



PRESS RELEASE
Wednesday 6th March 2013

Hacking To Make Music Accessible

Drake Music launches making day to inspire the creation of more accessible musical instruments.

On Sunday 21 April Drake Music will run a hackday to create and share new instruments that break down disabling barriers to music making. Run in partnership with Furtherfield and Music Hackspace, makers will have the opportunity to work towards one of two prizes for the most innovative work

The Accessible Music Hack Day is part of Drake Music's new R&D programme, which aims to:

- Increase the number of instruments available to those facing disabling barriers
- Engage with makers and developers in a spirit of openness for the benefit of the community
- Test and distribute best practice in assistive music technology (AMT)

As of January 2013 there are only 6 widely available solutions for accessible music making. In contrast an orchestra is made up of at least 19 instrument types, rock and pop frequently uses 4 or more types and the instruments used in world, electronic, jazz and folk musics add up to a rich and diverse pallet of choice for most aspiring musicians. This disparity needs to be bridged, in particular with the development of more *expressive* musical instruments for those facing barriers to music making.

'Hacking To Make Music Accessible' is developed with and supported by Music Hackspace and Furtherfield. This event is also a precursor to a series of projects and initiatives which will be hosted at the WeShare Lab later this year.

"I have been bowled over by the enthusiasm and seriousness of the hacking community when faced with the question of how we can create and develop new tools to make music making accessible. This event is the first of many, and allows us to collaborate with the widest range of talent in creating the most innovative tools for a sector that desperately needs them. "

For further information contact Gawain Hewitt: gawainhewitt@drakemusic.org
Notes to editors:

About Drake Music

Drake Music breaks down disabling barriers to music through innovative approaches to making, learning and teaching music. Now in its 25th year, Drake Music continues to play a pioneering role in the development and imaginative use of Assistive Music Technology (AMT) to make music accessible.

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Drake Music is the only organisation in England specialising in the use of Assistive Music Technology (AMT) to break down (physical/societal) barriers to participation.

Our focus is on nurturing creativity through exploring music and technology in imaginative ways. We put quality music making at the heart of everything we do, connecting disabled and non-disabled people locally, nationally and internationally. Drake Music is an Arts Council NPO.

The Hack Day is part of Drake Music's Research & Development programme, which seeks to increase the number of quality accessible musical instruments by stimulating, supporting and testing the development of new instrument types. We wish to see innovation across all possible solution areas from adaptations of acoustic instruments, new Assistive Music Technology (AMT) and things we have not yet imagined.

<http://www.drakemusic.org/>

Furtherfield

Furtherfield is a not-for-profit organisation for art technology and social change. We believe that through creative and critical engagement with practices in art and technology people are inspired and enabled to become active co-creators of their cultures and societies. Founded in 1997 as an independent, online platform for thinkers and makers who used the Internet as an artistic medium, Furtherfield opened London's first gallery for networked digital art in 2005. In Spring 2012 Furtherfield Gallery relocated to the McKenzie Pavilion in the middle of Finsbury Park, North London, supported by Haringey Council. The Gallery has attracted excellent reviews and over 5000 visitors in its first nine months of programming. Furtherfield is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation that offers "a physical space where artists and local communities can discover, create and be part of the debate around digital art" (Moirá Sinclair, London Executive Director of ACE).

Since 2004 Furtherfield has worked with people of diverse backgrounds, access needs and ages to create ambitious multi-format digital arts projects via commissions by institutional partners including: Science Museum, A New Direction/Creative Partnerships, Drake Music, V&A, St Mungo's charity for homeless people; also working closely with many London-based schools and universities. Haringey Council has recently agreed that Furtherfield (as part of a joint initiative with Drake Music called WeShare) should use another park building as a community technology space. This will host future tech clubs and participant-led projects.

<http://www.furtherfield.org/>

Music Hackspace

The London Music Hackspace originated as a subgroup of the London Hackspace as a place to share thoughts, knowledge, technologies, processes and aesthetics on music and audio. We foster innovation by gathering skilled professionals and facilitating exchanges between disciplines, from software development to music installations and production. The Music Hackspace organises weekly events, including presentations and talks by artists and musicians, workshops, performances and unexpected collaborations. We're proud members of London Hackspace.

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<http://musichackspace.org/>

WeShare

Drake Music and Furtherfield have come together to create 'We Share', a new initiative building on the combined creative assets, specialisms and strengths of both our organisations. In a series of projects in the first phase of WeShare, supported by an organizational development grant from Arts Council England, we tested and piloted new ways of working and collaborating through projects such as Pecha Kucha Beta and Deconstructing Pecha Kucha. This year will see the launch of the WeShare Lab, which will support and host events similar to 'Hacking to Make Music Accessible'.

'We Share' has emerged from three years of successful partnership-working between Drake Music and Furtherfield who share a critical and creative engagement with art, music and technology with a focus on participation and collaboration. It aims to amplify the existing quality, reach and value of our organisations' work, finding new ways to share knowledge, ideas, resources and opportunities; creating new ways of producing and sustaining socially engaged art and culture.

<http://www.we-share.org.uk/>



FURTHERFIELD



We
share



Supported by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

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