



CONTENTS

WELCOME	5
YOUR IMPACT	6
TODAY'S ASPIRATION, TOMORROW'S ARTIST	8
PREPARED FOR THE PROFESSION	10
STUDENT SUPPORT	14
INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS	20
TRANSFORMING ACCESS TO MUSIC	24
TEACHING THE MUSIC OF TOMORROW	32
OUR PLACES AND SPACES	36
HELP US SHAPE MUSIC'S FUTURE	38
THANK YOU	40



WELCOME



I am proud that the Royal Academy of Music continues to be the place where the future of music is forged with creativity and confidence. At our heart are outstanding young musicians who arrive from all over the world to develop their craft and shape their artistic identities.

As Britain's oldest conservatoire, we are steeped in tradition. Yet we are one of the most ambitious and progressive music schools in the world. Our teachers are renowned for their ability to turn young musicians with potential into successful professionals, alongside exceptional performing opportunities across all departments. Our leadership role in international exchanges and collaborations with other top conservatoires reinforces our global position.

Thanks to your extraordinary vision, understanding and generosity, we can provide the resilience and comprehensive support which sets up Academy students for rewarding and lifelong careers.

I hope you will enjoy reading about the difference you make.

Professor Jonathan Freeman-Attwood CBEPrincipal



Together we are ensuring that music has a bright future. You play a vital role in our success by funding scholarships, bursaries, artist development programmes and mental health and wellbeing support.

In 2023/24, our donors committed £13.85m to ensure that high-quality musical training is accessible to more than just the fortunate few.

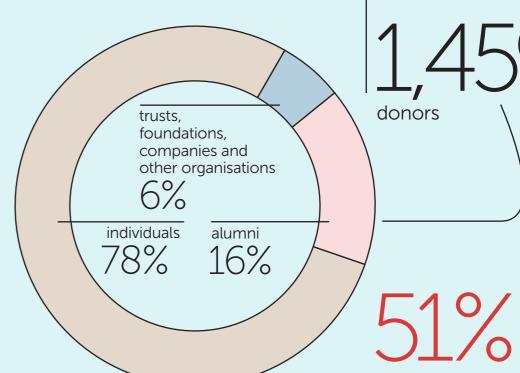
I hope you will enjoy reading about the impact of your philanthropic support on the lives of young musicians at the Academy. Your generosity is helping to provide aspiring artists with a well-rounded music education and additional opportunities for development.

Thank you for playing such an important part in the future of music.

Kirsty MacDonald
Deputy Principal (Advancement)



 $£13.85m_{\text{donated by}}$



of all scholarships and bursaries philanthropically funded

£542K for widening participation

£1.8m bequests received

£242 K for student support services



Our alumni make an incalculable contribution to society, serving as artistic leaders in the UK and internationally

For over 200 years, the Royal Academy of Music has been the place for young musicians to connect, collaborate and create as they forge their careers. Our meticulously designed curriculum prepares young musicians for the professional world, fostering artistic risk-taking and helping them shape their unique artistic identities.

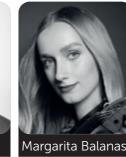
The Academy attracts the world's most ambitious young musicians, who come to study more than 50 disciplines. In 2023/24, they represented more than 55 countries.

Academy alumni, from Plínio Fernandes and Junyan Chen to Evelyn Glennie and Jonathon Heyward, are making their mark across the music industry. Highlights from recent graduates' successes include:

- Samuel Stopford joining the Bavarian State Opera Studio, following in the footsteps of Royal Academy Opera alumni Freddie De Tommaso and Vitor Bispo
- Violinist Charlotte Spruit and pianist Xiaowen Shang being respectively named a Classic FM and a BBC Music Magazine Rising Star
- James Orford appointed Organist of St Paul's Cathedral
- Margarita Balanas joining the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich as Assistant Conductor
- Ezra Collective, featuring Academy alumni Ife Ogunjobi, Femi Koleoso and Joe Armon-Jones, becoming the first jazz act to win the Mercury Prize

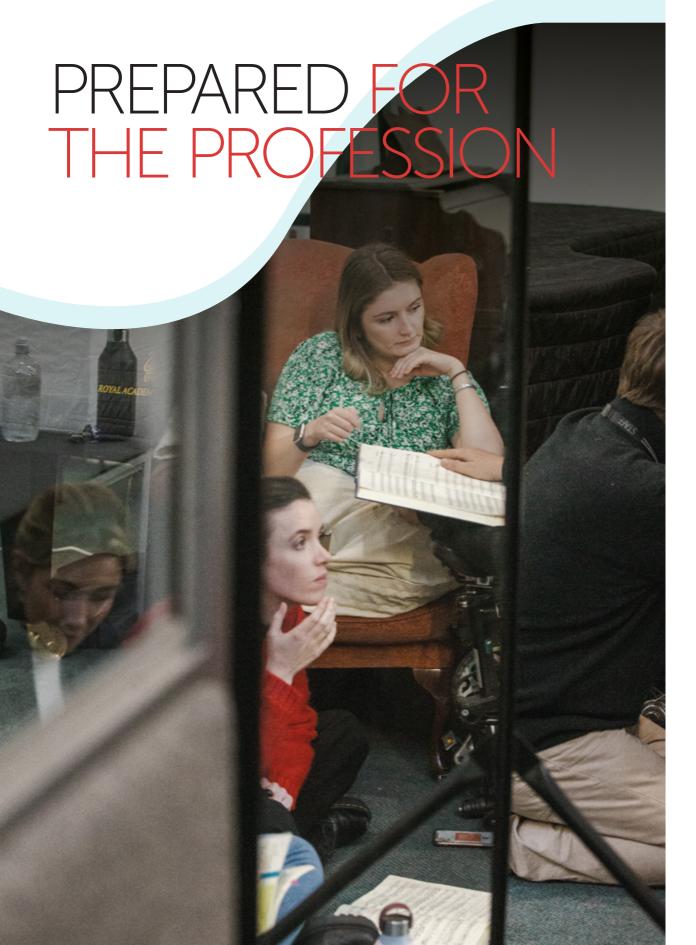






'When I was choosing where to study, the only real question I had was who produces the best musicians today? The answer was unequivocally the Academy'

George Reynolds
Royal Academy Opera



We prepare our students for the future by providing experiences that support their transition into autonomous professional artists

Our busy calendar of events offers young musicians diverse public performance opportunities, including SIDE-BY-SIDE opportunities, where mentorship is provided by our professional partners.

In 2023/24, our students performed in a full calendar of concerts, productions and masterclasses, showcasing their talents not only at the Academy but also at renowned venues such as Wigmore Hall, Royal Festival Hall and Snape Maltings.

When we asked our students which performances they particularly enjoyed, they mentioned:

- John Wilson conducting the Academy Symphony Orchestra performing Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No 2 in C minor and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's Scheherazade
- the final cantatas in our 15-year series featuring the music of Bach – followed by the launch of the new Sunday series, Resounding Shores
- SIDE-BY-SIDE projects with the Nash Ensemble at Wigmore Hall, Czech Philharmonic at the Rudolfinum and London Philharmonic Orchestra at Royal Festival Hall



'I have been able to focus on my studies and develop the imagination, versatility and resilience that I need to continue my artistic development while consolidating my professional contacts. By the time I leave, I will be ready for life as a working musician'

Jonasz Szachtmajer BMus Violin



ARTIST DEVELOPMENT

Our Artist Development programme complements our principal study departments, preparing students to graduate as creative, adaptable musicians

Life for young artists has always been a challenge, and the pandemic has made it harder to have a career in music, especially when starting out. Our students need to have confidence and imagination to build and sustain their presence in a fast-evolving profession.

Through our Artist Development programme we empower students to develop distinct artistic identities and cultivate productive industry relationships before graduation. Practical business skills prepare students for managing diverse portfolio careers. Many donors support this programme to directly help students build their careers through hands-on experience with partners across the arts sector.

Artist Development projects prepare students for the world in a way that is both creative and practical.

In April 2024, for example, Academy students performed in pop-up concerts within The Courtauld Gallery's Impressionist collection for *Sounds Like Art*, a collaboration between the Academy's postgraduates and The Courtauld Institute of Art. By combining their skills in art history, music performance and composition, participants gained valuable interdisciplinary experience, enhanced collaborative skills and expanded professional networks.

In January 2024, all of our performance venues were taken over for three days and evenings for the *Students Create* festival. Entirely planned and designed by 150 Academy students, they attracted almost 1,300 audience members. This annual event encourages artistic risk-taking and helps students experiment with new repertoire and programming ideas. This platform has been invaluable to many emerging ensembles such as Juno Duo and Intesa which have since launched professional careers.

ROYAL ACADEMY OPERA LIC

To prepare them for a life performing roles on the world's most famous stages, Academy singers require the best performance opportunities during their training.

Royal Academy Opera (RAO) functions as a small opera company. Replicating the standards and expectations of a professional company, RAO bridges the gap from postgraduate training to the professional world.

The two-year course includes:

- invaluable performance experiences, including three fully staged productions a year, attended by industry representatives
- acting and movement classes
- language coaching and classes in professional development
- teaching from distinguished in-house professors and international visiting artists

For nearly a decade, all RAO students have been supported through their training by full-fee scholarships, some of which have been funded by committed supporters.

In 2023/24 we welcomed a community of donors who formed the Academy's first opera syndicates, contributing to the cost of Handel's *Ariodante* and Britten's *Albert Herring*.

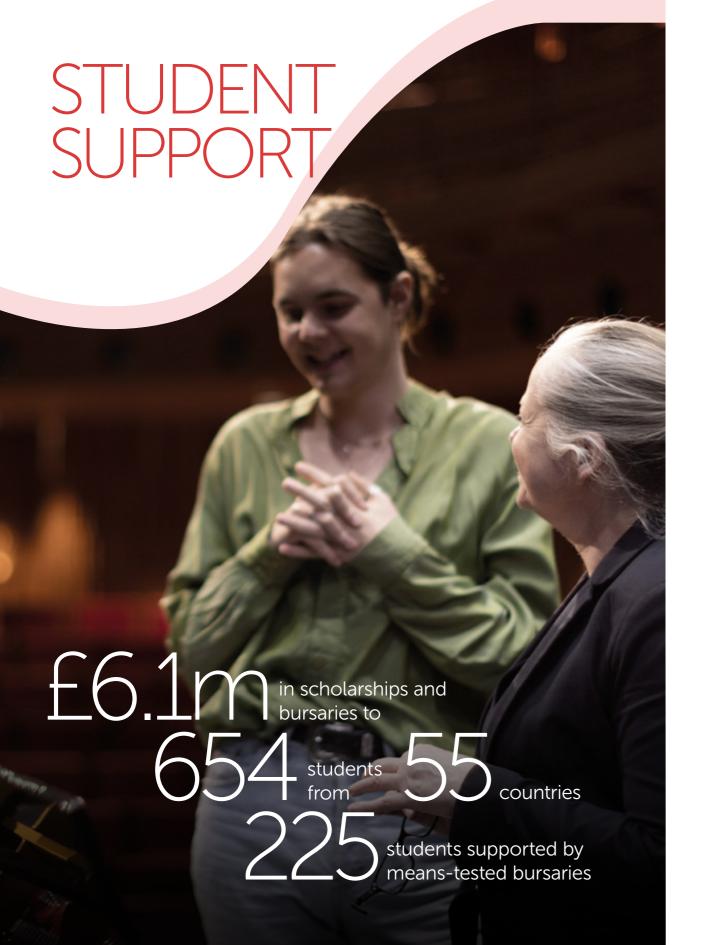
These syndicates support professional-standard, fully staged operas, with leading directors, designers and conductors, and we are now looking for three donors to support every major opera each year.

All Royal Academy Opera graduates from the 2023/24 cohort secured contracts with international opera houses or summer festivals before graduating.



'I have developed my technique and performance style with leading industry mentors. They have given me valuable knowledge to take into the professional world as I make my own way'

Madison Horman RAO graduate



Removing financial barriers gives students access to the training and resources they need to graduate fully prepared for a career in music

We must ensure that lack of funds does not stand in the way of a young person being able to develop their talent. While fees can be daunting for aspiring musicians, the true cost of training is even higher, averaging £35,000 per student each year.

UK undergraduate tuition is set by the government at £9,250 per year, and with the cost of living in London, a UK student needs more than £24,000 annually to study at the Academy. International fees are even higher: £27,300 per year for undergraduates and up to £34,000 for postgraduates in 2023/24.

The offer of financial support is often the deciding factor for a young musician being able to accept their place at the Academy. Only a small proportion of our outstanding students could afford to attend the Academy if it weren't for the scholarships and bursaries that our supporters help to fund.

In fact, in 2023/24, 82% of our students were supported by a scholarship or bursary, just over half of which were funded by philanthropy. The offer of a scholarship or bursary enables our students to focus on their artistic development without added financial pressure.

Supporters who left bequests to fund scholarships and bursaries made a particular difference this year. The 22 donors who remembered the Academy in their Wills supported 51 students. We are also immensely grateful to the supporters who have informed us that they have included the Academy in their estate plans – an exceptional way to support young musicians far into the future.



'My scholarship has allowed me to immerse myself fully in my studies and learn from some of the most talented individuals in the field. This has strengthened my skills, broadened my horizons and helped me discover new depths within myself'

Anna Eckhard MA Musical Theatre

SPOT

DONOR: SURESH MCMILLAN



Suresh McMillan began his relationship with the Academy in 2019 by establishing an award in memory of his late partner, Richard.

In 2023/24 he joined the Regents' Court of Benefactors – a group of supporters who have made exceptional contributions to the Academy – after making his transformative gift to endow two scholarships in perpetuity: the Suresh and Richard McMillan Scholarships for Opera and Music.

'When I met my late partner Richard 'Mac' McMillan in 1981 I had very little knowledge of classical music. Mac, on the other hand, had always loved it. For the next 30 years, music was our shared passion.

'When Mac passed away in 2012 I was determined that his legacy should live on through music. I decided a scholarship would be the best way to honour him and immortalise his love of classical music. When I got in touch with the Academy, it was the generosity of spirit with which I was greeted that convinced me I had made the right choice.

'Now some five years after I first established these scholarships to honour Mac's love of opera, violin, piano and clarinet, it gives me great pleasure to have secured this funding for the future. It matters so much to me that Mac will be remembered as a proud supporter and patron of classical music, even long after I am gone.'

Suresh McMillan Academy donor

STUDENT WELLBEING

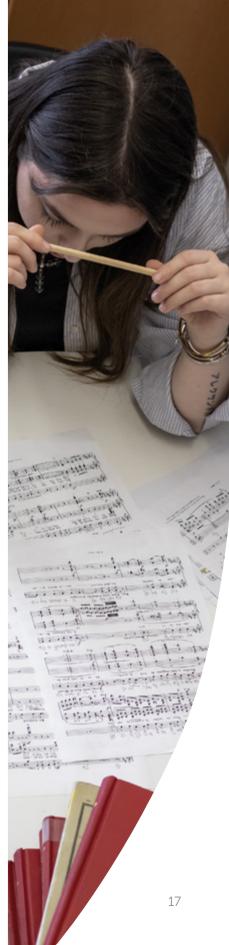
Our students need the right support to navigate the unique pressures and challenges of intensive musical training

In a volatile and competitive industry, young musicians will have their mental resilience tested. This is a lifelong challenge for musicians: students go on to manage freelance careers and need intellectual, emotional and physical flexibility in order to do so. We want our students to make the most of their time at the Academy and to develop the ability to sustain and cherish their joy in music-making as well as having well-balanced careers.

Thanks to the commitment of our donors, support for students' wellbeing and mental health has been transformed over the last five years.

Formerly a team of just two Counsellors and a Disability Advisor, our support structure now includes accredited counsellors, therapists, specialists in Alexander Technique and Feldenkrais (which develop musicians' understanding of their connected physical and psychological needs), a Disability Advisor and Additional Support Tutor.

Our Psychological Support Services now have a more sophisticated clinical database, which enables the team to manage larger numbers of registrants efficiently and confidentially. The system also enables analysis of data so that we can monitor and evaluate the services, ensuring we spend our resources where they are most needed.



16



HARPAL CHATWAL



Harpal Chatwal, Head of Psychological Support Services, emphasised the impact that new developments are already having on the team and the services they can provide:

'With an expanded team, we have been able to reduce response times, increase the range of support options available, and provide more proactive, personalised care for our students. This additional capacity has allowed us to address complex challenges with greater efficiency and offer more consistent support throughout the academic year.

'The implementation of the new clinical database has revolutionised the way we work, providing a centralised, secure and efficient system for managing student care. This has streamlined our administrative processes, improved data accuracy and enhanced our ability to collaborate across the team. Importantly, it has also given us deeper insights into emerging trends and patterns in student wellbeing, enabling us to adapt our services more strategically to meet our students' evolving needs.'

We want to build on our successes and continue to make significant improvements in how we support the health and wellbeing of our students, ensuring that every individual has access to the right support at the right time.





Young musicians thrive when exposed to global opportunities

Our students should have every opportunity to participate in international exchanges.

In 2022, Professor Jonathan Freeman-Attwood created the Sir Elton John Global Exchange Programme to enable young artists to expand their musical horizons. Led by the Academy, this programme includes 12 of the top conservatoires around the globe from Toronto to Tokyo.

The following year, 20 young musicians participated in the programme: twelve from the Academy and eight from partners, visiting five institutions across three continents.

Two students who benefited from the programme are Academy harpists Gina Gallacher and Megan Humphries, who travelled to the Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofía, Madrid. There, they rehearsed and performed with the Freixenet Symphony Orchestra at the Teatro Real and the National Music Auditorium, conducted by Péter Csaba.

In addition to the Sir Elton John Global Exchange Programme, the Academy provides collaborative opportunities with numerous international organisations including Mannheim Hochschule für Musik, Czech Philharmonic and Musikhochschule Lübeck.

In June 2024, the Academy Jazz Department partnered with the University of Miami's Frost School of Music to produce a highly acclaimed recording of lesser-known works by jazz giant Kenny Wheeler, recorded at the iconic Abbey Road Studios. The collaboration between the jazz orchestras of the Academy and the Frost School of Music saw students and alumni join Grammy-winning trumpeter John Daversa and two British jazz legends: saxophonist Evan Parker and jazz singer and lyricist Norma Winstone, a member of the original Kenny Wheeler big band sessions.

'It is so striking how we can connect through music even if we do not speak the same language. We have both returned to London filled with new ideas about how to approach life and music'

Gina Gallacher MA Harp





CZECH PHILHARMONIC

SPOT LIGHT

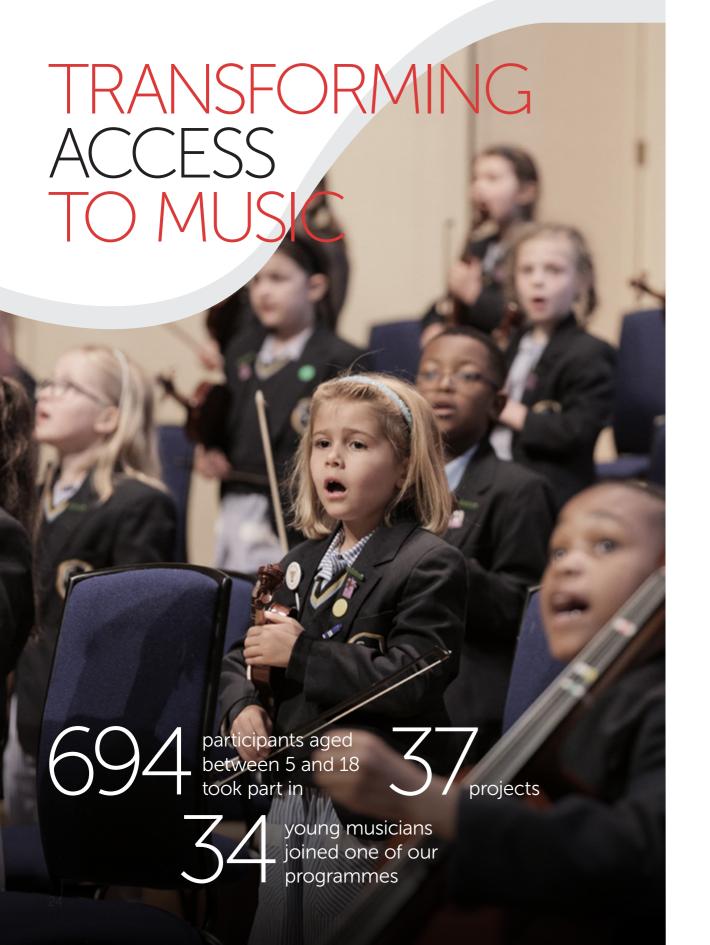
Under the guidance of Chief Conductor Semyon Bychkov, the Czech Philharmonic Orchestral Academy shares our mission to educate the next generation of musicians.

This year, support from the Semyon Bychkov Educational Enhancement Fund and the Gage Foundation has enabled the Academy to turn our longstanding creative connection with the Czech Philharmonic into a new educational and cultural exchange programme.

The programme has facilitated visits between Czech Philharmonic members and Academy students for mentorship, training and performance projects in London and Prague. It has provided travel bursaries enabling Academy conductors to observe Maestro Bychkov with the Czech Philharmonic, and offered masterclasses and chamber music projects led by Czech Philharmonic principals.

In 2023/24, eight Academy musicians travelled to Prague for a weeklong SIDE-BY-SIDE project with the Czech Philharmonic, performing in three live concerts at the Rudolfinum concert hall. Additionally, six students worked with a Czech Philharmonic violinist on Beethoven's chamber music, performing it in a matinee concert for the orchestra's partners and supporters.





Without access to high-level musical training, young people do not get the chance to discover their talent

Our Widening Participation team delivers activities ranging from short-term projects and workshops to summer schools and ongoing mentoring. From our Composers, Jazz and Percussion clubs to Musical Theatre Outreach Workshops and our Inner Ear Summer Programme, every project gives children the opportunity to flourish, regardless of background.

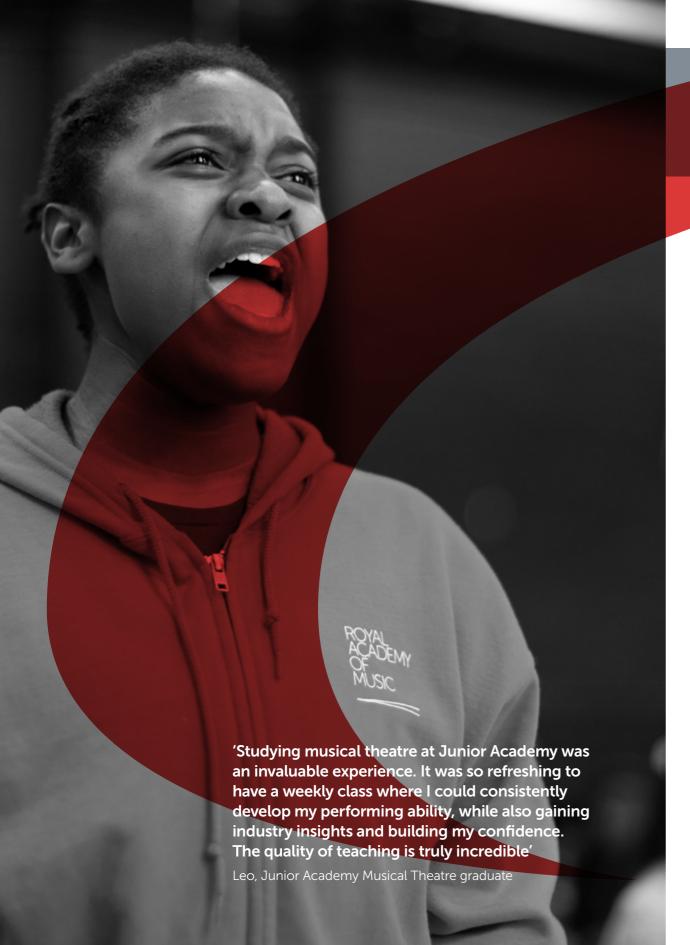
In 2023/24, young people attended a range of Widening Participation activities to support their ongoing musical progression. These included:

- 37 different projects (68% increase from last year) including 1,500 different interactions between participants and the programme, with some students attending multiple projects throughout the year
- our first cohort of 90 Community First Strings
 Experience children graduating from the programme after three years of teaching, with all students being offered the opportunity to continue lessons at school or in their local area
- delivering projects at 14 different schools through Community First Strings Experience, Composers Showcase, Audition Club and the Musical Theatre Outreach Workshops



'We want to make music more accessible so that children from different backgrounds who would have not approached classical music have the opportunity to discover and pursue their love of it'

Paola Delucchi Head of Community First Strings Experience



JUNIOR ACADEMY SF MUSICAL THEATRE LIG

Junior Academy Musical Theatre (JAMT) helps young performers aged 13 to 18 develop their skills, confidence and passion for acting, singing and performing.

With the generous support of The Karlsson Játiva Charitable Foundation, the Academy was able to launch a new JAMT programme, offering high-quality musical theatre training to a diverse group of young people, including those from under-represented and disadvantaged backgrounds.

In its second year the course has grown to encompass 62 students. In 2023/24, 43% of the JAMT cohort was made up of young musicians who were recruited through outreach and/or received bursary support. We were also able to launch a new mentorship programme, with six younger students receiving monthly training.

Since the beginning of the programme, the Academy has partnered with Disney's The Lion King to recruit young people from a wide variety of backgrounds. Disney helped us to identify exceptionally talented children who may not otherwise have had access to specialist training.

Leo, who was one of the students on the programme, joined with the support of a bursary and has now secured a place at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. An exceptionally talented performer, Leo wrote a musical during the JAMT course, using Academy practice rooms to compose, develop and rehearse some of the songs. Leo went on to pitch this musical at BEAM 2025, the UK's largest showcase of new musical theatre.





OPEN ACADEMY

Through our participatory and community programmes, musicians can develop new connections and take music to people from all walks of life

Open Academy works with a wide range of people, including young people in mainstream education, in special educational needs and disability schools and settings, adults with disabilities, hospital patients, care home residents and staff and day centre attendees. Through these projects, our students gain valuable experience, learn from knowledgeable Open Academy staff and develop skills that enhance their CVs and prepare them for their future careers.

Open Academy has had a full year of activities and partnerships, delivered by more than 60 students and our six Fellows. Offering 10 different types of projects, including work with people living with dementia, those experiencing homelessness, and primary school pupils visiting the Academy, in 2023/24, Open Academy has:

- engaged in person with 4,140 participants aged 3-90
- livestreamed performances as part of our Music for the Moment project to an online audience of 4,855, made up of people living with dementia, as well as their friends, families and carers
- developed two new partnerships with Harrow Road Community Choir, a choir open to all, regardless of age, background or musical experience, and Woven Gold Choir, a choir for refugees and asylum seekers from around the world
- continued its partnership with City Lit Percussion Orchestra and Academy alum Dame Evelyn Glennie, who was appointed Patron in January 2024



'Working with Open
Academy has been
a highlight of my
music education. It
was important for
me to make sense of
the role music plays
in our society. This
experience has shown
me how music can
connect communities,
lead to change, break
barriers and inspire the
deepest emotions'

Suzie Qiu Open Academy Fellow



60 PENFOLD STREET

SPOT

Open Academy has been developing strong links with 60 Penfold Street, a care facility in Westminster for people living with dementia. Providing round-the-clock care to its residents, 60 Penfold Street has been at the forefront of developing accessible and stimulating activities to help residents remain healthy, independent and active in spite of the complexities brought about by dementia.

The 60 Penfold Street residency offers significant benefits to care home residents and staff and provides invaluable training opportunities for our students, who take new skills forward into their own careers. Building on Head of Open Academy Julian West's work to date, the residency explores the benefits of co-creativity in music and dance for enhancing the wellbeing of people living with dementia. Alongside professional musicians and dancers, Academy students support sessions by improvising using sound, objects and movement, building connections to support participants' wellbeing and sense of agency.

Thanks to the generosity of the Constance Travis Charitable Trust, Open Academy has become an institutional leader in the field of combined arts and dementia care. Julian and his team can therefore continue to strengthen the foundations of their initial work and build on their successes, including:

- establishing a regular programme of music workshops run by a new creative ensemble
- affording long-term rehabilitative care to residents, and support for their carers and families
- offering workshops to everyone at the home, regardless of their stage of dementia or cognitive ability, bringing previously isolated people together through the power of collaborative music-making
- developing the new best practices that do not currently exist for dementia therapy





Our teachers inspire students to help them find their own voices

We were pleased to report last year the creation of the first fully endowed teaching positions at any UK conservatoire.

By the end of the 2023/24 academic year, donors had established five endowed Chairs and one endowed Visiting Professorship:

- Gatsby Chair of Musical Theatre
- Dame Myra Hess Chair of Piano
- William Lawes Chairs of Chamber Music
- Becket Chair of Historical Performance
- Fernside Chair of Choral Conducting
- Aud Jebsen Visiting Professorship of Piano

These endowed posts enable us to attract and retain the very best teachers in their areas of expertise, providing funding each year that will sustain the Academy's strength, success and global standing far into the future.

The profound impact of these transformative gifts has reinforced our determination to secure endowed Chairs for all 20 of our departments.

'This year was full of learning and discovery, a turning point in my life and career. I have worked with teachers who have taught me to reflect on how I play and who have guided me in my artistic and professional development'

Gabriel Alves Candido da SilvaMA Historical Performance





FERNSIDE CHAIR OF CHORAL CONDUCTING



Nicholas Chalmers was appointed the Fernside Chair of Choral Conducting in November 2023 to lead the Academy's postgraduate programme, which is the UK's longest running specialist course for conducting choirs. He has worked with many of the world's leading music organisations including English National Opera, BBC Singers, the Choirs of Westminster Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral and Shanghai Symphony Orchestra.

His work is driven by a passion to bring classical music to the next generation and to promote equal access to the performing arts.

'Choral music in the UK is an area of growth and an endowed position for this department ensures that the Academy is at the cutting edge of providing the best and most relevant tuition to guide students into this sector.

Coming to the Academy with the knowledge that this post is supported by the Fernside Trust gave me confidence that we could make a real change to the choral music scene in this country. The endowed chair allows me to form a strategy to broaden the educational and experiential opportunities for our students. Much of the choral music in the UK requires conductors to form a portfolio career that educates the population from primary level to senior citizens.

Thanks to this endowed position, I am able to integrate the changing musical scene in the UK into my course planning. This, in turn, allows me to best equip students with every opportunity available to them as they graduate.'





To remain a financially sustainable and ambitious conservatoire, we strive to constantly improve our facilities

With our supporters' help, in 2023/24 we invested in facility development and infrastructure, preserving and enhancing our listed buildings and improving their environmental sustainability.

A year on from the completion of the boiler replacement works funded by the Band Trust, the Academy received its latest Energy Performance Certificate rating. As a result of the improved boiler system, the Academy's rating has leapt up to a B – much higher than many listed buildings, which are often rated an E.

Donations to fund renovations have enabled many projects to be completed this year. Many of you will know that the ladies' toilets have been in need of modernisation for many years. With the help of a generous legacy from an Academy piano alumna, a full refurbishment of the basement space was successfully completed in summer 2024.

As well as improving our physical facilities, our donors have enabled the Academy to invest in some new digital infrastructure: a gift from Backstage Trust enabled the purchase and implementation of Xledger, a cloud-based financial management and accounting programme that is already increasing efficiency and streamlining processes.

The change to Xledger has eliminated time-consuming manual processes, enabling the Academy to focus more time, energy and money on our core purpose: training the world's best young musicians.

Philanthropic funding is vital to ensure we provide our students with the best facilities.

'A core requirement of an ambitious conservatoire is a beautiful environment that can inspire and become integral to students' creative experiences'

Jonathan Freeman-Attwood





Our community of donors makes it possible for us to give young musicians the opportunities they deserve. But there is still so much more to be done to shape the future of music

Throughout this report, you have read about remarkable acts of generosity that enable the Academy to build on its long musical traditions by training the talent of the future. The Academy is an extraordinary place with remarkable people, and we must continue to meet the changing demands facing young musicians.

With your support, we can continue to be the place where the very best new musicians realise their potential. There are many ways that you could help, including:

- providing funding for scholarships and bursaries, ensuring that every young musician can fully focus on their studies
- supporting the refurbishment of key teaching and performance spaces
- securing the future of pivotal teaching posts with endowed gifts
- helping us to expand on our global partnerships, giving young musicians every opportunity to participate in collaborations and international exchanges

To learn more about how you can make a gift to the Academy, please contact Lucie Kennedy, Director of Philanthropy, on director.philanthropy@ram.ac.uk or call 020 7873 7477



THANK YOU

We wish to thank the Regents' Court of Benefactors, the Wellington Benefactors and the donors who gave £1,000 or more between 1 August 2023 and 31 July 2024



Generous donors play an essential role in Academy life and, most importantly, in the lives of the young musicians who study here. We're both proud and tremendously grateful to recognise the many trusts, foundations, companies and individuals who have been central to the Academy's success this year. I hope that you have enjoyed reading about the extraordinary impact of philanthropy through the highlights of 2023/24.

Lucie Kennedy Director of Philanthropy

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41 40

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