



## EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION

UPDATE: JULY 2022

Liz Kenny

This update follows on from the last one I sent in early February 2022. Since we began this conversation our progress towards greater diversity in who we are as teachers and students, who and what we create and play, what ideas we debate, and who we engage with beyond our community, continues in many areas, and this is a chance to draw some strands together.

I'm highlighting some projects and themes here, some of which you may have seen in other fora such as the website, Principal's Bulletin and departmental newsletters. There'll be a little less about curriculum this time, though we do continue to highlight diverse repertoire and electives such as *Diverse Voices* go from strength to strength. I'm also using fewer words, and more images.

Who are our role models, and who do we celebrate? The Bicentenary is an opportunity to reflect on continuity and change and how they speak to each other.

Here's a picture of our honorands from Graduation just a week or so ago:



Graduation July 2022

Image: Frances Marshall

(Left to right: Susan Collier, Tom Poster, Allyson Devenish, Tim Williams, Cynthia Erivo, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, Dame Patricia Routledge, Matt Lucas, Helena Dix, Kadiatu Kanneh-Mason, Kirsty MacDonald, Cliff Masterson, Semyon Bychkov)

Diversity of race and gender, and of career trajectory are represented and celebrated here: composition in many genres, education, writing, acting, singing and development expertise all sitting equal to, and bound up with, our known history in classical musical performance. Iconic names alongside influential change-makers in well and less well-known areas. This is the Academy of 2022.

Our Bicentenary podcast series *Short Stories: 200 Years of the Royal Academy of Music* is currently sitting at no 10 in Apple Music's Music History chart. Recommended summer listening here: [ram.ac.uk/podcast](http://ram.ac.uk/podcast).

Episode 3: *The Class of 1918* tells the story of two black students we can see in photographs outside the Library. They are composer and multi-instrumentalist Edmund T. Jenkins, and mezzo-soprano Evelyn Dove. Our own student musicians provide a rich soundtrack. Thoughtful commentary from the present-day perspective is given by our SU Equality, Diversity and Inclusion representative Melissa Doody.

Episode 1: *Women of the Academy* traces stories of female performance from Fanny Dickens to the present, and again features some of our current students and staff including Hannah Stell, Briony Cox-Williams, Kathryn Adamson, and Sian Edwards, and it includes a backstage glimpse at the Glover-Edwards women conductors' programme.

On the subject of conducting, we are thrilled that alumnus Jonathan Heywood has just been named as the Music Director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

## STUDENTS CREATE and SEEN AND HEARD

These two Festivals are now important parts of our calendar. They both put students' ideas, priorities and creativity at the centre of programming in ways that are reflected in and supported by our year-round Events programme. This creates a virtuous circle where we keep each other motivated towards greater progress, and acknowledges our greatest strength, our students.

**SEEN AND HEARD** Ran for the second time in June. It is conceived and presented by the Students' Union, alongside the Feminist, LGBTQ+ and Ethnic Diversity Societies, to celebrate diversity in classical music. It opened with a programme dedicated to poet Edna St Vincent Millar. Yshani Perinpanayagam's *I am more than* was premiered by Sofiiia Matviienko, alongside works by Henriëtte Bosmans and Hannah Lash, and there were other **200 PIECES** premièred: by Errollyn Wallen, Ailís Ní Ríainin and Rachel Leach. Florence Price's music is established as central to regular concert repertoire, and was here represented by a quartet performance of her *Five Folksongs in Counterpoint*.

## ARTIST DEVELOPMENT

Performance, debate, research and entrepreneurship are central to Artist Development, led by Jessica Walker and Anna Wolstenholme, and the Diverse Voices elective provides a space to explore these processes with Jess Walker and Uchenna Ngwe.

Just two examples from the regular AD series demonstrate our inside-out interactions with the music industry, and the challenges as well as opportunities for change therein.

Ellie Consta from the ground-breaking **Her Ensemble**, and Hattie Butterworth & Rebecca Toal, whose podcast **Things Musicians Don't Talk About** presented their work, and opened up the conversation about musicians' mental health.

Clifton Harrison presented **Imaginative Programming Practices** – how to source and programme diverse repertoires.

## OTHER EVENTS

It's encouraging that 'non-standard' composers and performers are no longer such rarities as to be necessary to list individually, so just a few thought-provoking highlights.

Chiara Margarita Cozzolani's *Vespers*, (1650) conducted by Olivia Shotton

On 11 February the Manson ensemble, conducted by alumna Jessica Cottis, performed late-20th-century classics, Harrison Birtwistle's *Silbury Air* and Berio's virtuosic *Chemins II*, alongside Daniel Kidane's *Pulsing*, a new piece by PhD student Zhenyan Li, and a new work by Odaline de la Martinez written for the Academy's 200 Pieces Bicentenary project.

In March a group of our women singers performed a programme of songs by women composers written for female voices, including works by Amy Beach, Rebecca Clarke, Alma Mahler, Lili Boulanger, Ethel Smyth and Florence Price. In June Rhian Samuel featured as the composer of a set of works drawn together by a mixed ensemble, as *Orpheus and the Female Voice*.

Students from the Woodwind Department performed chamber works by British female composers. Works included Roxanna Panufnik's *Cantator and Amanda*, Anna Meredith's *Tripotage Miniatures*, and Ruth Gipps' *Seascape*, Op 53.

For February's Jazz Festival we welcomed jazz vocalist and songwriter Jo Lawry, leading UK jazz musicians Byron Wallen and Tori Freestone, New York-based alto saxophonist Will Vinson, ex-Jazz Messenger and legend of the London scene Jean Toussaint, and start of the new European jazz scene Jim Hart.

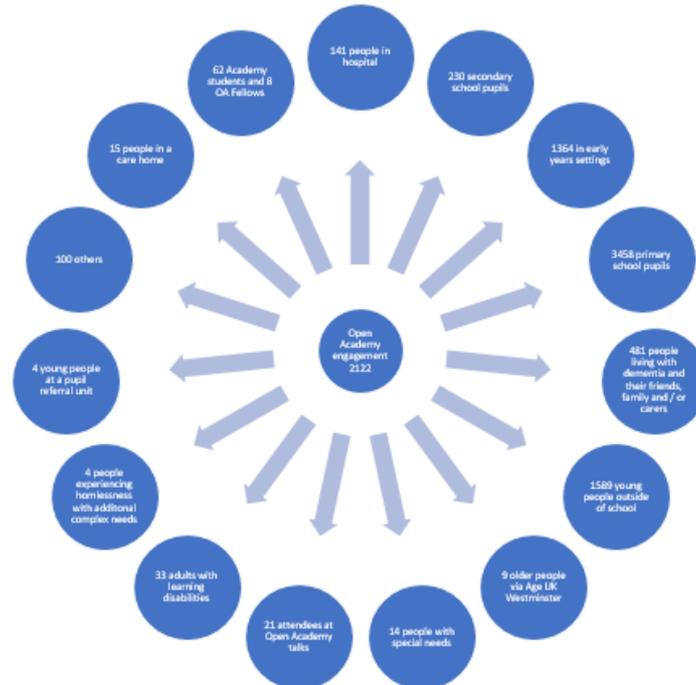
Term ended with interwoven female narratives from the Opera Department, Freya Waley-Cohen and Ruth Mariner's Academy-commissioned *Witch*, Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Monteverdi's *Lamento d'Arianna*.

## Summer Term

As part of the ever-innovative Piano Festival Andrea Rodriguez-Gomez, Joana Ribeiro, Theo Bently Curtin, Anna Graham Zara Williams gave a programme of William Grant Still, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Florence Price and Margaret Bonds, as well as the **200 PIECES** premiere of a new work by Joanna MacGregor.

## OPEN ACADEMY

Open Academy's wide reach is expressed best in this graphic, created by Janhavi Pradhan, this year's intern. Janhavi is now working for Theatre Peckham. Internships at the Academy are paid and often lead to interesting partnerships for the future.



In February, *Daylighting*, a new opera by Louise Drewett, received its world première, conducted by Otis Enokido-Lineham and directed by Hazel Gould. It featured children from Netley and St Albans' primary schools alongside Academy Vocal Studies students and a small group of instrumentalists, making the Open Academy collaborative ethos part of our performance business-as-usual and of our Bicentenary celebrations.

## WIDENING PARTICIPATION: NEW APPOINTMENTS

This spring we welcomed Nicola Tagoë as our Evidence, Evaluation and Planning Coordinator, and Aysia Edwards as our Your Academy Assistant. Our Clubs continue to build our connections with young people across London and beyond, encouraging them to think of the Academy as a possible future destination. Two projects to highlight this time:

On 11 June we had a visit from children and their families from Corpus Christi School, Brixton and from St Johns School, Rotherhithe. They have begun their musical journey through Community First String Experience, led by Paola de Lucchi and an extremely strong team of Fellows. More students led them in musical games, a visit to the Collections and galleries, and the Dukes' Hall where they met Junior Academy students and were welcomed by the Director, John Hutchins. 'See you in 5 years' was the last message they heard: we want these programmes to help close the gap between children who receive early 1:1 tuition in music, and those who don't.



Grainne Renihan and Deborah Stinton, course leaders on our upcoming Musical Theatre Juniors Saturday programme, took former Disney Scholars on a workshop roadshow to schools in South and East London. A third of the places this course will be fully funded with the aim of encouraging early training for all, again with the aim that a more diverse range of young people see themselves as part of the Academy in future.



*Image Charlotte Levy*

## **'YOUR ACADEMY' SUMMER 2022**

The WP team are preparing for the Academy's first ever summer school. It's a small pilot for now, allowing us to develop ideas for activities and recruitment, with a small number of children from our target areas where opportunities for music are not plentiful. The core principles are: working on 'inner ear' skills, 1:1 tuition in woodwind and piano, and games in the Park. This will run in August alongside an expanded version of 'Springboard', the programme that combines creative music making with the rigours of Grade V theory, led by the inspirational Agar Serugo-Lugo.

## **COLLECTIONS**

The Academy Collections are about the future as well as the past. We are getting back to being open to schools, casual tourists and importantly, students. We'd like you to get involved: voluntary and paid opportunities will come in from September. The Tertis Case, just outside the Canteen, highlights materials related to Academy Alumni whose work was outstanding but did not get to be known either because of their race, gender, sexual orientation, financial status, or political views.

In March, the SU were actively engaged as we celebrated Women's History Month, with a display about Alice Mary Smith, the first British woman to have composed a Symphony and to have had the work publicly performed (the C minor Symphony of 1863). This display was curated by Melissa Doody, RAM SU Equality and Diversity Representative, in collaboration with Museum and Library Collections.

In May we honoured May Mukle (b 1880, d 1963). Amy Foster, Library Assistant, conducted the research and the text for the display. May Mukle began attending the Royal Academy of Music when she was 13 years old, and won all available prizes for cello. In 1898 she graduated at seventeen and was made a Fellow of the Royal Academy in 1922. Mukle was one of the original members of the Society of Women Musicians (she was present at the very first meeting), and was very active in musical society in London. The May Mukle Prize was founded in her memory by Rebecca Clarke and friends. This award is still granted (May Mukle/Douglas Cameron Prize for cello sonata) at the Academy.

We are hoping to create a display featuring Edmund T Jenkins in October 2022 to celebrate Black History Month.

## **TRAINING**

We are confident that the three online training modules for student enrolment will be linked with the system this September. In consultation with the SU we have chosen Unconscious Bias for Students, Bystander Intervention, and Sexual Consent. Staff are also completing online training modules to increase awareness of issues in safeguarding, equality and diversity. HR would like to remind staff who have not yet completed the mandatory modules to please do so over the summer.

Senior Case Manager Fran Latham began work in July. Fran has experience in the Metropolitan Police as a Detective Sergeant, a background in Communications and a degree in Music and English. All these skills and experiences are being put to work as we

discuss ways to spread good practice across the. Academy, how to discuss and work on contentious or cultural issues, and best practice around investigations and complaint-management when things go wrong. Student feedback around Report and Support – that needs to be clearer, simpler and more informative about how reports are handled – has been hugely helpful and will be a priority, so do look out for changes and useful information there.

Get involved: it starts with students! I am always happy to hear ideas and to help if you have ideas but are not sure how to progress them [ekenny@ram.ac.uk](mailto:ekenny@ram.ac.uk)

**Useful contacts:**

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