, bringing together undergraduate and postgraduate musicians. A musical journey at Monash enables you to successfully embark on your chosen musical path beyond university, along with supportive peers who will become friends for life!



PERCUSSION CLASSES

Students participate in percussion ensembles, one-to-one lessons, workshops, and artistic practice classes, plus other special opportunities. Students develop skills in interpretation and performance of notated repertoire, improvisation, arranging, and recording, and regularly engage with national and international percussive artists.

PERCUSSION TEACHERS

Percussion tutors include Dr Louise Devenish, Niki Johnson, and Hamish Upton. Drumset tutors include Alastair McGrath-Kerr, Danny Fischer and Dave Beck.

Students also interact with interdisciplinary artist-researchers from The Sound Collectors Lab. monash.edu/arts/music-performance/the-sound-collectors-lab

Monash is a QS World University Ranking Top 50 university (#36 in 2026).

MEET OUR PERCUSSION TEACHING STAFF AND STUDENTS



**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
LOUISE DEVENISH
PERCUSSION COORDINATOR**

Louise Devenish is a percussionist whose creative practice blends performance, collaboration and artistic research. As a soloist and with ensembles Decibel, The Sound Collectors Lab, and Speak Percussion, she performs around Australasia, Europe, North America and UK. Louise's work has been acknowledged with numerous awards for performance, teaching and research, including a Churchill Fellowship, multiple APRA AMCOS Art Music Awards (including Performance of the Year Award 2020 and Luminary Award 2020), Australian Research Council fellowships (2020, 2026) and the UWA Early Career Teaching Award (2016). In addition to her role as Percussion Coordinator, she is Graduate Research Program Director (music), and director of The Sound Collectors Lab. This creative lab is dedicated to the research, development and creation of new music, in collaboration with musicians, visual artists, designers, technologists, and scientists. www.louisedevenish.com.au



**NIKI JOHNSON
POSTGRADUATE STUDENT**

Niki Johnson is a percussionist, improviser and composer-performer whose musical practice explores sound, theatre and relationships through collaboration.

Niki is currently undertaking a PhD at Monash University developing her sculptural percussion practice, working with glass, ceramics, and mycelium.

Niki is Creative Associate with Ensemble Offspring, and was a Speak Percussion Bespoke Artist (2022), and nominee of the Classical Freedman Fellowship (2021). She has been commissioned to create solo percussion works for the Sydney Opera House Play Space, Sydney Powerhouse Museum and Art Gallery of New South Wales.

As a freelance percussionist she has performed with Speak Percussion, Synergy Percussion, and recorded for the ABC, Sydney Opera House, and Fox studios. <https://niki-johnson.com/>



**JAY SUCHER
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT**

Jay Sucher is a Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Arts student at Monash University.

They regularly perform repertoire with the Monash Percussion Studio, Monash Academy Orchestra, Classical Collective, and special projects with guest artists Speak Percussion, Sonya Lifschitz, and Monash University Museum of Art.

Jay is Principal Percussionist of Preston Symphony Orchestra, section percussionist in Victorian Youth Symphony Orchestra, and co-founder of the Polaris Percussion Duo.

Jay has collaborated on several new percussion works with Australian composers, and was a finalist for the 2025 Monash Percussion Prize.

As a recording artist, Jay has recorded percussion for numerous theatre programs, and live-to-air on 3MBS Radio.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Associate Professor Louise Devenish
Percussion Coordinator
E: louise.devenish@monash.edu



monash.edu/arts/music-performance/home

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