**The Music Therapy Charity**

**MA Bursaries for trainees on Music Therapy Training courses in the UK**

Cat Stiles

Nordoff Robbins Music Therapy Masters Course

The bursary has been incredibly beneficial for me, allowing more time to focus on my studies with less financial strain. I have been able to cut down on my working hours outside of the course and thus devote more time to wider reading and practicing. This has had an impact on my energy and enthusiasm for my course and for the music therapy profession as a whole. I have been able to dedicate more time to learning about and developing my musicianship whilst also reading around the Nordoff Robbins tradition and the professional music therapy world, of which I aspire to become a part of. Furthermore, with this bursary, I have been able to continue counseling as part of my personal development through the course. This has been an essential opportunity to evaluate and reflect on my journey thus far.

My placements throughout first year have been some of the most challenging but rewarding experiences I have had. From working with young children with special needs to teenagers suffering with mental health problems, I have been fortunate enough to experience the benefits that music therapy can bring to others, whilst developing my skillset as a trainee music therapist. In addition to these experiences, through supervision and seminars with the tutors, my perception of myself as a musician has transformed. I rarely improvised music prior to this training course, but now have developed skills and a mindset to be able to do so. I have been working on both my piano and guitar playing, and have had more time to focus on this since receiving the bursary. This has been crucial to my development on this course.

I look forward to completing my second year, and continuing to develop both personally and musically on this exciting, challenging and incredibly rewarding course.