



The 1685 Stradivari meets a 1570 Andrea Amati

# The Sir John Manduell Research Forum Series

Forman Lecture Theatre

January - March 2018

Open to all, free admission

RNCM  
RESEARCH

FRENCH  
CONNECTIONS

## Wednesday 10 January 2018

4.15pm

Dr Edward Campbell  
(University of Aberdeen)

### Made in France but Celebrating the World

#### FRENCH CONNECTIONS

French modernism since Debussy has contained within itself aspects of the music and culture of geographically diverse regions. The influence of Messiaen and Jolivet as pedagogues was important in exemplifying how French modernism and the musics of the world could encounter one another in innumerable, innovative ways. Such conjunctions are not however the exclusive preserve of French-born composers and there is a less-celebrated generation of Asian composers who studied and worked in France. These include Ton-that-Thiet, Yoshihisa Taira and Nguyễn Thiên Đạo. These composers have worked, in turn, with their own French-based Asian students, who continue to compose in a modernist idiom which includes significant aspects of the musics of their own native cultures. In the course of the paper, we will consider the nature of the East-West encounters within their works and how this develops and differs from the work of their predecessors.

## Wednesday 17 January 2018

4.15pm

Dr Charlie Easmon (Your Excellent Health Service)

### The pits, the falls and the highs of the travelling performer

For 1-2 hours in a 24 hour period some people are elevated above others to be seen and heard as they entertain you. They bring all their practice, expertise and genius to that moment. They wish to do well and they wish to be applauded for it. They wish to be in optimal physical, mental and spiritual health at the time they do it but there are 22-23 hours either side. Hours in which they have to eat, drink, sleep, piss, poo, prepare and get there.

This talk will assess the various types of physical, mental and spiritual stress that performers are put under, and how the risks can be assessed and managed.

## Wednesday 24 January 2018

4.15pm

Dr Ágnes Kőry (Béla Bartók Centre for Musicianship)

### Hungarian Jewish composers and the Holocaust

In Hungary Jewish musicians were restricted in their studies and work first by the numerous *clausus* law passed in 1920 and later by the Jewish laws of 1938 and 1939. The restriction was fully tightened with the German occupation of Hungary in March 1944. Tragically, many talented musicians were murdered in the Holocaust; some of them never had the chance to fulfil their talents, others had their works destroyed. In my talk I will examine the historical background and I will show the astonishing resistance and resilience which many Hungarian Jewish musicians demonstrated in the face of unimaginable hardship and horrors. Of the many murdered musicians, I will focus on three composers: Ferencz/Franz Weisz, Sándor Kuti and László Weiner. Weiner may be deemed as of particular interest to the RNCM as his widow, Vera Rózsa, eventually became a much respected singing teacher at this college (as well as at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London and as a private teacher). The presentation will include short music examples by Weisz, Kuti and Weiner.

## Wednesday 31 January 2018

4.15pm

Dr Fiona Richards (Open University)

### Personifying the sounds of an orchestra

More often than not, orchestral players remain hidden – nameless musicians, contributing to the greater good. In working towards a comprehensive study of the Boyd Neel

Orchestra (flourished 1933–53), famous for its partnership with Britten, it became clear to me that uncovering the hidden musicians in this important string orchestra would be essential to a knowledge and understanding of the group's performances and recordings. This paper uses different source types – programmes, reviews, photographs, historic recordings and interviews with surviving relatives – to discover the musicians whose individual string tones and techniques affected the changing sound of the Boyd Neel Orchestra. I look at the three leaders, Louis Willoughby, Frederick Grinke and Maurice Clare, but also at the back desks, the third viola and the second double bass. Finding the lost people – names such as Beatrice 'Trix' Marr, Peter Beavan and Violet Palmer – and exploring their biographies and musicalities brings this orchestra and its history to life.

## Wednesday 7 February 2018 4.15pm

Dr Susanna Cohen

### **Music Performance Skills: A two-pronged approach – facilitating optimal music performance and reducing music performance anxiety**

Classical performing musicians have command of a wide range of cognitive, physiological and musical skills. However, the literature on facilitating optimal music performance has tended to focus on treating the pathological aspects of performance: on reducing debilitating music performance anxiety. This presentation explores the suggestion from the field of positive psychology that optimal functioning cannot be attained solely when there is an absence of pathology, rather that methods for facilitating positive functioning also need to be actively cultivated. The presentation will present the findings of an 11-week Music Performance Skills course comprising mental skills training, awareness and regulation of physiological arousal, enhancing musical communication and simulated performances.

## Wednesday 14 February 2018 4.15pm

Peter Sheppard Skærved  
(Royal Academy of Music)

### **The RNCM's 1685 Antonio Stradivari**

The RNCM's 1685 Antonio Stradivari violin is an immaculate example of the luthier's early work. It raises fascinating questions and possibilities as to the nature of the violin itself in the late 17th Century. What was the purpose of an instrument of this type? Peter Sheppard Skærved explores some possibilities, such as the widespread use of 'scordatura' and with particular reference to the contemporaneous 'Klagenfurt Manuscript', a collection of hundreds of movements for violin alone, in a number of tunings. Other composers whose work will be explored include Biagio Marini, Johann Vilsmay, Thomas Baltzar and Giuseppe Colombi, and a related violin by Girolamo Amati will form part of this dialogue ... come along to find out why!

Grammy-nominated violinist Peter Sheppard Skærved is the Viotti Lecturer of Performance Studies at the Royal Academy of Music. He is the dedicatee of over 400 works for solo violin and has recorded over 60 solo discs, ranging from cycles of works by Telemann and Tartini to many of the pieces written for him.

## Wednesday 28 February 2018 4.15pm

Professor Heidi Westerlund (University of the Arts, Helsinki)

### **Expanding Professionalism in Music: Shifting purposes, changing paradigms**

Terms such as hybrid, crossover, postmodern or community artist are increasingly being used to refer to contemporary arts professionals whose work has expanded beyond established institutional environments, often involving inter-disciplinary collaborations and boundary-crossing. This presentation shows how expanding professionalism challenges the purpose of music teaching and learning,

commonly constructed through the lens of musical quality only, as the interpenetration of other professional fields shifts the purpose qualitatively towards a more ethical, socially responsible and people-centered profession. Symptomatic of this shift, however, is an increasing discourse on wellbeing at the policy level that often reduces music to a 'cure' for a variety of individual and social problems. Using systems analysis the presentation shows how the purpose of a music education system can be expanded, while at the same time maintaining the integrity of its practices. The presentation draws upon research from the ArtsEqual initiative at the University of the Arts Helsinki, which currently involves over 90 researchers across the arts.

### Wednesday 7 March 2018 4.15pm

**Dr Alexandra Lamont (Keele University)**

#### **Supporting and sustaining engagement in a community choir over time**

This talk will address some of the practical and theoretical issues around researching real life music groups and providing robust evaluations of practice that convince policy-makers and academics alike. Drawing on a case study of a community choir for older people in Manchester I will tease out issues of bringing in theory to practice and evaluation, practical issues to do with funding and managing a long-term research project, and new findings on the 10h anniversary of the choir.

### Wednesday 14 March 2018 4.15pm

**Dr Laura Bowler (RNCM)**

#### **Verbatim Music Theatre - *Laura Sings***

*Laura Sings* (working title) is a work in development being created by Laura Bowler, Philip Venables, Patrick Eakin Young and Matthew Fairclough supported by Arts Council of England, Aldeburgh Music and Rape Crisis. This seminar will provide an insight into the practical, ethical and producing challenges of making a devised work of verbatim music theatre centred around the topic of Rape Culture.

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## FRENCH CONNECTIONS

SEPT 2017 – JULY 2018  
CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF  
FRANCE AND ITS IMPACT  
ACROSS THE WORLD