

RNCM Music Education News

Autumn 2019



Dr John Habron and Dr Keith Phillips

WILMA comes to the RNCM

The RNCM, along with the [Centre for Excellence in Music Performance Education](#) (CEMPE), at the Norwegian Academy of Music, have established the Work-Integrated Learning in the Music Academy (WILMA) project. This investigates the ways in which higher music education (HME) institutions offer professional placements to their students. Increasingly, HME providers are reforming their curricula to equip musicians for 'portfolio' or 'protean' careers, but there is little research on professional placements from the

perspectives of the academic institutions, students and professional partners. The study, which runs from 2019 to 2021, will develop our understanding of the role of professional placements in European higher music education and may inform curriculum design. Dr Keith Phillips, RNCM alumnus and now Postdoctoral Research Assistant, is the lead researcher, working alongside Dr Jon Helge Sætre, Director of CEMPE, and Dr John Habron (RNCM). Keith and John recently visited Oslo, to develop the project and start data collection.

A visitor from Vienna

In late October, we hosted Professor Angelika Hauser-Dellefant on an Erasmus+ teaching visit. As past Head of Department of Music and Movement Pedagogy at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (mdw), Angelika is a specialist in eurhythmics and theatre training. She facilitated an introductory eurhythmics workshop, training for third-year students on pedagogy placements, and performance training on stage presence and theatre work for singers. Some of these sessions included techniques dating from Angelika's training at the Lecoq School and with Philippe Gaulier. She also gave a lecture – 'The origins of musicality and its relevance for education' – based on her chapter in *Life is movement is music: Developments and concepts of Viennese rhythmic at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna*, the 2016 book she edited with Eleonore Witoszynskij.



Thanks to everyone who's contributed to Music Education News this year. You can find all archived issues [here](#). For future editions, please send content (50 - 100 words and a high res photo where possible) to [Liz Rowley](#), Communications Manager.

Welcome and congratulations to Jen!

Jen Hartley has joined the music education research community at the RNCM, as a new PhD student. Her study – provisionally entitled ‘Critical Creativity: Listening to and composing new music’ – investigates the use of free, group improvisation as a way into compositional practice and aural training at Key Stage 5. Her supervisors are Dr John Habron and Dr Michelle Phillips (RNCM), and Dr Clive Parkinson (MMU). Jen is Head of Music at Queen Elizabeth School, Kirkby Lonsdale, Cumbria and a keen composer. Her carol *Rune of the Nativity* has been chosen by the ORA Singers as one of 12 new pieces to be professionally recorded by the choir on 12 December at All Hallows’ Church, Gospel Oak, London, as part of the [Christmas Gift](#) project.



Jen Hartley

RNCM researcher featured in WHO report

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has included research by Sara Ascenso (Lecturer in Musicians’ Health and Wellbeing) in its recent landmark report on arts and health. Entitled ‘[What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review](#),’ the report synthesises results from more than 900 publications published between 2000 and 2019. Along with colleagues, Sara is a co-author on four of these articles, which investigate the benefits of group drumming for mental health service users and their carers, both formal and informal. The studies provide promising evidence on the role of community-based music initiatives in promoting mental health, assessed through both psychological and biological indicators. The WHO review states that the arts can impact both mental and physical health, not only through prevention and promotion, but also management and treatment. Besides calling for a wider acknowledgement of the role of the arts in health and wellbeing, the review also highlights that culturally diverse forms of art should be available and accessible ‘to a range of different groups across the life-course, especially those from disadvantaged minorities.’ It ends by advocating closer collaboration between the cultural and health sectors, and ‘the inclusion of arts and humanities education within the training of health-care professionals.’

Welcome to Jennie!

In October, the RNCM welcomed Dr Jennie Henley as its new Director of Programmes. This is great news for the area of music education at the College, as Jennie is an internationally-renowned expert in music pedagogy and was previously Area Leader for Music Education at the Royal College of Music, London. She has designed innovative music education programmes and modules, including distance learning and continuing professional development, embedding this work across the curriculum. Jennie’s knowledge exchange and consultancy activities have involved designing the framework for the national music curriculum in Malta and Egypt, curriculum development for Cambridge Assessment and Cambridge International Exams, consultancy work for ABRSM, Trinity College London and Artis Education, and adult education. We are also looking forward to learning more about her current research, which focuses on inclusion, diversity, and widening participation.

Conference focuses on listening



216 delegates from 25 countries came together at the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music, Katowice, Poland, for the 4th International Conference of Dalcroze Studies (ICDS4): ‘The listening body in action’ in the summer. The keynote presenters – Jacqueline Vann, Liora Bresler and Andrea Schiavio – focused on how listening plays a role in Dalcroze pedagogy, qualitative research, and embodied music cognition. For five days, there were papers, workshops, roundtables, talking circles, and performances. Dr Karin Greenhead (RNCM Tutor in Dalcroze Eurhythmics)

gave a paper-workshop entitled ‘I see you hear me: Exploring the rhythmics teacher’s attitude in improvised, music-movement dialogue’ and Dr John Habron (Head of Music Education) presented a paper on his oral history project with the oldest surviving generation of Dalcroze teachers in the UK. John has been re-elected as Chair of the Scientific Committee for the 5th International Conference of Dalcroze Studies (ICDS5), in collaboration with the Jaques-Dalcroze Society of Japan. This takes place 22-26 March 2021, Kunitachi College of Music, Tokyo, Japan.

Focus on preventing injury

October was injury-prevention month at the RNCM. Throughout the month, as part of the RNCM Wellbeing initiative, and in partnership with Sarah Upjohn and Dan Turnell, physiotherapists specialising in musicians’ injuries, students had the opportunity to hear about the major risk factors for playing-related injuries and the most effective strategies to prevent them. A variety of sessions were held across the college, including: a lecture for all students engaging in the opera orchestra this term, practical workshops per instrument family for the same group, a cross-faculty open lecture for all the RNCM community and a research-focused session integrated into the Musicians’ Health and Wellbeing research elective.

Pedagogues in Porto

In October, Robbie Gardiner (Assistant Head of Music Education) shared his doctoral research at the International Conference of Cipem/INET-md (Centre for Research in Psychology of Music and Music Education/Institute of Ethnomusicology, Centre for Music and Dance Studies).

Hosted in the beautiful coastal city of Porto, Portugal, the inclusive nature of the conference allowed for presentations in English, Spanish and Portuguese. Research was presented in various fields, including teacher education, creative music education and psychology of music education. Robbie presented a pilot study on how the language used by trainee teachers differs depending on context.

He said: *'The feedback was very helpful, particularly from Estelle Jorgensen [Professor Emerita, Indiana University Jacobs School of Music], who was a keynote speaker. I hope to publish this research later this year.'*

RNCM hosts MusicHE conference



The annual **MusicHE** (formerly NAMHE) conference took place on Tuesday 12 November, with many RNCM staff contributing as speakers (Dr Jennie Henley, Fiona Stuart, Dr John Habron, Robbie Gardiner), participants, and MusicHE committee members (Dr Michelle Phillips is acting Chair). The day was invigorating, stimulating, motivating, and very much a call to action for everyone in the music education sector to do our bit in promoting the value of music. Professor Pam Burnard (University of Cambridge) and Dr Jonathan Savage (Manchester Metropolitan University) (pictured) gave a rousing start to the day, providing a backdrop for the discussions that followed. Other highlights included contributions from Delia Stevens and Katie Foster from the ensemble Kabantu, hearing from community music lecturer Jess Abrams, and plenty of discussion in the afternoon led by Jennie Henley.

ABRSM taps into Andrea's expertise



RNCM percussion tutor Andrea Vogler is the lead consultant in the development of the new **ABRSM percussion syllabus** which launched on 07 November. This is the first time the syllabus has been revised since its creation 30 years ago, and the new pieces and technical requirements reflect the huge developments in percussion education and repertoire during that time. The new syllabus features over 80 exciting newly commissioned pieces by leading percussion composers and educationalists.

Budding percussionists can immerse themselves in innovative new repertoire, which offers: a variety of genres and styles; solos, duets, accompanied and multi-percussion pieces; and a flexible and accessible approach to percussion assessment. Andrea said: *'This has been a fantastic opportunity to lead a team of some of the country's top percussion teachers in totally redesigning a syllabus for young percussionists.'*

Congratulations to Karin!



Karin Greenhead (RNCM Tutor in Dalcroze Eurhythmics) has completed her PhD, entitled: *Dynamic Rehearsal and Dalcroze Eurhythmics: A phenomenological investigation into participants' experiences and their implications for the practice, teaching and learning of music and musical performance*. Dr Greenhead's supervisors were Professor Jane Southcott (Monash University, Melbourne, Australia) and Professor Jane Ginsborg (RNCM), and her MMU Director of Studies was Dr Martin Blain. The examiners were Dr Raymond MacDonald (University of Edinburgh) and Dr Trevor Thwaites (University of Auckland, New Zealand), both jazz improvisers who use phenomenological research methods. Read more about Karin's research on the last page.

Megan starts with In Harmony

At the start of this term, Megan Thompson (BMus 2018) started to work for In Harmony Liverpool. Megan gives instrumental and musicianship lessons to children aged 6 to 11 in the Anfield and Everton areas of the city. She is currently an MMus student at the RNCM and is combining this with three days a week teaching. Megan says, *'I love being an In Harmony Musician! It's developing my adaptability and versatility, and I'm constantly self-evaluating. It's also improving my knowledge of areas of music education that I didn't encounter during my own training, such as Kodály musicianship.'*



Lindsey Stoker

Nordic focus on horn pedagogy

In January 2015, Lindsey Stoker (RNCM's Senior Horn Tutor) spent the weekend at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki to share teaching ideas with a group of Scandinavian horn teachers, Nordhornped. *'It was an inspiring time where we shared and discussed teaching philosophies, methods and ideas about repertoire and books. We considered a wide range of topics, including how students learn and masterclass delivery,'* she said. Lindsey was subsequently invited to become a member of Nordhornped, meeting with them at the ARD Horn competition (Munich, 2016) where they interviewed two members of the Jury about their horn teaching, and at the International Horn Symposium in Ghent (2019), where they interviewed three international players about their teaching methods. Lindsey said: *'My teaching has been really enhanced by the culture of open collaboration in this group. Through our shared reflections, I have accessed teaching ideas that I wouldn't have had otherwise.'*

Naomi appointed Director of Music in China



Naomi Kayayan

Former RNCM piano tutor and alumna **Naomi Kayayan** (BMus 2001) has been appointed as Director of Music at Wycombe Abbey School in China, after first joining as Head of Keyboard in 2018. After hosting the RNCM Big Band for combined performances with her students, the Wycombe musicians visited the College for masterclasses and a collaborative recital with Junior RNCM. In 2020, the RNCM School of Strings will visit the RNCM partner school in China to present another side-by-side concert. Naomi is an ABRSM examiner and is completing the Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy in performance pedagogy at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. As a lecturer on the PG Cert in Instrumental Teaching at the University of Chichester she is regularly invited to give masterclasses that encourage audience participation and 'master-apprentice' role reversal. Watch out for her piano performance class at the RNCM in January 2020 and her recording project *El Pianista Peregrina*, based on piano music inspired by the Camino de Santiago de Compostela.

Finding a path in piano teaching

RNCM graduate Olivia Dance (BMus Piano, 2018) spends one hour a week coaching a young musician on the RNCM Pathfinder Programme. Pathfinder was established in 2017 to support musically talented young people who face financial, cultural and social barriers to progression. Pathfinder Manager, Rachael Jones, says that *'55 young people have benefitted this year, and 13% of participants continued their musical education at the RNCM and Chetham's this September.'* Each Pathfinder student can access mentoring, free concert tickets and workshops exploring composition, improvisation and chamber music skills. Pathfinder has been nominated for the Manchester Cultural Awards (Promotion of Culture and Education) and a Times Higher Education Award (Widening Participation or Outreach Initiative of the Year, 2019). Olivia said: *'I joined Pathfinder in September and feel immensely proud to be involved. I combine this work, along with my postgraduate studies at RNCM, with two day's teaching piano at Aura Music Academy in Altrincham, established by Bethany Dullea, an RNCM alumna. I look forward to seeing where my future in teaching takes me!'*

John in Bilbao

Students and staff at the Universidad de Pais Vasco, Bilbao, Spain welcomed Dr John Habron (Head of Music Education) for an Erasmus+ teaching visit in early November. John presented two seminar-workshops on inclusion and diversity in music education, to students undertaking a degree in primary teaching (pictured). These sessions focused on using various art forms (creative writing, drawing and song-writing) to reflect on personal experiences of inclusion and exclusion. Whilst there, he also met with colleague Dr Cristina Arriaga Sanz and their PhD student, Beñat Ralla Yusta, who is investigating the application of Dalcroze practice to the pedagogy of the txalaparta, a traditional Basque percussion instrument.



2 minutes with...

Dr Karin Greenhead



RNCM Tutor in Dalcroze Eurhythmics talks to Dr John Habron, Head of Music Education

Starting at the beginning, could you tell me a story about a teacher that had a big impact on you? What do you think made the difference?

Two Dalcroze teachers had a big impact on me. Ruth Stewart was one, but my first teacher was Elizabeth Vanderspar, who could take a class of children unknown to her and, in front of an audience, ensure were all engaged. Where Ruth was a poet, Elizabeth was pragmatic. For her, the practice of Dalcroze Eurhythmics and handing this on to future generations was essential. She had no ego, was impervious to flattery, modelled enthusiasm and was unselfishly dedicated. To give us the best, Elizabeth brought in teachers from whom she thought we could benefit, even if she didn't get on with them. Behind the scenes she helped her students financially and personally. Elizabeth could be demanding and critical, but I think we were very lucky in having teachers who not only taught us, but also showed us what teaching is.

How would you describe your approach, or underlying philosophy, to teaching and learning?

To open a door onto a world of experience and knowledge and accompany students as they walk through it. I favour Rousseau's approach in *Émile*: posing problems and asking questions, nudging the student to discover things for themselves. Teaching is essentially dialogical - in fact triological, if there is such a word, or trinitarian: the teacher, the student and the subject. Teaching is not instructing or tutoring. The teacher must be a learner who knows the subject well, attends closely to the student's needs, and responds creatively and rigorously. It is demanding and 'high risk', since the teacher can never be on auto-pilot. The teacher must not require admiration from the student or need to possess them because the teacher's aim is to become redundant as the student gains freedom, autonomy and agency. A good teacher is essentially a servant who serves both the subject and the student.

Your specialism is in Dalcroze Eurhythmics, and specifically how this can help instrumentalists and vocalists to prepare for performance. How did that work develop, and what have you learnt about training performers?

I trained as a performer and performed professionally until my late 30s so I know what performers have to do and about their anxieties. When I started working, at the Royal Ballet School and on what became the two-year PGCE with Specialist Strings at RNCM, I was struck by the ambivalent feelings that some students had towards performance and how this affected the quality of their playing. I developed an application of Dalcroze that the students called Dynamic Rehearsal. When students struggle with

musical interpretation and performance, it is usually because they do not have a personal, bodily connection to the sound they are making and to music in general. In such cases, they think and worry, but don't feel (physically and emotionally) or imagine. Inner hearing and feeling, and the musical imagination, are not guiding the playing. My approach helps students connect or re-connect the sensory, muscular and nervous systems with imagination, thought and intention. Working in pairs and groups, they also learn communication and ensemble skills.

You've just been awarded your PhD at the RNCM. What did you study and what will you take forward from this into your teaching practice?

I undertook a phenomenological investigation into the experiences of students in my lessons to uncover their experiences and what these meant to them. I also kept fieldnotes for a year. The data were quite extraordinary, although not surprising in a way. Very rich. They suggested how and why Dalcroze Eurhythmics and Dynamic Rehearsal tend to have the effects they have in my lessons. The material itself suggested a new way or level of analysis and generated a kind of hypothesis. I found the examiners' response very interesting as the viva was the first time anyone has really discussed my work with me. This has given me great confidence in my methods.

What advice would you have for other teachers who are considering undertaking research in music education?

If you are good at writing, consider qualitative methods. If you are interested in bringing to light what actually happens in the lesson and what the student or teacher experiences, then try hermeneutic phenomenology. A teacher who constantly asks '*how can I help students better?*' and seeks and finds answers is already engaged in research-like activity. Don't be put off by academic vocabulary! You can say most things in everyday language and you will find you already know from experience what many of those things are. Make a reference dictionary for yourself when reading and gradually learn to use some of those words when necessary. There are different schools of phenomenology, but I discovered that I'm a natural phenomenologist because I've always tended to do what phenomenologists talk about and I think many teachers do too, without realising it.

If you had to sum up the ideal teacher in three words, which would you choose?

I would use five! Enquiring, responsive, caring, constructive, free - in relation to the world, the other and oneself.