

>> Snapshot

Janette Mason

Composer Arranger Performer

Musicians' Union



“There is a lot of information packed into each day, which makes them so worthwhile and I’ve learnt many new skills by attending”

Can you tell us a bit about your career to date?

It has always been about music for me. I started as a gigging musician and have performed with artists such as Seal, Oasis, k.d. Lang and Robert Wyatt.

I met many different industry professionals along the way, which developed into me writing music for TV, film and adverts, including Sex and the City, Come Dine with Me as well as films such as Ruby Blue and The Calling. I was also Musical Director on TV for Jonathan Ross and Antoine De Caunes.

I compose contemporary jazz for my ‘Red Alert’ and this year released my third CD. I have also produced many albums for other artists including Lea DeLaria and Peter Borthwick.

I’ve had a varied career. I love to teach and work with groups and individuals. I am also currently Musical Director at Hideaway a great music venue in London.

What do you like most about your work?

I love the variety of what I do. I enjoy the musical director role most, which gives me the opportunity to direct and play live, while working with other musicians using all the skills I’ve gained and honed over the years.

What are the biggest challenges of maintaining a freelance career?

The biggest challenge for me is the constant change in technology. It can be tough keeping up with all the changes in software and having to constantly self-promote through the various social media platforms. The lack of a regular income can also be a challenge.

Have you added new skills to your portfolio over time?

Definitely - I’ve learned how to use software programmes like Sibelius music notation software and Logic, a professional recording package.

It’s essential to do this if you want to keep up and enhance what you are producing. I want to make sure that what I create looks and sounds as professional as possible.

Using the best software and digital recording equipment helps me produce high quality demos for people, which of course is good for business.

What is the biggest challenge of learning the skills that you need?

That’s easy - time and money.

What FEU Training courses have you attended?

- Run a social media campaign
- Writing for business

What are the most important things that you’ve learned?

One of the real benefits of attending the training was that it confirmed that my current practices are correct, which is always great to know. As well as gaining that reassurance, the courses have also helped me expand and develop how I now use social media.

There is a lot of information packed into each day, which makes them so worthwhile and I’ve learnt many new skills by attending.



Janette Mason

Composer Arranger Performer

Musicians' Union

The social media day has made me much more aware of the available platforms out there and how to streamline the way I use them. What I learned has made me work much more effectively. I now schedule more of my social media marketing and am planning ahead too.

One of the key messages I got from the Writing for Business day was to be really clear and direct in all your interactions and marketing. I've definitely been consciously practising this more and I'm seeing a change in the responses I am now getting.

Attending the workshops has given me additional confidence, not just from getting confirmation about what I was doing right, but by allowing me to build on that with new skills and information.

What has encouraged you to attend FEU training sessions?

I'd been seeing the notices for the workshops for a long time, so when I had some free time I came along. It is always good to learn new things.

It can be very isolating being a one-person band so it's great to interact and find out what is going on elsewhere in the industry.

Because attendees are from all four of the participating creative unions, you get insights into what is going on elsewhere. Everyone attending FEU Training is coming from a different perspective, so we all learn from each other. It's a fantastic networking opportunity.

FEU Training offers a very good, broad range of courses on topics that are essential for creative freelancers. They

|||||

"Because attendees are from all four of the participating creative unions, you get insights into what is going on elsewhere...It's a fantastic networking opportunity"

|||||

are all kept up to date as technology changes which makes them so valuable, so please keep doing it!

Do you know any other organisation that offers business skills courses for creative?

No.

