Faculty News

Sound Art and Environment

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Music and Late Medieval European Court Cultures

Karl Kügler explores new methods of studying the culture of late medieval Europe

Night Dance Fantasy: re-mapping a sound world

Robert Saxton and Dan Hulme discuss their recent musical collaboration

George Butterworth and Oxford

Stephen Darlington discusses the use of Old Alumna Profi le late composer Martin Holmes discusses the life and times of the musical collaboration Karl Kügle explores new methods of studying the Music and Late Medieval European Court Cultures

Magazine designed by The Graphic Bomb

Edited by Professor Michael Burden and Elizabeth Green

Oxford Musician Issue 7 2017

From the Chairman of the Board

One of the most enjoyable tasks of the year is composing this letter; writing to Faculty alumni – many of whom I can remember – is an enormous pleasure.

The Faculty as a whole continues to perform excellently. We topped the Guardian University League Table 2018 for the subject (and for once, not equal first, but first on our own), while the University of Oxford was ranked second in the world in the QS rankings for Arts and Humanities. Like all league tables, the Faculty’s position in any one of them entirely depends on the range of factors taken (or not taken) into account, and to obsess about such ‘ratings’ would be both foolish and self-defeating. But that said, being at the top is better than not! One cannot help but feel, though, that these are laurels based on the past, however immediate. I wrote last year about the difficulties that Brexit was already causing the music industry; my fear that we are still not in the clear about Brexit was confirmed when the University’s admissions net is cast to diversify our student intake and to meet the University’s estate, meeting the University’s diversity agenda, and ensuring that our admissions net is cast as widely as possible – remain.

But there have been positive moves in all three areas, and even more changes are in the pipeline. One of the changes that has not been positive is the erosion of financial support mechanisms for undergraduates; as I write in July, the latest figures suggest that, at its worst, student debt on graduation may be in the region of £57,000.

From the safety of Oxford, though, the significance of even £57,000 pales beside the horror of war-torn Syria. As someone who has been involved in the Stravinsky series, which was shortlisted for a RoyalPhilharmonic Society Award earlier this year, it is all the more poignant that the loss of libraries, architecture, archaeological sites – is incalculable. From the heart of this appalling situation we received an appeal from Susie Artwood, a filmmaker, violinist and Faculty alumna, for support in the form of the loan of a violin for a 14-year-old Syrian musician Aboud Kaplo who fled from Aleppo and is now living in London. The Faculty has lent him a 1916 violin instrument made in Germany by Wolf Brothers, and his parents have written to us: ‘Your action brought us much relief, hope and encouragement to Aboud and to us in the midst of our life circumstances’. It is fitting that the violin was previously the property of the late Helene La Rue, our much-missed curator of the Bate Collection, whose personal collection is funded by the Delius Trust in London, and it is available to those able to visit the British Library or the Delius Trust in London, but they will also benefit from a wealth of expert commentary drawing on the research conducted during the original AHRC project. Moreover, the project will allow non-expert listeners to understand and engage with the digital items, as well as presenting recordings and photographs. The project is particularly targeted at students aged 16-21, and will develop digital teaching resources while offering an exciting programme of practical workshops to complement the exhibition.

The Faculty will be hosting a number of conferences this year. Two key conferences to note: J2C Opera, led by Professor Suzanne Aspden, will take place in the Faculty on 11 and 12 September 2017. This conference will address two key questions: How did the representation of interiority develop in eighteenth-century British art and music? And were there different developmental paths for different genres or regions in the period?

In September 2017 Professor Dan Grimley and Dr Joanna Bullivant will embark on a new project, Digital Delius: Interpretation, Performance, and Analysis, supported by £375,000 grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council’s (AHRC) Follow-On Funding for Impact and Engagement scheme. Digital Delius will create a virtual exhibition that will allow anyone with an internet connection, at any time and without cost, to access items from the extraordinarily rich collections of the British Library and the Delius Trust. Not only will users be able to view items that have previously only been available to those able to visit the British Library or the Delius Trust in London, but they will also benefit from a wealth of expert commentary drawing on the research conducted during the original AHRC project. Moreover, the project will allow non-expert listeners to understand and engage with the digital items, as well as presenting recordings and photographs. The project is particularly targeted at students aged 16-21, and will develop digital teaching resources while offering an exciting programme of practical workshops to complement the exhibition.

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The combined expertise of the opera historians, historians of ideas and music psychologists participating in this conference will facilitate a systematic interdisciplinary consideration of the ways in which opera’s structures and practices demonstrate contemporaneous thought on identity, the self and interiority. The British Academy’s Julian Stoll-Klehn is coordinating an interdisciplinary conference Wagner 1900, taking place in Jesus College, Oxford, 9-11 April 2018. Comprising about twenty papers (including from several members of the Faculty of Music) and a keynote lecture from Wagner scholar Barry Millington, this conference will investigate the impact of Richard Wagner on fin-de-siècle Vienna, not only in music but also in visual arts, theatre, literature and philosophy. Two performances taking place during the conference each address different issues related to the topic of Wagner 1900.

Research Round-Up

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The editors would like to thank all the students, staff and alumni who have contributed to the magazine, as well as the University of Oxford Alumni Office and Development Office.

Cover image: Rahat Fateh Ali Khan plays with students and the Fusion Project at the Faculty.

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Awards and Distinctions

Composer and Master of the Queen’s Music Judith Weir was awarded the degree of Doctor of Music honors causa at this summer’s Encaena.

The Philharmonia Orchestra’s critically acclaimed 2016 series Stravinsky: Myths & Rituals (with series advisor Professor Jonathan Cross) won the 2017 South Bank Sky Arts Awards in the classical music category. This is the second award nomination for the Stravinsky series, which was shortlisted for a RoyalPhilharmonic Society Award earlier this year.

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Sound Art and Environment

Professor Gascia Ouzounian

is a musicologist and
violinist whose work is
focused on experimental
traditions in music and
sound art of the last century.
Her current book project,
Stereophonics, examines
technologies of space in
relation to sound after 1850.

I was delighted to join
Oxford as an Associate
Professor of Music and
Tutorial Fellow at Lady
Margaret Hall in September
2016. I have found the
Faculty of Music to be
remarkably innovative
in conceptualising new
approaches to form, material
and medium.

In the Sound Art and
Environment course we
explore sound art works that
are specifically concerned
with issues of environment,
place and site. For example,
we encountered works that
give ‘voice’ to a place, like
Walter Fahnrdich’s Music
for a Quarry: In this work,
a marble quarry that has
loudspeakers embedded
into it produces a 12-minute
electronic composition every
day at the precise moments
of astronomical sunset and
sunrise. If you happen to
walk by the quarry at these
times, the quarry itself
appears to be singing. We
also explored works that
reconfigure the soundscapes
of public spaces, like Max
Neunah’s Times Square,
a sound installation that
has been active for over
30 years in Manhattan’s
Times Square district, where
it emits a continuously
evolving, richly layered
electronic hum. Other
works take root between
music and architecture.
For example, BUG (2008–)
by the sound artist Mark
Bain and the architect Arno
Brandlhuber invites people
to plug their headphones
into the façade of a building
in order to listen to the
sounds produced by the
building itself; this is made
possible through the use
of seismic sensors that are
embedded into the building’s
infrastructure. Listeners who
plug in their headphones
can hear the building as
it responds to changes
in weather, atmospheric
pressure, wind and rain, and
as the building material
contracts and expands over
time.

Each of these works – and
many others – represent
new ways of experiencing
and conceptualising sound
in relation to environment
and place. They also invite
new ways of analysing and
thinking about sound. It was
important for me that
students would be exposed
to relevant theoretical
concepts and histories, but
equally that they would have
opportunities to explore
the creative dimensions of
sound art. Students were therefore
invited to create their own
works – sound installations,
sound maps, and so on – and
to reflect on these as part of
their essays for the course.

About the Author: Professor Gascia Ouzounian
Associate Professor; Fellow and Tutor, Lady Margaret Hall, Lecturer at Brasenose College
Late medieval cultural history in Europe has traditionally been studied from a mono-disciplinary and nationalistic perspective. For musicologists researching the period 1250-1450, this meant a strong focus on sources and on notation, leading to well-established distinctions between ‘English’, ‘French’ or ‘Italian’ music and styles. Musicology’s sister disciplines developed along similar lines: we speak of an English, French or Italian ‘literature’. Historians, on the other hand, have savoured these pieces and understood the cultural history of late medieval Europe along lines that adequately reflect the perceptions of contemporaries and give due attention to courtly centres or networks that have become submerged. Specifically to music, what exactly were the social and architectural contexts in which a polyphonic song by, say, Du Fay, or a motet by Machaut would have been performed, and how would an audience have savoured these pieces aesthetically? These are some of the questions that the ERC-funded MALMECC project will seek to tackle in the upcoming years.

MALMECC, an acronym for Music And Late Medieval European Court Cultures, is supported by an Advanced Grant provided by the European Research Council (ERC) and will run through the end of 2020. The project not only seeks answers across disciplinary fault lines but also strives to innovate methodologically. As Principal Investigator, I am the only musicologist on the team, all other MALMECC researchers were deliberately recruited from sister disciplines in order to generate the transdisciplinary critical mass that the project requires to achieve its objectives. Three post-doctoral researchers, Drs Christoph Masson (History), David Murray (Literary History) and Laura Slater (Art History) are my scholarly collaborators on the project. Martha Buckley lends invaluable support as Programme Administrator.

Each MALMECC scholar will pursue their own research project. The various sub-projects within MALMECC were selected to converge along interlinked research themes, generating synergies that can only be achieved through our work together. For my own research, for example, I focus on the court culture of late medieval Savoy during the reign of Duke Amadeus VIII (1389-1455), later (anti-) Pope Felix V (1429-49), his father Louis of Savoy (1413-69), and Duchess Anne of Savoy (1418-49). They played important roles as advisors, educators, intellectuals and administrators in the court of Savoy, and formed a network of their own that will be examined by Christoph Masson.

Needless to say, visual and musical performances were essential for the cultural display at all these courtly communities. Courtiers secular and ecclesiastic often grew up together and were connected through dynastic and educational ties. This makes it easy to understand how a transnational courtly habitus came about that the MALMECC team aims to reconstruct.

Music, sounds and listening played a vital role in courtly life, from the daily prayers and mass to making, exchanging, discussing, hearing and performing courtly song and poetry, to dancing and acoustic signals performed at courtly ceremonies. Much remains to be recovered about music's Sitz im Leben from romances, chronicles, educational texts and archival records as well as architectural, visual and material artefacts. Translating this evidence against that of the notated sources and archives already explored, and assembling our findings into a coherent picture, is an exciting challenge and the main objective of the MALMECC team in the upcoming years.

For further information please go to the project website malmecc.eu, which features regular updates and blogs by team members.

**About the Author:** Professor Karl Kügle

ERC Research Professor and Senior Research Fellow, Wadham College

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**Music and Late Medieval European Court Cultures:**

**REWRITING THE CULTURAL HISTORY OF LATE MEDIEVAL EUROPE**

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Night Dance Fantasy: re-mapping a sound world

About the Author:
Professor Robert Saxton
Professor of Composition; Fellow and Tutor, Worcester College

Night Dance Fantasy (1986–7) is a re-composition for electric guitar and electro-acoustics by Nick Fowler and Daniel Hulme of Night Dance (1986–7), a work for acoustic guitar, originally commissioned and premiered by the New York-based guitarist David Starobin (recorded by him on the Bridge Record label). The music depicts an old man sitting in a doorway on a hot Spanish evening, playing the guitar to himself while a crowd of increasingly nightmarish revellers (as in Goya’s late paintings) pass and dance wildly. At the close, they have disappeared and the old man, once more, plays to himself. Was it real, or did he imagine it?

Nick and Dan have recreated this ten-minute tone poem in an impressive and highly imaginative fashion, using the shape and dramatic idea of the original and much of the latter’s musical material as a springboard for composing Night Dance Fantasy: a dramatic electro-re-simulation of Robert Saxton’s 1986–7 composition Night Dance. Based on the original structure and narrative, but introducing the talents of electric guitarist Nick Fowler (who plays with numerous pop and rock acts, including Oxford legact Gaz Coombes) and me: studio musician, record producer and director of the Music Faculty’s Electronic Music Studios. Nick and I have long been fans of Night Dance, and as it was approaching the 30th anniversary of its premiere it seemed like a fitting time to collaborate with Robert on a reworking.

Professor Saxton describes the concept behind the original piece elsewhere in this article, but I wanted to briefly explore the challenges and methodology of bringing together what are often perceived as disparate musical genres: classical, popular and electro-acoustic.

Initially Robert, Nick and I sat down to map out an approach and aesthetic for the piece. We decided that it must be a performance, not merely a ‘tape’ piece (i.e. a studio recording). We wanted to create an exciting live dialogue between electric guitar and electronics that would convey a sense of the climactic spirit of the original, and avoid the pitfalls of the overused hip hop, electronics and rock. No easy feat with such a harmonically and rhythmically dynamic piece as the original!

To accomplish this, we attempted to distil parameters of the Dance movement such as signature, pulse and key to an elementary level that would convey a sense of the original, but also allow us to build a solid electroacoustic framework with contemporary popular music reference points. We employed a polyrhythmic approach to this section with layers at different tempi and rhythms. The whole project has been enabled by technology. We hope to carry on pushing into new ground with other pieces in the not too distant future.

The idea began, as good ideas often do, over a curry in central Oxford. Three friends and colleagues all from different musical disciplines: discussing the exciting possibilities of a collaboration.

There are three distinct sequential movements to Robert’s composition: the Serenade, Dance and Nocturne. Together they construct the journey of a lone old man playing the guitar, a troupe leading him in an exotic dance and his return to earth from the revelry.

We committed to keeping both the Serenade and Nocturne recognisable from the notated music, Nick playing the score with additional electroacoustic transformations and gestures as described, but we wanted to completely rewrite the Dance section to include elements of hip hop, electronics and rock. No easy feat with such a harmonically and rhythmically dynamic piece as the original!

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Watch this space.
2016 marked the centenary of the death of composer George Butterworth, one of several Oxford-trained musicians killed in the Great War, who has come to symbolise that lost generation.

Born in London on 12 July 1885, Butterworth grew up in Yorkshire and came up to Oxford from Eton where he had been a somewhat rebellious teenager, as correspondence between his father and house-master reveals. Excelling in sport and music he won a place to read Classics at Trinity College in 1904.

A series of letters home survives in the Bodleian which tells us much about his student life. His mother was constantly fretting about his health and it is clear that George was more interested in his musical activities than his academic work, which suffered as a result.

He became Secretary of the Musical Club and was President from October 1905 to March 1907. He played piano in several OUMC concerts and his letters report on various notable events, such as a visit by Kreisler and Elgar’s honorary degree ceremony in 1905. In his second year, he moved out of college into shared digs opposite the Union, at 20 St Michael’s Street. His interest in AE Housman’s poems dates from this period although it was not until 1911 that the first of his famous sets of A Shropshire Lad songs appeared (first heard at an OUMC concert).

While at Oxford, Butterworth made a lasting friendship with Hugh Allen, then Organist of New College (subsequently Heather Professor of Music). Crucially, he was introduced to Ralph Vaughan Williams and Cecil Sharp, sparking an interest in folk song and dance which greatly influenced his own music. After going down with a Third in 1907, he remained a frequent visitor to Oxford. A spell as a music critic for The Times was followed by a year teaching at Radley College when he met a Christ Church student, the young Adrian Boult. Always restless, he left Radley to go to the RCM but that, too, did not last long. In 1910, he began (but never completed) an Oxford BMus and thereafter spent his time composing, collecting folk tunes and honing his skills as a folk dancer, still making occasional appearances at OUMC concerts.

In addition to the letters, the Bodleian holds his war diary and many of Butterworth’s surviving music manuscripts, among which is an unfinished Orchestral Fantasia which has been treated to two different completions in recent years. There is also a fascinating scrapbook compiled by his father after his death and a remarkable Kinora ‘flip book’ of Butterworth Morris dancing in 1912 (www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIZA4WX2psc). Also, last year, a lost early song, which had previously been hidden in the archive of the Butterworth Trust for many years, emerged from the Bodleian backlog. The discovery was celebrated with a recording of the song made by current Music student John Lee and lecturer Guy Newbury (https://soundcloud.com/bodleianlibraries/butterworth).

Following the outbreak of war in 1914, Butterworth joined up and obtained a commission in the Durham Light Infantry. After a brief but distinguished period at the front, he fell victim to a sniper’s bullet and died near Pozieres on 5 August 1916.
Rachel Portman (Worcester College, 1979) is a film composer who has scored countless feature films including Chocolat and The Duchess. In 1996 she became the first female composer to win an Academy Award in the category of Best Original Score for Emma.

We asked Dr Luke Lewis (Merton College, 2010) to interview Rachel and find out more about her.

What are your memories of studying Music at Oxford?

I enjoyed orchestration lessons with Robert Sherlaw Johnson most of all. I was writing a lot while I was there, and it was during that time I became interested in film scoring. I wrote scores for OUDS and Buskins productions and was always involved in some kind of theatre.

How did you become interested in film composition?

A group of students decided to make a feature film which was released theatrically – Hugh Grant was in it – he was a contemporary. I wrote the score and discovered the joy of writing for film which has fascinated me ever since.

How do you approach scoring a film? Does it differ from colleagues?

I write at the piano with pencil and paper which is unusual these days!

With so many advances in technology throughout your career, have you had to adapt much and seen your working method altered?

I've adapted my working method over the years and seen your working method clearly alter. With so many advances in technology throughout your career, have you had to adapt much and seen your working method altered?

With so many advances in technology throughout your career, have you had to adapt much and seen your working method altered?

You might be forgiven for being sceptical about how classical composers score music within the film. Demo mock-ups are the norm now whereas they hardly existed when I started out.

Naturally you must be inspired by other composers, but is there another art form that inspires you particularly?

Not really, except perhaps poetry. I love the poems of Mary Oliver.

You've worked on some incredibly exciting projects – what would your advice be to aspiring film composers?

My advice would be to get as much experience writing for different films, paid or unpaid, as possible. It is tough to break in, but determination paid off for me.

What are you working on now?

A bunch of projects. An animated film, an opera in development and a choral piece.

The Old Hispanic Office Project

Rachel Portman

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Not really, except perhaps poetry. I love the poems of Mary Oliver.

You've worked on some incredibly exciting projects – what would your advice be to aspiring film composers?

My advice would be to get as much experience writing for different films, paid or unpaid, as possible. It is tough to break in, but determination paid off for me.

What are you working on now?

A bunch of projects. An animated film, an opera in development and a choral piece.

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With so many advances in technology throughout your career, have you had to adapt much and seen your working method altered?

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On 16 March 2016, we received an email requesting our support for an innovation-funded project. The ambition was to produce an LGBTQ+ themed gallery trail for the museums and Collections of the University of Oxford.

The aim of this initiative was to address issues raised in a recent lecture by Professor Peter Parkinson – A Great Unrecorded History: LGBT Heritage and World Cultures (available at podcasts.ox.ac.uk).

In this, he highlighted the demand for more LGBTQ+ representation within the University’s museum displays. The Bate Collection was quick to support this project, although it did take some head-scratching to find aspects of the collection and displays that could reasonably be said to have LGBTQ+ significance.

In the end, we offered the following as subjects in the Trail handbook: an oil painting of Arcangelo Corelli, a pink plastic recorder of Bressan design and a watercolour featuring the pink recorder.

Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713) was, although not the most prolific, one of the most influential composers of the baroque period. He never married and lived for the last 30 years of his life with the violinist Matteo Fornari, to whom he was ‘devoted’ and ‘rarely...absent from his side’. As well as his 50 sonatas, which were used as models by many 18th-century composers, Corelli was a pioneer of the concerto grosso, a baroque form in which the performance is shared between the orchestra and a small group of soloists. His 12 concerti, which inspired works by Locatelli, Vivaldi and Handel, among others, have survived because of his partner Fornari’s efforts to have them published after Corelli’s death in 1713 at the age of 59. He died wealthy; his only indulgence had been collecting art and violins – these, along with his manuscripts, were all bequeathed to Matteo Fornari.

The pink recorder was selected as an example of using bright colours to represent LGBTQ+ people. In the late 19th and early 20th century, gay Londoners and Parisians wore a green carnation; Oscar Wilde is a famous example. Under Nazism, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a symbol of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was reclaimed in the 1970s as a symbol of gay rights and protest. Since 2000, the Independent on Sunday has published the Pink List to celebrate influential LGBTQ+ people. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, gay prisoners in concentration camps had to wear a pink triangle as a sign of shame. This symbol was re...
Women Conductors at Oxford

In February acclaimed conductor Marin Alsop visited the Faculty of Music delivering an inspiring lecture titled Leading by example: my path to the podium at the Holywell Music Room. As you may remember, back in September 2013 she made history as the first female conductor of the BBC’s Night of the Proms in London and during her talk she spoke at length about her illustrious career revealing some of the challenges she has faced so far.

We asked three female student conductors to talk about their own experiences of the podium here in Oxford.

Chloe Rooke

Since coming to Oxford, my musical trajectory has changed enormously. Although I arrived as a first-year flautist, I quickly saw the need for an orchestra at my college, with a number of keen instrumentalists lacking an ensemble to join, and so decided to set one up. Side classes in conducting at the Junior Academy meant I already had the basic technique needed to rehearse and conduct the players, but exercising and developing these skills was only possible because of the nature of the Oxford music scene. The vast number of exceptional musicians wanting to play in high-standard ensembles lends itself to a vibrant environment, it encourages developing musical directors to take on ambitious projects without feeling discouraged. After a successful first term with the newly formed Catz Orchestra, I won the conductorship of the Oxford University Wind Orchestra, where I have recently been appointed for a second year. In that time I have worked on a number of other incredibly exciting projects as a conductor. From directing operas by Stravinsky and Walton, to conducting a performance of Clara Schumann’s rarely underplayed Piano Concerto in Christ Church Cathedral, I have been soaked in a wealth of unforgettable experiences, and yet it has been the longer time spent with OUWO that has been particularly special. The group has allowed me to push them through increasingly challenging repertoire – focusing on repertoire for the contemporary band written in the last 20 years – which has in turn pushed me as a conductor. Yet the biggest privilege has been working week by week with individuals who are all eager to grow as people and musicians. In recent months the sensitivity they have developed, in responding to each other and to my gestures, has led to some beautiful moments in rehearsal and concert. Music is exceptionally powerful in communicating things we cannot verbalise – a device which the world desperately needs – and my time in Oxford has encouraged me to pursue the creation of such a medium wholesale.

Hannah Schneider

After observing Valery Gergiev conduct every day for over a year while I worked as his personal assistant, I arrived in Oxford eager to begin conducting myself. I was instantly impressed by the multitude and quality of ensembles here, but I also noticed that there was room for a new approach among these traditional groups. Convinced that classical music has strongly labelled obsolete and elitist, in December 2016 I founded Oxford Alternative Orchestra, with the aim of exploring the intersection of music and social impact. Within three months we had performed at a homeless shelter, hospice centre, retirement community and children’s hospital, and had raised money for local charities. In addition, we went on tour to Scotland and collaborated with the University of Edinburgh Chamber Orchestra.

I feel blessed to work with remarkably dedicated student musicians who quickly caught on to the vision. There is clearly a hunger to explore how we as musicians can serve our communities and expand access in more active ways.

From 2017 to 2018 I will also have the honour of conducting Oxford University Philharmonia, and have programmed the first concert to include the Oxford premiere of Stravinsky’s Chant funèbre, a masterpiece lost for over 100 years and only discovered last year.

All of these opportunities testify to what an unusual place Oxford is: not only have I not felt disadvantaged by being a woman conductor, I have also witnessed dozens of students willing to push the boundaries and discover what classical music is and what it can become. In a field as traditional as ours, this is a rarity.

Cayenna Ponchione

As a conducting tutor myself I have been inspired by Alice Farnham’s conducting workshops. Alice demonstrated to me the critical need for women conducting tutors and mentors. Conducting is an embodied art and, historically, one that has been primarily embodied by men. Women need safe spaces to be able to explore the types of embodied communication essential to become effective conductors. It is not just women conductors who have taken up the flag, however. My colleague, John Trail, founder of the Oxford Conducting Institute (OCI) with which I am a Conducting Associate, first came to me for ways to positively encourage and support female conducting students. OCI is now committed to equal gender representation in its tutors. Additionally, OCI has led the charge with hosting the first ever Conducting Student Conference, programming a plenary session dedicated to exploring issues of gender in conducting. The session was transformational as over 50 male and female conductors from across the globe engaged in an open discussion about gender issues. For many of the women there, this was the first time that they had the opportunity to have such candid discussions with their male colleagues, many of whom expressed genuine concern about how to best be supportive of their female conducting students.

As a doctoral student, I was the first female conductor to win the conductorship of the Oxford University Philharmonic in 2012 but already we have seen the second female appointed to that position, and Natalia Luis Bassa has been invited twice to conduct the Oxford University Orchestra in the past 5 years. In the last conducting workshop with the Oxford Philharmonic, two of the three candidates were female, while over 50% of the applicants were female. While a true balance has not quite been struck, the trend is a positive one and there is a strong momentum right now that makes me feel optimistic about the future of conducting and the opportunities for the bright young women conductors at Oxford.
In September 2016, students, scholars and alumni gathered at Lady Margaret Hall for a one-day conference in honour of Professor Susan Withyman, an esteemed Fellow, who recently completed a major research volume titled Analytical and Critical Reflections on Music of the Long Eighteenth Century. Organised by Joe Davies (St Hugh’s College, 2013) and Dr Benjamin Skipp (Christ Church, 2007), the event marked Susan’s recent retirement from her university lectureship (which she had held continuously since 1976), and celebrated her significant contribution over four decades to 17th- and 18th-century studies. It featured nine individual papers on topics ranging from Haydn to late Schubert, a keynote address by Professor Matthew Head (King’s College London) and an evening recital by soprano Auling Kenny, accompanied by Oxford alumni Cecily Lock (St Hilda’s College, 2003) on the college’s new Steinway. The programme’s Lindey by Fanny Hensel, Clara Schumann and Maude White provided a moving introduction to the programme, paying tribute to Professor Wollenberg’s pioneering work on women composers.

In late October 2016 Roger Allen (St Peter’s College) gave a lecture. Richard Wagner’s Beethoven, and taught classes in Analytical at the Hochschule für Musik in Luzern. He also made a research visit to examine primary source materials held in the Richard Wagner Museum, Villa Trichsen, where Wagner lived from 1866 to 1872. In April 2017 he took part in a weekend of events at University College London examining Culture in the Third Reich, when he lectured on the controversial career of the conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler.

The holder of this year’s University Visiting Chair of Opera was acclaimed stage director Katie Mitchell. She spoke at length to Professor Michael Burden about her experiences creating new and contemporary opera as well as engaging students with masterclasses.

Concert: Rahat Fateh Ali Khan
In May 2017 internationally celebrated Pakistani singer Ustad Rahat Fateh Ali Khan gave a sold out fundraising concert for the Faculty of Music at the Shrubsole Theatre. He worked with student performers and student group - The Fusion Project - on a special programme commemorating the life and work of his famous uncle and revered performer, Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Rahat Fateh Ali Khan generously gave the concert to help raise money to support the work of the Faculty of Music. The proceeds will be invested in further concerts that promote music and musicians from South Asia.

Khan also donated a harmonium played by his uncle to the Faculty of Music. The proceeds will be invested in further concerts that promote music and musicians from South Asia.

Alexander Gebhard (St Edmund’s Hall, 2016) wrote:
I very much enjoyed the masterclass with Katie Mitchell. We worked on the hair scene from Delius’s Pulcinella and Melodrame. One of the big challenges for the singers is what to do with the symbolist allegory that is Maurice Maeterlinck’s Libretto. Katie was extremely articulate in framing the concept that she used for her interpretation of this opera. We shared with us her vision that the opera was in fact a dream, a surreal sequence where anything is possible. The dream context enabled the introduction of characters to scenes that were not meant to be present. Thus, we arrived at the situation where Melodrame was seducing her brother-in-law Pellias on the marital bed, while her husband, Goloaf, entered the room and sat down next to the bed, nursing their baby. I found it fascinating how this enabled us to access deeper layers of the text that weren’t explicitly referenced in the librettos. In sum, the masterclass was truly inspiring, both for the way in which we worked on so much detail in such a short space of time and for getting an insight into how one of the world’s greatest opera directors thinks about acting and stage presence.
Claire Hobbs (Kitay)  
St Peter’s College, 1979
On leaving St John’s in 1982 (where I had been organ scholar) I spent a year at the Royal Northern College of Music studying organ performance before going to the Conservatoire de Musique in Geneva, Switzerland. After returning to the UK I was Assistant Organist at Bristol Cathedral and Organist at Clifton College. Although I performed as a soloist and accompanist a great deal in those years, I had become increasingly fascinated by the psychological aspects of music-making both in performance and teaching. So in 1994, I returned to study this time to train as a music therapist at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. For the last 20 years I have worked mainly as a music therapist in settings ranging from pre-schools to secure psychiatric services. I worked for many years in the NHS setting up and running therapy services in both adult mental health and learning disability. More recently I have worked more in education than health, running a project evaluating music therapy with children in local authority care and developing work with children and adults from pre-school upwards. Reflecting on Oxford’s place in my musical career, it has been the open-minded thinking and critical evaluation skills that I developed there that have served me well in my therapy career.

I have maintained my own more traditional musical work through running choirs and singing workshops both independently and for the Sing Up initiative some years back. Examining for the ABRSM for more than 20 years has kept me busy also, alongside continuing to undertake work combining therapeutic and musical skill and freelance accompanying.

Now I am back nearer my home town of Cambridge with my husband and two grandchildren.

David Mahoney  
St Peter’s College, 2006
Since graduating from St Peter’s College, David has enjoyed success with Classical Brit Award winning group Only Men Aloud, being part of the 15th Anniversary production Broadways to the Bay, Live with Pink Martino (Wales Millennium Centre, The Golden Age of Dance Theatre, Wales Millennium Centre, London) as well as being Musical Director for various ITV and BBC television productions, including Songs of Praise.

Future projects include conducting the UK tour of A Christmas Carol (Film with Live Orchestra) and Musical Director / Music Supervisor for Disney’s The Jungle Book in Concert (Royal Festival Hall, London).

Emma Granger
New College, 1986
After completing my degree, I won a scholarship for a postgraduate year in harp performance at the Royal College of Music. Solo, duo and chamber music performances followed before I joined the Birmingham Royal Ballet as Resident Harpist, touring the UK and abroad.

After gaining experience in this role I was appointed Principal Harp at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, where I have made numerous recordings, including Harrison Birtwistle’s The Minotaur and Anna Nicole by Mark-Anthony Turnage. I also had an onstage cameo appearance in a revival of Britten’s Gloriana.

I was particularly pleased to return to New College in 2012 to record A Ceremony of Carols with New College Choir under Edward Higginbottom (Benjamin Britten, The Sacred Choral Music).

I have recently been on a career break, living near Stratford Lough in Ireland with my husband and Jack Russell terrier, Pickle. I have spent my free time attempting to learn ballroom dancing (although my quickstep is still rather slow...). I am returning to the Royal Opera House for the 2017/18 season beginning with a new production of Puccini’s La Bohème, directed by Richard Jones and conducted by Antonio Pappano, Music Director of the Royal Opera.

Ken Shifrin  
Linacre College, 1995
I received my DPhil (Linacre College) in musicology in 2000 after performing as a professional musician for nearly 20 years. Formerly I was Principal Trombone in the English City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Chief Conductor Simon Rattle, Principal Trombone in the Israel Radio-Symphony Orchestra and Co-Solo Trombone in the Radio Orchestra of Stuttgart. I have played under the baton of leading conductors Daniel Barenboim, Zubin Mehta, Loren Mazel, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti, Marris Janowsky, Antal Dorati and Charles Dutoit, among others. In America I was a member of the popular rock band The Atlantis, performing for such artists as Michael Jackson, Olivia Newton-John, Natalie Cole, Paul Anka, The Drifters, Pearl Bailey and Andy Williams.

I am currently the leader/ music director of the internationally touring baroque/jazz ensemble Passeme Voix Trio and first trombone in the English Consort. I am a frequent guest soloist both in the USA and Europe, having appeared with the US Navy Band, the US Army Orchestra and the Florida Orchestra, as well as various other ensembles. I regularly present recital and masterclasses on both sides of the Atlantic, including for the International Janaček Music Festival, the International Smetana Festival, the International Trombone Association, the Eastern Trombone Workshop, the International Women’s Brass Conference, the British Trombone Society, the North Carolina School of the Arts, Rice University, the University of Texas, the Prague Conservatoire of Music, the Royal Danish School of Music and the Bratislava Academy of Music.

David founded The Novello Orchestra in 2011, and recent performances include the Wales Millennium Centre’s 15th Anniversary production Broadway to the Bay, Live with Pink Martino (Wales Millennium Centre, The Golden Age of Dance Theatre, Wales Millennium Centre, London) as well as being Musical Director for various ITV and BBC television productions, including Songs of Praise.

Future projects include conducting the UK tour of A Christmas Carol (Film with Live Orchestra) and Musical Director / Music Supervisor for Disney’s The Jungle Book in Concert (Royal Festival Hall, London).

Further credits include Show Producers for the BAFTA TV Awards, Music Supervisor for the Royal Dali centenial celebrations City of the Unexpected, Creative Director / Conductor for Christmas on the Rocks, and Musical Director / Conductor for Christmas on the Rocks, with the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Artistic Director of the Cardiff Music Festival and Producer for various ITV and ITV television productions, including Songs of Praise.

Profiles
Maggi Hambling. Other alumni to be heard at Aldeburgh this year are Mark Simpson, whose Windflower is planned by Adam Nicholas Daniel, and Ryan Wigglesworth, who conducts a new production of Britten’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream.

Alexander Campkin (St Catherine’s College, 2002) was commissioned by the Tallis Scholars to write a new setting of Misere re met as a partnering piece to Allegri’s strikingly moving Misere re met, Deus. The Tallis Scholars, conducted by Peter Phillips, premiered Misere re met in London and are touring it in Europe this summer.

Alexander has also been commissioned by the Southbank Centre to compose a short reflection on Wagner’s Die Walküre for Streetwise Opera. It was premiered in the Southbank Centre preceding a performance of Die Walküre by Opera North.

Sansa’s debut recording, Cloths of Heaven (Convivium Records), was released in February 2017 and has since been reviewed by Choir & Organ (5 stars) and The Observer (4 stars), with critics praising the choir’s “perfect intonation” and “breathtaking interpretations”. The disc features choral works old and new with five debut recordings by living composers including James MacMillan, Gabriel Jackson, Malcolm Archer, Oliver Tamey and Marco Galvani (The Queen’s College, 2012). Cloths of Heaven is available to purchase online on iTunes, Amazon and the choir’s website www.sansaraechoir.com.

Congratulations to Trinity College President Hilary Boulding (St Hilda’s College, 1975), who was appointed a dame in the Queen’s Birthday Honours. She follows in the footsteps of Frederick Williams (Magdalen College, 1984), who was appointed OBE.

Both Jessie Reeves (Lady Margaret Hall, 2011) and Ghislaine Reece-Trapp (Christ Church, 2011) were finalists in BBC Radio 3’s carol competition this year. Jessie’s carol Alleluia! was chosen for the Royal Philharmonic Society and Classic FM co-commission. 7 young composers all under the age of 25 were chosen from 180 applications to write a new piece of classical music each to celebrate the radio station’s 25th birthday.

Congratulations to Giles Masters (New College, 2011), who was judged the joint runner-up in the Observer/Burgess Prize for Arts Journalism.

Congratulations to finalist James Chater (St Anne’s College, 2014) on being awarded the Van Cliburn Fellowship to study journalism at Harvard. The Van Cliburn Fellowship, which is associated with Corpus Christi College, is highly competitive and was established at Harvard in preparation for a journalism career. James has already been published in the New Statesman and has been the editor of the Oxford Student Journal.
Abingdon School where Geoff rugby), their first move was to and was college organist, and solos around the University Helen sang with a vocal quartet and making music 59 years Faculty they are still married of the first term in the Music Having met on the first day Geoff Keating Somerville College, 1957 Helen Caisley The Queen's College, 1957 Geoff Keating Queen's College, 1957 Helen Caisley Somerville College, 1957 Having met on the first day of the first term in the Music Faculty they are still married and making music 59 years later! After Oxford (where Helen sang with a vocal quartet and solos around the University and was college organist, and Geoff was in Queen's chapel choir and captain of rugby), their first move was to Abingdon School where Geoff was Assistant Director of Music with George Pratt (St Peter's, 1959) as Director. Geoff and George were members of the Master Singers of Highway Code and Weather Forecast fame (if you're old enough to remember those!). Recordings of these led to TV performances over the UK and Holland, with royalties (minimal) from everywhere including an Icelandic jukebox, and reaching no 22 in the charts (above Bob Dylan and the Kinks!). In turn this led to Geoff being invited to arrange for Cliff Richard and The King's Singers. Moves to Clayesmore and Cheadle Hulme School followed, and finally for 17 years Geoff was Director of Music at Millfield School while Helen was Director at Millfield Junior School. After Geoff's early retirement Helen spent three years as a Housemistress at Sherborne School for Girls before they retired early to south-west Scotland (where they had holidayed for many years), where their musical life has continued. Geoff is a part-time church organist and has a jazz group ('Gentle Jazz') while Helen has conducted the local choir and been accompanist for another, when she's notembroidering (including some of the Great Tapestry of Scotland), tapestry weaving or acting as Secretary of the local Community Council. The best part of retirement, however, has been the creation in 1997 (largely their responsibility) and the flourishing of the Solway Sinfonia which Geoff conducts while Helen plays double bass (badly!) and is librarian. CENTRED in Dumfries, it gives two large concerts with professional soloists a year and another smaller one somewhere in the region, drawing its 60 or 70 players from all around the Solway. The horn section Oxenford,, his legacy can be seen and heard in the establishment of a style of performing polyphonic music that broke new ground in the 1970s, and has now become mainstream. James Dalton 1930–2017 It is with sadness that the Faculty of Music announces the passing of James Dalton, for many decades University Lecturer in Music, and Organist and Fellow of The Queen’s College (1957–95). To read more about James Dalton and Professor Wulstan please go to our website www.music.ox.ac.uk.