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Edited by Professor Michael Burden, Elizabeth Green and Jasper Minton-Taylor
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Cover image: Aboud Kaplo plays a nineteenth-century violin borrowed from the Bate Collection of Musical Instruments.

From the Chairman of the Board

To my mind, nothing captured the events of this year with such economy and accuracy as this hand-drawn poster, which appeared at one of the faculty protests around the country. Many of you will be aware that staff of UK Universities have been on strike but will have associated it mainly with the troubles of our pension provider, the USS. But in fact, it was the tip of a very large iceberg of frustration at the general state of the higher education sector, at the ridiculing of the efforts of those who work in it, and at an impoverished public discourse that does little but pour scorn on its institutions. Sound familiar? It should, for sadly, I can make no claim here for our sector’s exclusivity.

It might seem to be the ultimate in vanity to claim that ‘we are the University’, but the reality is that without its faculty, staff, students and alumni, the University ceases to exist. Marking the 900th anniversary of Europe’s oldest University in Bologna in 1988, 388 heads of universities acknowledged this by drawing up the Magna Charta Universitatum, of which the first two principles are the notions of an autonomous institution, and of freedom in research and training. But as Stefan Collini has pointed out, we have been subjected to ‘the daily erosion of intellectual integrity, the relentless commodification of scholarly values, and the tightening grip of managerial autocracy’ to such an extent that the UK has ranked 28th out of the 28 member states of the EU, as measured by Terence Karran and Lucy Mallinson in their 2017 Europe-wide survey of academic freedom.

One issue is not included in the pictured list, and that is the parlous state of the humanities. The problem is worldwide. A recent article on the importance of History as a subject, which appeared in the Los Angeles Times, commented on the ‘general slighting of humanities disciplines constituted only 6.1% of all bachelor’s degrees awarded in 2014, the lowest proportion since systematic data collection on college majors began in 1948’. There is no single reason for this fall, but central to our plight is the oft-repeated sound bite that they are ‘useless’ subjects, a notion that has been perpetuated by many – remember President Obama on Fine Arts, or vacuous US state governors on History. Their comments fly in the face of much evidence that ‘the most useful degrees are those that can open multiple doors, and those that prepare one to learn rather than do some specific thing’. We will need you, our alumni, to advocate for the subject, for the humanities, and for the broader idea of the University more than ever before; the wolves are not at the gate, they have moved into the guest room.

On 31 August I will be stepping down as Faculty Board Chair. I have accomplished some of the things I had hoped to achieve, both big and small; although it would be inappropriate to list them, I don’t mind admitting to having had those goals, for why take on such a role if you have none? The one development I would choose to mention is the establishment of the Sounds of South Asia series, one we have built on the back of the Oxford visit of Rahat Fateh Ali Khan in 2017. My choice may come as a surprise to those who know me as a scholar of (very) Western opera, but the series represents the interests of a range of different communities in Oxford, new audiences for the Faculty concert series, and an expansion of repertories performed here. Further, it echoes some of the developments that have been taking place in the Faculty’s curriculum. And above all, it speaks through performance to a wider, more international, musical world.

And as my predecessor, Jonathan Cross, found, the one thing that will not be missed in life after FBC are the Friday afternoon meetings in the central University. Next year I am off to my home-from-home, the Huntington Library in Los Angeles, where I intend to put my head down to make up for some lost writing time. Or, as the Humanities Division might express it, the (research) train has left the station, in the (right) direction of travel, going forward, and (we hope) the results will survive a robust measure against relevant criteria.

Michael Burden
Chair, Music Faculty Board, 2015–18

Suzanne Aspden will become Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Music on 1 September.
We are delighted to announce the appointment of Steven Grahl as the new Associate Professor in the Faculty of Music, Organist at Christ Church Cathedral, and Tutor in Music at Christ Church.

Professor Robert Saxton has written a replacement for the Agnus Dei in Mozart’s Requiem, originally written by Süssmayer. Saxton’s version will be recorded by the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Singers in June, under the conductorship of Debbie Wiseman. The piece will form part of the soundtrack for a psycho-drama about Mozart, directed by Peter Kominsky (Worcester, 1976), whose Wolf Hall won a BAFTA.

In July, Saxton’s Introit (Chorale) on a text of WH Auden will be sung during the retirement service for Professor Stephen Darlington in Christ Church Cathedral. Saxton has also recently completed his String Quartet No. 4, written for the Kreutzer Quartet. This seven-movement work will be premiered soon at St John’s Smith Square, London.

July 2017 saw the premiere of Professor Martyn Harry’s Green Brushes for Brass Band, performed by the City of Cambridge Brass Band and conducted by the composer.

In Birmingham, February 2018, period instrumentalist Jamie Savant premiered Harry’s Palimpsest for solo cornett and live electronics. The work was then repeated at The Art of Noises event in March at Modern Art Oxford.

In May, Harry’s reworking of Alban Berg’s Bruchstücke aus ‘Wozzeck’ (Fragments from ‘Wozzeck’) was premiered at the first ever Bergfrühling (Berg Spring) Chamber Music Festival. The event was held in the idyllic town of Kärnten, Austria, nestled in the southern Alps.

Robert Saxton: Piano Music, performed by Clare Hammond, piano (Toccata Classics, 2018)

This recording, with Saxton’s Hortus Musicae cycle at its centre, is the culmination of a long collaboration between performer and composer.

Bloch, Ligeti & Dallapiccola: Suites for solo cello, performed by Natalie Clein (Hyperion, 2017)

‘A wonderful and compelling recording by Natalie Clein demonstrating the art of cello-playing at its most intimate – physical, lyrical and beautifully recorded.’ Martin Cullingford, Editor’s Choice, Gramophone

Roger Allen, Wilhelm Furtwängler: Art and the Politics of the Unpolitical (Boydell, 2018)

Wilhelm Furtwängler (1886 - 1954) was both a renowned conductor of Austro-German music and a high-profile member of the Third Reich. Here, Roger Allen provides a nuanced analysis of a man who remains controversial today.

Boydell & Brewer are pleased to offer readers of the Oxford Musician a 25% discount on orders Roger Allen’s new book. Quote BB572 when prompted at the checkout at www.boydellandbrewer.com or via telephone: 01243 843291 or emailing customer@wiley.com. Offer ends 31 August 2018

Robert Quinney: Hubert Parry: Songs of Farewell (OUP, 2017)

Quinney used the autograph manuscripts held in Oxford University’s own Bodleian Libraries as well as early printed editions to provide a fresh look on these much-loved pieces.


The first major study of Alan Bush, this book provides new perspectives on twentieth-century music and communism.


The studies in this volume are based on the idea that a global history of music cannot be one single, hegemonic history. The chapters address historical practices and interpretations of music in different parts of the world.
In early 1920, Danish tenor Mischa Léon announced that his next recital in London would include a group of Lieder. This would hardly be thought cause for comment today, but there was outrage in the press at the time. The German language had not been heard in an English concert room since the start of the war in 1914, according to music critic Ernest Newman. When Léon eventually appeared at the Aeolian Hall there were protests from a ‘small but noisy section of patriots’. The singer prevailed, and gradually others were emboldened to reintroduce lieder to their programmes. Once visa restrictions were lifted, native German speakers began to reappear in London and debates over singing in translation were quashed by a preference for hearing Lieder in the original language.

The interwar period is most often discussed in relation to its new musical idioms: modernism, jazz, popular song and film soundtracks. Yet stories like the above illustrate the ways that performances of a seemingly canonical and modest musical genre such as Lieder can reflect complex political, social and aesthetic issues. The songs of Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Wolf and Strauss were sung throughout the 1920s and 1930s in traditional settings: in the home, in the classroom and on concert platforms. They were also disseminated via mass media: gramophone recordings, radio broadcasts and cinema. Singing in the Age of Anxiety uses Lieder performance as a way to reassess not only the performance culture around German art-song, but also historical narratives that privilege new practices over the old. In so doing it becomes apparent that many of today’s habits derive not from the nineteenth century but from, for example, listening and marketing strategies that developed around the gramophone – from performing complete song cycles to preferring more regular tempi.

The four chapters of the book first trace the relationship between Europe and America after the First World War, by looking at the transatlantic careers of musicians such as German-American contralto Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Irish tenor John McCormack, African American tenor Roland Hayes and composer Richard Strauss. Second, the use of translations in concert, on recordings and radio, and in film (particularly the ‘Multi-language versions’ of the late 1920s), traces attitudes towards live and recorded performances and examines repertoire choices. Third, the many clubs at which Lieder were sung on both sides of the Atlantic are explored, revealing the tensions between ‘old society’ and new media. Fourth, the politics of the 1930s form a backdrop to considering the politics of reception, using Lieder singers as case studies. These include Elisabeth Schumann, who fled Nazi Germany to London and then New York; African American Marian Anderson, who famously defied Jim Crow laws to stage a broadcast concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial; and Norwegian Kirsten Flagstad, who was accused of being a Nazi sympathiser.

Historian Richard Overy has observed that interwar ‘networks of anxiety’ were reflected in a preoccupation with the potential destruction of what was called ‘civilization’. Productive international relations, an appreciation of the arts, and the responsible use of media technologies were already perceived to be under threat in the 1920s. During the 1930s, economic depression and aggressive nationalist agendas heightened concerns. With the outbreak of the Second World War, however, a very different approach to German music and musicians was taken in London and New York.
than had been the case in 1914. The influx of émigrés from Europe encouraged – for the most part – a rhetoric of inclusion and the celebration of a shared cultural heritage at risk of being tarnished by its association with Nazism. Pianist Myra Hess ran a series of daily concerts at the National Gallery throughout the war, featuring established German singers such as Elena Gerhardt as well as young British artists including Kathleen Ferrier and Peter Pears. Hess explained: ‘I realise that music is of the utmost importance. All normal life has suddenly ceased, and every element of spiritual influence will be needed to sustain our courage, and our sanity’. Lieder performances were thus inherently political acts, advocating for a civilization that sometimes still feels at risk today.
In May 2017 we were approached by alumna Susie Attwood (Queen’s, 2005) with an interesting request. Susie was working on her debut documentary *The Wait*, about the plight of refugees fleeing from the civil war in Syria, which focused on a group of Syrian Orthodox refugees living in a monastery outside Beirut.

When Susie visited the monastery, she was impressed with the talent and dedication of one of the boys living there: Aboud Kaplo. He and his family had fled the fighting in Aleppo the previous year. The only possession he had been able to bring with him was a violin. As an accomplished violinist herself, Susie recognised the limitations of his instrument.

Unbeknownst to the Kaplo family, she had set out to make a huge difference in Aboud’s musical capabilities. The Kaplos were visited by a translator from the documentary team, who had some surprises for the family, including greeting cards from Attwood. And for Aboud, there was a prized violin on loan from the Bate Collection.

‘I was overjoyed. I couldn’t believe it, that it was happening’. He said the difference between his old violin and the Bate instrument was ‘amazing’.

The Bate Collection holds more than 2,000 instruments that date from medieval to modern times. The violin we sent to Aboud is a nineteenth-century instrument made in Germany by Wolff Brothers, and once belonged to former curator of the collection, Hélène La Rue.
Aboud wrote to us at the Bate Collection to explain his enthusiasm, ‘My passion for music started when I joined the boy scouts in Syria. My parents noticed that passion and I asked my father to attend music classes. I wanted to learn how to play the violin. I felt that I can express both my joyful and sad moments as I play on this instrument.

My mother tried several times to encourage me to study at school so I could become a doctor and my answer to her was always that I will not become a doctor but a violinist. I knew that is what I want and is my purpose in life.

When I got the new violin it was the happiest day of my life and I couldn’t believe my eyes. Now with this new violin I could reach new levels in playing and learn new techniques’.

In April 2018 Aboud and his family finally received the necessary documentation to emigrate to Australia (with his new violin) and Susie is currently seeking funding to allow him to study at a music school there.
After 33 years, Professor Stephen Darlington is retiring as Director of Music and Tutor at Christ Church. Emma Dillon, one of Stephen’s former students and King’s College London Professor, interviews Stephen about his time here at Oxford.

How did your love of music begin?

I was at a direct-grant school in Worcester, and like lots of children I learned piano and violin. The particular combination of teachers there made all the difference: Christopher Robinson was the organist at Worcester Cathedral, and his assistant, Harry Bramma, was the Director of Music in my school. Together, they were a brilliant team. At 16, I also took on a local parish choir in Salwarpe – as early as that, I developed a love for forging something musical out of community.

You were an undergraduate and organ scholar at Christ Church (1971 - 74). How did the music curriculum in your day compare to today?

The differences were considerable. The course was largely techniques based, and at least five papers were harmony and counterpoint in the exam room. Imagine that! There was an analysis paper and set works (mine were Corelli’s Concerti Grossi, Handel’s Susanna, and Buxtehude’s organ works), keyboard skills and a performance option. There were two history papers (900 - 1600 and 1600 - present day), and while there were conventions about what topics would arise, there was much more flexibility. While the scholarship had not developed in the way it has done in the last 30 years, there was something to be said for the fact that it wasn’t too prescriptive.

What were your unexpected musical discoveries?

One was late nineteenth-century orchestral music, and I remember getting fairly obsessed with Strauss. The early music revival was underway, and with Simon Preston (Organist and Tutor, Christ Church, 1970 - 81) the choir performed lots of Handel. It had such energy and dynamism – that was a discovery for me. Walton (Christ Church, 1918) was another. I loved the vibrancy of his music.

You returned to Christ Church in 1985 after stints at Canterbury and St Albans. What were your ambitions for the choir when you took over?

My main motivation has been to develop, in a monastic way, the daily singing within the liturgy at a very high, consistent standard. At Christ Church, I felt there was a contribution I could make to this aesthetic form of worship. When people come into a church such as ours and hear wonderful music performed well, they find it uplifting.

Another desire has been to develop ground-breaking repertoire. There’s lots to be said for having broad taste: that’s very much who I am. I get very excited by music of the Eton Choirbook of which we’ve recorded five discs; and at the other end of the spectrum, by performing and recording New Music, for example Howard Goodall’s Requiem (2008).

The 51 recordings made during your tenure reflect an extraordinary expansion of the choir’s repertoire. What has guided your choices?

Part of that has been connected to my academic interests. For instance, our recent recording of Durante’s Requiem (2016) emerged from a lecture course involving eighteenth-century Italian liturgical music. I’d not encountered much Durante before, but my teaching prompted me to investigate it and that turned into the recording, and also an editing project.

Other discoveries have been by chance. In 1990 we went to Prague for a television...
broadcast to mark the first Christmas celebrated there since the collapse of 40 years of Communism. The concert, which involved Plácido Domingo, was unforgettable. There was so much optimism. I’d persuaded Domingo to perform a setting of Janáček’s Ave Maria. While I knew and loved the operas, I’d never come across music of this kind before. So Domingo sang it, and sang it beautifully, and it sowed a seed for a later recording project.

What’s your advice for young composers of choral music?

Don’t make it too difficult! Practical and singable music produces the best results, whatever the style.

Recordings

Francesco Durante: Requiem (Coro, 2017)

In an exciting new collaboration, three musical ensembles come together in this premiere recording of Darlington’s edition of this eighteenth century piece.

Howard Goodall: Invictus – A Passion (Coro, 2018) (forthcoming)

Christ Church form another musical powerhouse in this recording of Howard Goodall’s major new work.

The Door to Paradise: Music from The Eton Choirbook (Avie Records, 2018) (forthcoming)

All five discs of the choir’s exploration of the sine qua non of English sacred vocal music are brought together for the first time.
About the Author:
Des Oliver (Worcester, 2012) recently completed a doctorate in composition and critical writing at the Faculty of Music, having previously studied composition at the Royal Academy of Music and Guildhall School. He is currently the curator for the Oxford Music Faculty’s Sounds of South Asia Series.

Exploring the Sounds of South Asia
In February 2018 the Music Faculty held its first Sounds of South Asia concert at the Holywell Music Room. Inspired by a performance given by the Qawwali singer Rahat Fateh Ali Khan at the Sheldonian Theatre in May 2017, the series is an attempt to promote the music of South Asian musicians through concerts, workshops, and talks.

The concert comprised a mixed programme of exquisite north Indian rags sung by the Hindustani vocalist and musicologist Dr Shruti Jauhari, accompanied by tabla player Janan Sathiendran, and pianist and harmonium player Rekesh Chauhan. The programme also included Western classical works influenced by India, including French composer Maurice Delage’s Quatre poèmes, performed by graduate soprano Hannah McDermott (St Anne’s, 2016) and the University’s New Music group, Ensemble Isis, conducted by Dr John Traill.

Oliver’s work was loosely modelled on some of the principal formal characteristics of raga. The harmonic language was created by superimposing several traditional night-time ragas. ‘My treatment of this material is inescapably Western and not intended to be period- or provenance-authentic in any way. As with Delage’s Quatre poèmes, his collaborative worth with Jauhari. ‘It was a challenge for all involved; precision plays such an important role in both traditions but in completely different ways. The conductor, John Traill, given the success of their first project, both artists are currently seeking arts funding in order to continue their collaborative journey.

The next Sounds of South Asia concert featured the Mysore Brothers, a violin duo of the South Indian Carnatic tradition, who performed at the Holywell Music Room on Tuesday 8 May at the invitation of Oliver and their former pupil and DPhil student Alice Barron (Somerville, 2014).

Next year, Oliver is keen for the series to branch out into the local community, and is looking to set up South Asian workshops involving local schools.

‘I felt it important not only to study aspects of Indian classical music in preparation for my composition but to work directly with musicians with a background in Hindustani music’

Quatre poèmes hindous, performed by graduate soprano Hannah McDermott (St Anne’s, 2016) and the University’s New Music group, Ensemble Isis, conducted by Dr John Traill.

At the centre of the programme was the premiere of Des Oliver’s composition Mallikāmoda (delightful jasmine flower in Sanskrit). Inspired by a lesser-known fable from the Padma Purana, the piece uses both sets of performers and serves as a bridge between Indian and Western classical traditions. The collaboration between Jauhari and Oliver began with a series of Skype discussions on subjects ranging from form, metre, tone colour and contour, as well as the idiosyncrasies of their respective musical traditions. In preparation for the piece, Oliver researched some of the history, theory and performance practices of Hindustani music, as well as studying repertoire recommended by Dr Jauhari.

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As Indian classical music is predominantly an oral tradition, Oliver was unable to rely on Western notation in had not previously heard the improvised material until the final rehearsal when the two groups were put together. For Shruti Jauhari, it was a challenge improvising against a fixed piece of music with quite a complex harmonic language. It was also a challenge communicating my ideas to performers from such a different musical tradition without the common frames of reference (i.e. notation, terminology, repertoire, etc.), and at the same time providing enough detail in the score for the conductor. This work arose from a cross-pollination of traditions and concepts, so the jasmine flower seemed like an appropriate subject’.

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Indian Bengali singer and songwriter Moushumi Bhowmik will give a talk as part of the graduate Research Colloquium series titled: Migration, Memory and Music: Field Recordings from Bengal and the Diaspora, 16 October 2018, 5.15pm, free entry

Information about Bhowmik can be found here: thetravellingarchive.org
Working in the Opera

Benjamin Holder (St Catherine’s, 2009) is perched in a crow’s nest on one side of the orchestra pit at the Dominion Theatre in London’s West End. The show is Bat out of Hell (the Meatloaf musical) and he communicates with the band solely via headset and camera: ‘I can’t really see any of them anyway once the car crashes into the pit’, he says casually. I may be a man of the theatre, but when it comes to the cables, cues, and click-tracks of a major West-End musical, I find myself way out of my depth.

Benjamin and I met at Oxford, where we both studied Music and held the New Chamber Opera (NCO) Répétiteur Scholarship. We had never accompanied operas before, but under the expert guidance of harpsichordist and NCO Musical Director Steven Devine (St Peter’s, 1992) we were soon rolling and rippling recitative chords to our hearts’ content.

The NCO summer opera gives each year’s répétiteur scholars the chance to work with professional soloists and the company’s period ensemble, The Band of Instruments. For conductor and viola player Jam Orrell (St Catherine’s, 2014) this collaboration provided the impetus and inspiration to set up their own historical performance ensemble, The Bate Players. ‘It gave
me real inside experience of how to work with period instruments and direct from the harpsichord’ says Jam, who is currently studying at the Royal Academy of Music for a Masters in Historical Performance.

Graduates Harry Sever (Queen’s, 2010) and Edmund Whitehead (Hertford, 2011) have both gone on to work in opera. Harry is currently a Young Artist Conductor at Opera in Holland Park, where he is assisting on La Traviata. He comments on his time as a NCO Répétiteur: ‘I was struck by how the NCO Studio was led by students, but run like a professional company’. Edmund is currently working at Grange Park Opera as an assistant on Un Ballo in Maschera. In September, he joins the Royal Opera House as part of the prestigious Jette Parker Young Artist Programme.

Finalist Chloe Rooke (St Catherine’s, 2015) says that in her three years with NCO ‘I have learnt so much about singer and orchestra relationships and how to fix problems in performance when things go wrong ... at its heart, I think NCO is really about encouraging students to be ambitious.’ Chloe enrols next year on the Masters in Orchestral Conducting led by Sian Edwards at the Royal Academy of Music.

For Benjamin Holder (St Catherine’s, 2009), training in opera gave him a set of transferable skills, which he now uses every day in his role for Bat out of Hell. His recent MD work includes two pantomimes and Bugsy Malone at the Lyric Hammersmith, The Entertainer with the Kenneth Branagh Theatre Company at the Garrick, and the national tour of Crazy for You.

My own experience with NCO was defined by my very first project with the company. Andrew Gant’s Don’t Go Down the Elephant after Midnight starred soprano Patricia Rozario as a Mozart-obsessed London cabby called Pat, who never drove anywhere without her trusty recording of Le nozze di Figaro. The work fused Gant’s music with tape-recorded excerpts from Figaro. Having never worked on an opera before, I decided it was logical to practise Gant’s new score, so that I would be ready to play along with the pre-recorded excerpts in rehearsals. I shall never forget my first session at Rozario’s house in London: ‘Right then, Jonathan, shall we go from the top?’ asked Professor Michael Burden. ‘Um, that’s the Figaro overture’, I replied. ‘Haven’t you got the tape?’ ‘No’, replied Michael. ‘We won’t have that until the band rehearsals. Off you go...’

It might not have been the world’s most fluent rendition of the Figaro overture, but we all have to start somewhere. Like the rest of my colleagues, I am deeply grateful for the beginning the NCO Répétiteur Scholarship gave me.
I suspect that if I were to ask an Oxford music student why they had decided to study for a music degree, they would probably refer, among other things, to a time when they experienced music as beautiful. Many of us like to think about musical performances as opportunities to experience beauty in music, but are probably less willing to acknowledge that music can also play an active role in situations of violence and conflict. Music has great potential as a therapeutic aid, to heal, calm and restore. But in recent conflicts, music has also been used as a means to inflict pain, or as a coercive tool. Moreover, the language that is used to talk about music can sometimes draw on violent imagery. When someone talks about being overwhelmed or struck by a musical performance, they use words that, figuratively, draw on the language of violence. Music has the potential metaphorically or otherwise to be violent.

In thirteenth-century France, music had just such violent potential. Representations of the Middle Ages on the big or small screen tend to be highly romanticised, and this has affected the way in which music of the middle ages has been approached. We like to imagine medieval courts as sumptuous places, redolent in silk, song, chivalry and courty love. Many love songs by the troubadours and trouvères, poet-singers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, do portray this romanticised picture of courtly life. Some other songs by these poet-singers, though, present a very different view of music’s role in thirteenth-century life. These songs do not expound music’s beauty, but rather show its potential to act powerfully on individuals without their consent.

One genre of song demonstrates this particularly clearly. The jeu-parti consisted of a debate between two poet-singers, who would each sing their side of the debate to the same melody. Typically, poets would debate a love question, such as ‘should you tell your Lady that you love her, or suffer in silence?’ Over 150 jeux-partis survive in a number of thirteenth-century manuscripts, documenting a fashionable but probably short-lived practice of formalised sung debate. Since all stanzas in a jeu-parti were sung to the same melody, the genre provided a terrain on which poet-singers could test their compositional muscles. Poet-singers argued vociferously against each other, refuting the arguments of their opponent not only with reason, but also with insults. They also created intricately interlocking structures of poetry and
music, which an opponent could subvert through their own musico-poetic choices.

What was it about the *jeu-parti* that made it a violent genre of song? In part, it is the single-minded determination of *jeu-parti* singers that gives the genre its violent edge: singers would insult each other, calling each other ‘childish’, ‘foolish’ or ‘stupid’, using any means necessary to defeat their opponent. Participants in the *jeu-parti* describe their debates as ‘struggle’ or ‘war’, violent metaphors that can tell us something about the aesthetics of the genre. Many other agonistic activities were considered in the thirteenth century to be forms of violence. Chess was an integral part of a knight’s education, since it allowed him to simulate battle and to develop tactical thinking. Public debates held at the University of Paris were criticised by some clerics for being too similar to armed combat. King Louis IX replaced trial by armed combat with trial by inquest: instead of defending themselves with the sword, noblemen had to defend themselves with words, but the injury that could be done to their character was just as bad. The substitution or simulation of physical violence through non-physical ritualised competitions was therefore a common phenomenon in thirteenth-century France.

Thirteenth-century competitive play was often couched in the language of violence, in part because violent deeds were associated with prestige. Heroes of medieval French literature such as Lancelot were epitomes of chivalry, a set of attributes that every good knight should possess. Foremost among these attributes was prowess, a knight’s ability to fight with brute strength and a reckless spirit. If the *jeu-parti* was considered to be a form of violence enacted through music, then it seems likely to me that the prestige of prowess would have been sought by poet-singers. We can see this in the musico-poetic decisions that are made in some *jeux-partis*. Sometimes the range of a *jeu-parti* might push beyond the bounds of what is expected tonally or in tessitura. Likewise, the tit-for-tat of stanzas and the subversion of musico-poetic schemes in the course of the debate would suggest a kind of musical one-upmanship, a musical rendering of the attribute of prowess.

Listening to song in the Middle Ages could certainly have been an experience of encountering beauty, but watching a performance of song could also have been a chance to spectate on a violent competition. I believe it is important that we ask questions about music’s role in violent situations, and how violence defines our appreciation and understanding of music. That shouldn’t stop us from finding beauty in music, but it should, at the very least, make us attentive to the less pleasant uses to which music is put.
David Owen Norris (Keble, 1972) is a pianist, composer and broadcaster. He has had a varied career as a répétiteur, concerto soloist and period instrumentalist, and has appeared countless times on BBC radio and television. His work as a composer is more recent, including two large-scale works written in 2015.

We asked Jasper to interview David and find out more about him and his work.

What are your memories of studying at Oxford?

I spent a great deal of my time at Oxford in conversation – not just with musicians, of course. That’s a great strength of the collegiate system. The Music Faculty was next door to the Holywell Music Room in those days, and the Oxford University Music Society concerts made it a central point for me. I was not very sedulous in my attendance at lectures, but I read a great deal, practised continually, performed a lot, and spent two hours a week with John Caldwell.

Outside academia, what did you get involved in?

Keble was a great place to learn about religion, from theology to ecclesiastical politics. And I punted a lot.

What did you do directly after graduating?

When I graduated I went back to the Royal Academy of Music. I’d spent my gap year there, and during my second and third years at Oxford I had lessons there with Alexander Kelly. I lived in a flat next to the Opera House in Covent Garden, and played for passing singers who heard me practising – Jon Vickers amongst them. And I taught myself the harp, to get a job at the Royal Shakespeare Company just down the road. I earned most of my money as a harpist for the next few years.

You are particularly known for championing the work of Elgar. What draws you to this composer?

Of the many, many reasons that I am drawn to Elgar, let me choose just the fact that he could not only hear, but also play, what he wrote.

Another one of your interests is research into early pianos. Can you tell us about the quirkiest piano you’ve ever come across?

The most interesting early piano I know is the Zumpe square at Hatchlands. It’s signed by J C Bach, and it’s just possible that Mozart
played it when he stayed with Bach after his mother died in Paris. The quirkiest is Bizet’s composing piano, in the same collection: a table with keys, really.

Tell us about the Jupiter project. Why the name?

In London in the 1820s, many arrangements of orchestral and operatic repertoire were made for ensemble of flute, violin, cello and piano. One of the earliest was Clementi’s arrangement of Mozart’s C Major Symphony, and it was this publication that first dubbed it The Jupiter. The vogue for these arrangements was long-lived – they include the Mendelssohn’s aunt had in Berlin, divided the sustaining pedal, simply sawing it in two, so that the left-hand slice raised the bass dampers, and the right-hand slice, the treble dampers. I love the idea of Victoria and Albert playing footsie on the sawn-in-two pedal.

At the RNCM, I return to my roots and coach singers.

You are also known as a composer. How do you begin a composition?

First, catch your hare. I like to have an intellectual concept for my compositions, as I’m sure everyone does. My concepts reflect my particular mind, of course. So my oratorio Prayerbook sets, not so much the prayerbook, as its prefaces over the centuries. My piano concerto deals, amongst other things, with the vulgarity of virtuosity – if you don’t feel slightly embarrassed playing the opening of Tchaik One, you ought to, especially if you know the first version. One of the pieces I’m currently working on is loosely based on Cluedo, called The Body in the Ballroom.

Finally, can you tell us about one of your favourite pieces of classical music and why it means so much to you?

Probably Winterreise, not so much for its very considerable intrinsic merits as for the memories it conjures up. I’ve performed it with Sir John Tomlinson and Philip Langridge, with David Wilson-Johnson. We were the first to record it on fortepiano, back in 1984. And I was the first since Liszt to play the whole of Liszt’s transcription of it – and to explain why he transcribed only half of it. I played that in my first American tour, so it reminds me of a lot of wonderful geography.

‘Of the many, many reasons that I am drawn to Elgar, let me choose just the fact that he could not only hear, but also play, what he wrote’
The 2017 BBC Proms (June to September) featured many appearances from Faculty staff and alumni. Professor Robert Quinney performed Bach on the mighty Royal Albert Hall organ, in a concert that included part of a completion of Bach’s Orgelbüchlein by alumnus William Whitehead (University, 1990) and a new chorale prelude composed by alumnus Daniel Saleeb (Magdalen, 2005).

Robert Hollingworth (New, 1985) directed period ensemble I Fagiolini and alumnus Roderick Williams (Magdalen, 1984), who premiered his own vocal composition, Là ci darem la mano.

Mark Simpson (St Catherine’s, 2008) was another composer featured: his ‘blazingly original’ (Alfred Hickling, Guardian) oratorio The Immortals (2015) was performed by a host of players, including the BBC Philharmonic and the Crouch End Festival Chorus.

Other notable contributions included Toby Spence (New, 1988) singing Henry Purcell, arranged by Elgar, and Hugh Brunt (New, 2004), who co-curated and directed music in a special prom in the industrial surroundings of The Tanks at Tate Modern. And in ‘Proms Extra’, Professors Suzanne Aspden and Daniel Grimley introduced, respectively, Handel’s Israel in Egypt and Nielsen’s Symphony No. 2.

In autumn 2017, English Touring Opera made their first foray into French Baroque Opera with Jean-Phillipe Rameau’s Dardanus, conducted by the Faculty’s Dr Jonathan Williams.

Countertenor Andreas Scholl, Humanitas Visiting Professorship in Voice and Classical Music, visited the Faculty of Music to give a number of masterclasses to students. Students commented on his friendliness, warmth and attentiveness.

March saw Faculty celebrations for International Women’s Day. At LSO St Luke’s, London, the BBC Concert Orchestra performed selections from Professor Jeremy Llewellyn’s new critical edition of the oratorio Sant’Elena al Calvario by Marianna von Martines (1744 - 1812). They also performed Russian composer Leokadiya Kashperova’s (1872 - 1940) Symphony in B minor, newly edited by alumna Dr Graham Griffiths (Christ Church, 2004). In Oxford, Artist in Residence Natalie Klein presented a concert formed entirely of women composers, which included the premiere of Faculty-commissioned Network Bed by Hannah Kendall.

In May, Professor Richard Taruskin visited Oxford as part of his reception of the 2017 Kyoto Prize for Arts and Philosophy. He lectured at the Blavatnik School of Government on Shostakovich’s Quintet for Piano and Strings, with an accompanying recital by former artists in residence, The Villiers Quartet. The day after, Taruskin visited the Faculty of Music to answer postgraduate questions and take part in a panel discussion chaired by BBC Radio 3’s Tom Service. The Faculty’s own Professor Laura Tunbridge was on the panel.
In Oxford’s music scene, high-calibre orchestras and choirs, taking the stage in venues such as the Sheldonian Theatre, University Church and various college chapels, dominate University concerts. Its central hub is the Oxford University Music Society (OUMS), which oversees eight student orchestras. Student chamber music, in contrast, has no such hub. Instead, most chamber groups feature in recital series organised by colleges or in adhoc concerts run by individuals.

OUMS Chamber Music, revived over the Christmas vacation of 2017, hoped to fill this gap. After receiving sign-ups from chamber musicians throughout the University (including visiting students and staff), 15 new chamber ensembles were allocated in Hilary Term 2018, ranging from piano trios to saxophone sextets. The aim was not only to provide a hub for communication between enthusiastic chamber musicians, but also to offer frequent opportunities for all University chamber ensembles to perform in the world-class Holywell Music Room. OUMS Chamber Music, with generous support from the Faculty of Music and OUMS, now has an established recital series on Monday evenings during term time.

The first concert of term featured Athena Hawksley-Walker (violin) and Tom Fetherstonhaugh (piano), who have embarked on a project to perform the entire cycle of Beethoven’s Violin Sonata Series over Hilary, Trinity and Michaelmas terms. Professor Laura Tunbridge gave an introductory talk, which was warmly received by the audience. Other ensembles that have performed include: a recorder consort managed by Emily Hazrati (2nd year, Lincoln); a clarinet-cello-piano trio; and the Ostro Quintet, who charmed the audience with Ligeti’s Six Bagatelles and Arnold’s Three Shanties. Most of the ensembles were newly established groups, but all performed with remarkable energy.

OUMS Chamber Music, under the new management of Amy Chang (3rd year, St. Catherine’s) and David Palmer (2nd year, Worcester), is just hitting its stride. You can look forward to seeing even more concerts organised by them, as well as informal chamber music days, which will bring musicians together for a whole day of collaboration.

**BEETHOVEN VIOLIN SONATA SERIES**

Beethoven’s ten violin sonatas are a cornerstone of Western Classical chamber music, and map his development as a composer. Hawksley-Walker and Fetherstonhaugh have performed all but two of the sonatas. They will play numbers eight and nine in October. This ambitious project, demanding intense commitment from the performers, earned them a slot on BBC Radio 3’s In Tune, where they performed live to thousands of listeners.
Alumni & Student News

Sturdivant Adams (Worcester College, 2016) won the Royal Northern Sinfonia’s Young Composer Competition with his piece POLIN, inspired by the epic and tragic story of Polish Jews.

Manuel Martinez Burgos (St Anne’s College, 2005) and Giulia Monducci (St Hilda’s, 2014) were the joint winners of the 2017 John Lowell Osgood Memorial Prize, this year awarded in the Chamber Music Composition category.

Professor David Greer (Queen’s, 1957), Emeritus Professor of Music at Durham University, has been awarded the C. B. Oldman Prize for his book, Manuscript Inscriptions in Early English Printed Music (Ashgate, 2015).

Daisy Fancourt (Christ Church, 2008) has been selected as one of the BBC’s New Generation Thinkers. She will have the opportunity to make programmes for BBC Radio 3, BBC Four and other outlets.

> Lyndsey Marie Hoh (St John’s, 2014) has been awarded a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship in Music at Stanford University. Lyndsey will join the Stanford community in September 2018 as Fellow at the Stanford Humanities Center and Lecturer in the Department of Music.

In March 2018, Dr Thomas Hyde (Christ Church, 1996) had his symphony premiered by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. July sees the premiere of his comic overture Les at Leisure, in memory of Les Dawson, at this year’s Lichfield Festival.

Geoff Keating (Queen’s, 1957) was awarded the British Empire Medal in the New Year Honours list, as Founder and Conductor of the Solway Sinfonia for service to music and charity in Dumfries and Galloway. Over the years, the orchestra has raised thousands for various charities.

Lyndsey Marie Hoh

Benjamin Nicholas
Will Marshall’s (Worcester, 2011) piece Little Passacaglia has been recorded as part of a CD featuring a collection of works in memory of the composer/pianist, John McCabe. A Garland for John McCabe features compositions by Robert Saxton and alumni Emily Howard (Lincoln, 2011), Rob Keeley (Magdalen, 1978), and Robin Walker (Balliol, 1997).

Tom Metcalf (Worcester, 2014) has been awarded the prestigious Orlando Composition Prize at Christ Church for his setting of Psalm 150. Nick Morrish Rarity (Jesus, 2013) has been appointed alongside five other composers to the LSO Soundhub and LSO Jerwood Composer+ programmes. The scheme provides a flexible space where composers can explore, collaborate and experiment, with access to vital resources, equipment and professional support. He has also just been awarded a Mendelssohn Scholarship.

Benjamin Nicholas (Lincoln, 1995) has been appointed as Principal Conductor of The Oxford Bach Choir.

Dr Des Oliver’s (Worcester, 2009) electronic piece Dionysian Rivers Flow through Me will be performed at the International Computer Music Conference in Daegu, South Korea, in August 2018. Inspired by Euripides’ The Bacchae, the work aurally depicts the final moments of Pentheus before he is torn limb from limb by the maenads.

Michael Pandya (Queen’s, 2012) pianist, and his duo partner Harriet Burns (soprano) won the 2018 Oxford Lieder Young Artist Award. They will now perform across the country as Oxford Lieder’s Ambassadors for Song. Pandya was also the winner of the Accompanist’s Prize at the Kathleen Ferrier Awards. In May, he performed live on BBC Radio 3’s In Tune.

Dr Deborah Pritchard (Worcester, 2004), has won a British Composer Award (BASCA) for Inside Colour, a work for solo violin inspired by the Aurora Borealis. Frederic Viner (St Peter’s, 2016) has become a composer for University of York Music Press.

Student Profile: Joshua Asokan (2nd year, St Anne’s)

Coming from Sri Lanka, where progress in Western art music is limited, arriving in Oxford was a surreal experience for me, due to the sheer vibrancy of the music scene here.

I began playing the piano by ear from a very young age, but I started taking lessons much later. Having sat my ABRSM piano exams including diplomas in performance and teaching, I performed as a concerto soloist with the Symphony Orchestra of Sri Lanka. Since arriving in the UK, I regularly commute to London for piano lessons with Graham Caskie, and I have enjoyed preparing for and performing at the recent Oxfordshire Concerto Competition.

I try hard to balance my piano playing with conducting, which I’m equally passionate about. Although St Anne’s College does not have a chapel choir, the St Anne’s Camerata, comprising professionals, students and sixth formers, functions in a similar capacity.

The orchestra is directed by Dr John Traill, with whom I study conducting. As the Senior Conducting Scholar, I conduct this orchestra and the student-run college orchestra. Over the last two years, I have been fortunate to conduct professional orchestras and choirs in Estonia, Italy, the Czech Republic, Kenya, Sri Lanka and here in the UK. I have also had the opportunity to take part in conducting masterclasses with leading figures in the industry.

Studying at Oxford is an attractive prospect for any young musician, as it lays a strong musical foundation and opens up a variety of career pathways. The music course is such that students are able to tailor it to their practical interests in addition to the academic modules studied. I hope to present a piano recital and also take the newly introduced conducting option as part of my final exams next year. I am grateful for the opportunity to be able to live in such a musical city and study music at this distinguished university.
Alumni Profiles

David Flood
St John’s, 1974

After studying here, I went directly to Clare College, Cambridge, for a PGCE. In September 1978 I became Assistant Organist at Canterbury Cathedral: my first post. Having played for an Archbishop’s Enthronement and the visit of Pope John Paul II, I was appointed Organist and Master of the Choristers at Lincoln Cathedral in 1986. After only two years, I returned to Canterbury Cathedral as Organist and Master of the Choristers and I am now in my 30th year. I am currently President of the Cathedral Organists’ Association. I was awarded an Hon DMus from the University of Kent in 2001 and an Hon Fellowship from Canterbury Christ Church University in 2008, where I am Visiting Professor. I am also Visiting Fellow of St John’s College, Durham.

I have directed the music for the enthronements of three Archbishops and for two Lambeth conferences, and I have led an International Children’s Choirs’ Festival in Canterbury since 1997. I still thrive on the daily performance to visitors and pilgrims from all around the world.

I have four children, now all married; my wife and I were married in St John’s Chapel in 1976.

Clare Douglas
Keble, 1989

Following a brief time as a researcher for Channel 4’s television series Music and the Mind, presented by Professor Paul Robertson of the Medici String Quartet, I became a peripatetic violin teacher for North Yorkshire. From there I served as Head of Strings and Assistant Director of Music at Giggleswick School, where my duties, happily, also included singing in and, occasionally directing the Chapel Choir in the stunning setting of Giggleswick School Chapel.

Following the birth of my son, Leo, I took a break in my teaching career whilst continuing to perform for varied ensembles, including as Leader of the Burnley Municipal Symphony Orchestra. Playing fiddle with The Pictish Players, the acclaimed Highland Fiddle Dance Band, I recorded several CDs over the years, and I was fortunate to play at Highland balls in the most wonderful places: Inverness, London, Paris, Vienna, Venice, Istanbul and India being amongst them.

Most recently I have found great satisfaction in serving my local community by growing a thriving classical and folk music teaching practice whilst assisting broadcaster and folk expert Mike Harding in the running of the Settle Folk Gathering.

As a violinist and fiddler, exploring and performing as many diverse styles of music as possible continues to be my passion.
Cathryn Miserandino  
Keble, 1990

After ten years a student and rewriting my doctoral thesis (having passed my viva), I spent several years working in the Faculty of Music Library and the Taylorian Library. I chose to retire early due to my husband’s very serious health issues. While taking care of him, I could mostly answer a dull “What?” to anything musical. Before his death, he was too ill with Alzheimer’s to allow even the playing of gentle music in the background.

However, before my husband’s illness took over completely, I was Deputy Musical Director of the Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir for a few years and Musical Director of the Wantage Male Voice Choir for nearly ten years. From these activities I can still sing in Welsh, and indeed continue to do so at two of the local care homes when strictly needed.

Since my husband’s death I find that I am able to play viola da gamba twice a week, alternating between bass and tenor. My friends and I even play at a care home and entertain the residents, most of whom think I play a very big guitar. In addition, I still teach young American children on RAF Croughton. I teach them about music and England which is for them, host nation. To this end, I have created my own syllabus. Some of the highlights include teaching about Shakespeare and music using my doctoral robes as props, teaching about America’s royalty (Count Basie, Prince, et al), and opera with the help of The Pearl Fishers, the duet from Lakme, the Cat Duet and the tragic story of Jack and Jill demonstrating all the voices. My lessons have been so successful that no student dares call football ‘soccer’ any longer.

Ellie Douglas
New, 1999

I arrived at New College feeling not quite ready to have made the leap to living away from home! Despite this, I then spent a wonderful three years exploring many different areas of college and city life. This included attending concerts most days and working as a teaching assistant at a primary school in Blackbird Leys, as well as volunteering at a homeless shelter in central Oxford and playing in every orchestra and ensemble the University had to offer! Edward Higginstbottom was wonderful at offering our New College quartet opportunities to perform.

Having toyed with the idea of doing a post-grad on the cello at one of the London colleges, it was managing the Oxford Philharmonia that first sparked my love of orchestral management. When I graduated in 2002, I went on to work with Glyndebourne Opera, the English Chamber Orchestra, the Philharmonia and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment in roles from touring to stage management to fundraising.

However, it was during two years spent as Orchestral Manager at the opera house in Santiago de Chile that I realised that long hours spent behind a computer were not fulfilling my thirst for contact with music. So on my return to London I spent seven years as Manager of the violin shop Stringers. That was a great time, as I learned a huge amount about the instruments themselves and how they were made and repaired. But what I most enjoyed about the job was the contact with the musicians, the teachers and the families and children.

After our second little one was born in 2015, I took up the role of Assistant Principal at the North London Conservatoire (NLC) working with Deborah Harris, who founded the school 25 years ago. Working with children from 6 months to 18 years, Colourstrings (based on the methodology of Kodály) is central to the NLC’s teaching. Children are taught to sing and to listen. They are taught to think about how they play rather than just repeating the notes on the page. It’s okay for them to make mistakes (even in performances), as this is recognised as part of the learning process. More than anything, children are taught and encouraged to develop a love of classical music, no matter what they then go on to do in their lives.

I now deputise for teachers, and when my own children are a little older, I will take on some of my own pupils here. After 15 years of experimentation in many different areas of music, I think I have finally found my home!

John Clement Anderson
Hertford, 2001

After graduating I moved to Pescara, Italy, where, parallel to Oxford, I had been enrolled in a piano performance course at the Academy. I earned two master’s diplomas there, specialising in twentieth-century music with Bruno Mezzena, a pupil of Michelangeli. Since then I occasionally have opportunity to study analysis informally with my Oxford tutor, Hugh Collins Rice. It’s mostly thanks to these men that I became a dedicated advocate for new and twentieth-century music.

In 2018 I founded Ondredek Records, which has over 100 albums and musicians from 30 countries in classical, jazz and world formations. It employs a team of 11 across Europe and North America, and has quickly grown from the pet project I expected to become a significant enterprise. It employs the peer review process, with roster members democratically blind-auditioning all new artists through a web platform called ANONYMUZE.com.

Together with my team, we expanded our company to include a white label logistics service called GhostLabel, and we recently launched a service for managing biographies across the internet, called Bio, which we expect will be particularly useful to musicians, professors and management agencies.

Last June we inaugurated The Spheres, a new recording studio and events venue.
Faculty of Music Alumni Weekend

Welcoming Friends and Alumni of the Faculty of Music
Saturday 15 September 2018

We are delighted to invite you to a day of discussion, education and fun.

2pm
Welcome
Tea and coffee served

3pm
Panel Discussion: The Future of Music
Chair: Sir Nicholas Kenyon and Panelists:
Eric Clarke, Heather Professor of Music, University of Oxford
Lydia Connolly, Director, HarrisonParrott
Katie Hasler, Assistant Principal, City of London Academy Highbury Grove
Yasmin Hemmings, Assistant Producer, ENO Baylis

4pm
Breakout sessions
Gamelan Workshops, Isabelle Carré
Music and Leadership, Duncan Fraser
The Life of the Researcher, David Owen Norris
Tours of the Bate Collection, Andy Lamb

5.30pm
Drinks

7.30pm
Choral Performance, Magdalen College Chapel
Sansara, Music of the Spires IV

9pm
Late Night Cabaret, Holywell Music Room
Dragprov Revue and other performers

Early bird tickets £35 (full price £55) ooshop.com