

OX

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



From the CHAIR OF THE BOARD

It has been another long, hard year for universities, their students, and staff, and of course for professional musicians and performers not only up and down the country, but around the world. This issue of the *Oxford Musician* pays tribute to our students, staff, and professional musicians alike, celebrating their resourcefulness, diligence, and generosity. As we hope for a return to more in-person music-making this year, we are pleased to welcome a new Director of Performance, **Rosalind Ventris**. We farewell **Robert Saxton**, whose retirement marks the end of an era, and welcome **Jennifer Walshe** as an exciting and worthy successor to Robert.

I would like particularly to thank not only colleagues for working tirelessly over the past year, but also those students who have contributed to this edition of Faculty news, and

who have, like **Ellen O'Brien**, put the musical enrichment of others first, working to bring music-making to those who might otherwise have little opportunity. I would also like to thank all those students who have contributed constructively to curriculum reform discussions over the past year (as over previous years). As many of you will know, we have recently finalised changes to our first-year curriculum (in particular), which will assist more young people without traditional musical skills (many of which are no longer offered at secondary schools) to aspire to and achieve academic success at Oxford. That we have managed to introduce these reforms without abandoning traditional skills or areas of study for those who have the aptitude is testament to the curricular flexibility of Faculty colleagues. Those who are interested may

find more detail on the changes on the Faculty website.

This issue reminds us of the continuity and contribution of Oxford's musical life: **Reuben Philips**, himself an Oxford alumnus, writes about another alumnus, Donald Tovey; **Christopher Wintle** and **John Morehen** remind us of their careers, as distinguished alumni. While Tovey and the Young Musician competition demonstrate Oxford's connection to the musical establishment, our encouragement of diversity is also noted: **Samantha Ege's** centring of Florence Price's music; **Joanna Bullivant** and **Samantha Dieckmann's** championing of diversity in the British string quartet; **Leo Geyer's** marking of Oxford's contribution to the development of female conductors, and the example of **Natalia Luis-Bassa**. The research of **Gascia**

Ouzounian (and many other colleagues), and composition of **Luke Lewis** remind us of the variety of ways in which musical diversity is marked across our Faculty. Indeed, the 'Faculty News' list of some recent publications, commissions and recording highlights gives a sense of this Faculty's continued role as a centre of research and performing excellence. As **Matt Pickles'** essay reminds us, our eventual move to the Schwarzman Centre will advance both teaching and research still further and enable more people from diverse backgrounds to access music and the Faculty. As ever, we hope the magazine gives you a taste of life in the Faculty and encourages you to stay in touch.

Suzanne Aspden

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MUSIC
AND CHAIR OF FACULTY BOARD



FACULTY *news*

In 2020, Professor **Daniel Grimley** prepared the first edition of the missing movements of Frederick Delius's first string quartet, which were rediscovered at auction. The full work was premiered at the University Church by the Villiers String Quartet in October.

Daniel has also been appointed as interim Head of Humanities. He will lead the Division from October while the board searches for a permanent replacement for Professor Karen O'Brien.

Dr **Cayenna Ponchione-Bailey** conducted the Orchestra of St John's in a performance of the electro-orchestral composition *Reaching Water*. Commissioned by Cayenna and composed by the psych-pop band pecq, the work draws on the research of Oxford social scientist Dr Catherine Grasham, in Ethiopia's Awash River Basin. The performance was featured in a UNESCO-IHP sponsored webinar on water security.

Composer **Tom Coult** has been made the 'Albi Rosenthal Visiting Fellow in Music' at Oxford University's Bodleian Libraries. He has written a piece for voice and piano, inspired by materials in the library. The piece was written for and performed by soprano Anna Dennis at the Oxford Lieder Festival in October 2021.

In April, as part of the Sounds of South Asia series, Real World Records and the Faculty of Music live-streamed a remastered live performance of Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and Party from the 1985 WOMAD Festival. The event was followed by a panel discussion with ethnomusicologist **Dr Thomas Hodgson**, singer/songwriter Wajiha Naqvi, Qawwali singer Dhruv Sangari and music historian Dr Katherine Schofield. The event received 2700 views.

EMPres Creative Director **Daniel Hulme** has recently been awarded a Humanities Cultural Programme grant for 'Sampling the City with Shiva Feshareki'. The collaborative project aims to connect different areas of cultural and academic life in Oxford, resulting in a performance from experimental composer Shiva Feshareki.

Research Fellow and Lecturer **Dr Emanuela Vai** has been awarded a grant for her project on musical instruments at the Ashmolean Museum and the Bate Collection, in collaboration with the Digital Humanities team and TORCH. The project will trace the history of select musical instruments in the Ashmolean's collection.



Tom Hodgson



Tom Coult

Lord Crewe Junior Research Fellow **Dr Samantha Ege** has been awarded funding from BBC Radio 3 and UK Research and Innovation's (UKRI) Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to research American composer and pianist Margaret Bonds (1913 – 1972). The grant aims to celebrate and give recognition to historical classical composers from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Heather Professor of Music **Professor Eric Clarke** launched a new seminar series – the Oxford Seminar in Psychology of Music (OSPOM). The series has explored such topics as musical memory, emotion and meaning in music, the aesthetic pleasure of information seeking, and affiliative interaction in music and speech.

A First Glimpse of MUSIC'S FUTURE HOME

The image below shows how the future home of the Music Faculty could look in the future. It's one of the proposed designs by Hopkins Architects for the Stephen A. Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities.

The University released the designs in June as part of the second public consultation for the building. Feedback from the Oxford community has informed the planning application, which will be submitted to Oxford City Council in late summer or early autumn. If the application is successful, the building is expected to be completed in 2025.

The Centre will provide a new home for seven faculties, a new Institute for Ethics in AI, the Oxford Internet Institute, and a new library. There will be three performance spaces: a 500-seat concert hall, a 250-seat theatre and a Black Box

lab, which will be “one of the most technologically advanced experimental performance spaces in the UK” (Professor Jason Stanyek). We expect to see Oxford music students regularly rehearsing and performing on these stages.

Alongside the proposed designs, the University outlined its priority of making the building environmentally sustainable. It will bring new planting, landscaping and green spaces to the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter and add more biodiversity to the site than existed before. Features like solar power generation on the roof and energy- and carbon-efficient design will contribute to the University's aim to halve its carbon emissions by 2030.

Philip Pullman, a renowned author who set his His Dark Materials trilogy in Oxford, gave a warm reaction to the design: “The Schwarzman

Centre for the Humanities will be an exciting and distinguished addition to the architecture of this beautiful city, and what it embodies about the central place of humanities in the world of learning needs demonstrating now more than ever.”

FIND OUT MORE

You can find out more information about the proposed building, including viewing the consultation's exhibition boards, at www.schwarzmancentre.ox.ac.uk/buildingconsultation

Support for academic posts, graduate scholarships and cultural programmes will be vital for realising the transformational vision of the Stephen A. Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities. If you would like to help, please contact our development office at humanities@devoff.ox.ac.uk



Matt Pickles is Head of Communications for the Humanities at Oxford University. He promotes teaching and research in the Humanities, with a particular focus on the Schwarzman Centre.





VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES

Community Music and Music Education in Lockdown

Both community music and music education are defined by communication, interaction, and collaboration. So when the pandemic emerged, I was devastated that this would end. For the prisoners I had been singing with as a part of 'Sing Inside', restrictions meant twenty-three and a half hours locked in a cell each day; a choice between a shower or a breath of fresh air. However, the flexibility of practitioners in the field and perseverance of participants has been astounding and only enhanced my appreciation for music's social capabilities.

My first experience of community music via Zoom was with 'Turtle Song', a weekly song writing session for people with early-onset dementia and their carers. The project, part of the Music in the Community module, is a collaboration between Turtle Key Arts, The



About the author: Ellen O'Brien (St Hilda's College, 2018) is a third-year music student at St Hilda's College. She was the first Access and Outreach Officer for the Oxford University Music Society and is the current Oxford President for Sing Inside. She has enjoyed bringing community music to many settings including local nurseries, schools, care homes, hospitals and prisons.

FIND OUT MORE

To find out more about Soundabout visit: www.soundabout.org.uk/

Royal College of Music and English Touring Opera and culminates in a 'sharing' event where the songs are performed to friends and families. After eight weeks of shared music, creativity, and laughter we were ready for the final performance, just as COVID cases began to surface. Fortunately, recordings of the sessions had been made, and the first virtual performance took place on Zoom to a wider audience than ever before. Since then, Turtle Song has completed three fully-online projects.

The Music Education: Practice and Pedagogy module was a welcome addition to the FHS course in 2020. We were placed in St Frideswide Primary School, teaching music lessons in twos over Zoom to fifteen four- and five-year olds. It became the highlight of my week to log in to Zoom and be met by a class full of excited children.

Perhaps one of the most pertinent success stories of the pandemic, Soundabout started as a local charity, working primarily with children and young people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD). I have been lucky enough to be involved in their inclusive choir, which during the pandemic has seen an expansion from one Oxford-based group to twelve online choirs across the UK and beyond. Over the past year, the Soundabout Inclusive choirs have featured on the BBC News, appeared on Songs of Praise and collaborated with the King's Singers.

The pandemic has created an additional virtual dimension to the community music sphere, showing that even during medical and social uncertainty, musical communities can thrive.



Reuben Phillips joined the Faculty of Music as a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow in January 2021. He was awarded a PhD from Princeton University and has articles published and forthcoming in the Musical Quarterly and the Journal of the Royal Musical Association.

THE MUSICAL SCHOLAR, PIANIST, AND COMPOSER DONALD FRANCIS TOVEY (1875–1940) WAS A STUDENT AT BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD BETWEEN 1894 AND 1898. A SERIES OF LETTERS TO HIS TEACHER SOPHIE WEISSE PROVIDE A VIVID ACCOUNT OF HIS EXPERIENCES AND OF HIS IMPRESSIONS OF LEADING FIGURES IN THE OXFORD MUSIC SCENE DURING THE MID 1890S.

While Tovey's studies were in classics, one can readily infer from his correspondence that much of his time was in fact spent composing, performing, and reading through musical scores. On arrival at Balliol at the start of Michaelmas 1894, he described the difficulties of accommodating his vast collection of printed music: 'The armchairs are occupied by pictures & I have spent most of yesterday trying to get everything in some sort of order. I had to take the music upstairs in 17 instalments, or it would have taken 5 men to get the case up'. One of Tovey's contemporaries, Ernest Walker,



Tovey

at Oxford



later recalled that volumes from the nineteenth-century Bach-Gesellschaft edition (the first complete scholarly edition of Bach's music) had been Tovey's regular bedtime reading. The newsy letters to Sophie Weisse are punctuated with requests for further scores and observations on the music he had recently heard or read—in several cases relating to his interest in Bach's parody techniques.

Tovey was a participant in and keen observer of college musical life. Regular Sunday concerts took place through the organizational efforts of the Balliol College organist, John Farmer, often featuring Tovey as a pianist. In one letter Tovey communicated his first impressions of the organist: 'I have just had 3/4 of an hour with Mr Farmer! He has banged away at his own Balliol student songs (some of which are rather good) and has given me the most sensational thrills & palpitations for my poor piano.'

Readers of Tovey's *Essays in Musical Analysis* (1935–9) will be familiar with his readiness to contradict orthodox opinion and it is clear from his early letters that this instinct was present at a young age. In one letter, Tovey narrated his experience of a piano recital given at the Sheldonian by the famous pianist Ignacy Paderewski:

Occasionally, as in the second theme of the first movement of the Brahms A major quartet [Op. 26], there was incomparable majesty to be seen, but on the whole there was twice as much bang as tone, and in sustained melodies the pianoforte sounded almost as much an instrument of percussion as it does with most other players. The Chopin G major Nocturne [Op. 37 No. 2] was stark mad. A most repulsive reading he gives of it ... either knocked on the head with a sledge-hammer or played with the end of a pocket handkerchief.

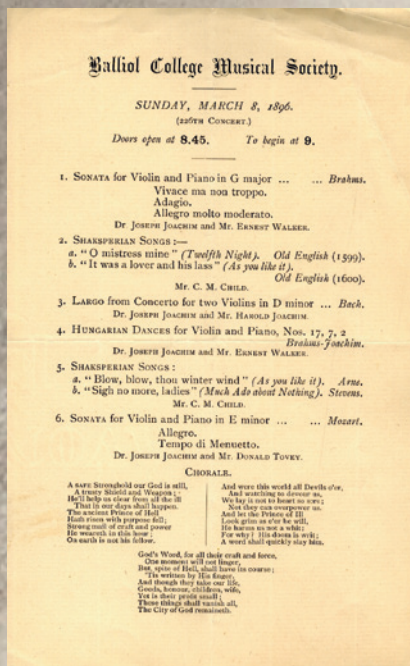
While Tovey might have been

sceptical about Paderewski's playing, his most acerbic remarks were reserved for the then Heather Professor of Music, Sir John Stainer, with whom chatted in the spring of 1895:

He's a very nice man; although he's the worst musician in Europe. Old Farmer knows 20 times as much, in spite of his insanity ... He [Stainer] subscribes to the Schütz edition and we got into conversation on Schütz & I referred to a passage, which we looked out, & he said "I wonder how they were supposed to sing this" pointing to a deep note in the bass trombone! He's had those volumes for years without finding out that the Psalms [Schütz's *Psalmen Davids*] had orchestral accompaniments.

While one might feel sorry for the much-maligned Stainer, there is perhaps something rather inspiring about this nineteen-year-old undergraduate's capacity for the critical observation of esteemed university professors.

D T



SOURCES

University of Edinburgh, Centre for Research Collections: Coll-411/1/1/L371, L372, L390, L408, L487.

Mary Grierson, Donald Francis Tovey: A Biography based on Letters (London, 1952).

Ernest Walker, Preface to Donald Francis Tovey, A Musician Talks: Musical Textures (London, 1941).

Concert Programme from Balliol College Historic Collections; reproduced by kind permission of the Master and Fellows of Balliol College.

Photograph of Tovey in 1898 from the University of Edinburgh Image Collections.

OUO

Four Questions with Natalia Luis-Bassa

Four Questions with Natalia Luis-Bassa

OUO

OUO

Four Questions with Natalia Luis-Bassa

OUO



The Oxford University Orchestra recently appointed celebrated conductor and educator Natalia Luis-Bassa to be their first Principal Guest Conductor. Jude Neanor, the Communications Officer at the Oxford University Music Society, sat down for a virtual interview with Natalia to talk about her life, work and future plans for the OUO.

Natalia grew up within a musical family in Venezuela. As a girl, her parents would take her and her sisters to see operas and concerts. She decided from a young age that she wanted to become a conductor and took up the oboe to help realise her dream. She later became the first person to receive a degree in orchestral conducting in Venezuela, before moving to the UK to study at the Royal College of Music.

Now living in the UK, Natalia is a professor of conducting at the RCM, Elgar ambassador for the Elgar Society and often works with the National Children's Orchestra and the Benedetti Foundation.

You are someone who has experienced music education in two very different countries: first as a student in Venezuela, and later as a student and professor in the UK. Are there any big differences in how conducting is taught in the two systems?

When I was in Venezuela, conducting didn't exist in the university. This was in 1991: before this, conductors had to go to Europe to study. When I got to the university, a group of five students wanted to be conductors more than players, and we started pushing two big conductors to create a

curriculum for the university to open a conducting course, and they did it. So, answering your question, it was different. When I arrived at the Royal College of Music I knew what I had to do to get to the end of the course. I didn't in Venezuela – they were remodelling the curriculum as they went. But it was still wonderful because we were able to work with big orchestras.

In the UK you now work a lot with youth groups like the National Children's Orchestra and the Benedetti Foundation. Do you think the way in which you had to fight for your education in Venezuela has influenced how you approach teaching music, and your philosophy in helping others to gain access to education?

Yes! I hadn't realised this before, but it probably does help me to keep going. I have a motto that says, "music education matters", and I think that it is very well proven that being involved in music and playing an instrument works wonders in your brain. In my case it probably helped me to be more organised, to be quieter – before, I was a bit – well, very – hyperactive. Working with the NCO and the Benedetti foundation, those are really small kids, and the earlier you put the music bug inside, the better!

What advice do you have for young conductors?

Keep preparing yourself. The more information you can put inside your brain, the better it will be [for] you as a conductor. Embrace any opportunity that may arise; don't say no to anything that will encourage and expand your creative process. The more you can attend other conductors' rehearsals, the more you will learn - what to do, and what not to do.

Covid rules permitting, in Hilary 2022 you will be conducting the OUO's performance of 'The Rite of Spring'. How do you put your own mark on such a well-performed piece as a conductor?

It is definitely a piece that is a challenge for the orchestra and the conductor. I think that what I can probably bring is a new approach to the rhythm involved: being Latin, those rhythms may be easier for me to show and project. I have never done 'The Rite of Spring' before in my life, and maybe that's why the OUO have asked me to do it— to see if they can make me get rid of this 'fear' that I have of this piece. It's such a big challenge, and I'm really looking forward to it!

FIND OUT MORE

Visit oums.org for updates on the Oxford University Music Society.

Sounding Florence Price FOR A NEW CENTURY

Dr Samantha Ege, pianist and Lord Crewe Junior Research Fellow in Music at Lincoln College, discusses her work exploring the life and music of American classical composer Florence Price.

On 7 April 2019, I performed at the Chicago Cultural Center. My programme was called 'Of Folk, Faith & Fellowship: Exploring Chicago's African-American Women Composers.' I performed the works of early twentieth-century composers Florence Price and Margaret Bonds and those of living composers Regina Harris Baiocchi and Dolores White, who were both in attendance. I closed with Price's spiritual-inspired *Fantasie Nègre* No. 1 in E Minor. It was not until I sounded the final chord of the fantasy that the significance of this event dawned on me.

I was introduced to Price in 2009 during my undergraduate exchange year at McGill University, Canada. *Fantasie Nègre* No. 1 was the first classical piece by a Black woman composer that I had ever heard. And so, to bring this work to life ten years later

in the city that Price called home was incredible. Baiocchi's address to the audience after my performance further clarified why: 'When you go through music school, you study the canon; and a lot of times, for Black women composers, the canon is incomplete... So, what you heard today is a part of the canon that is omitted. It is music written by people who look like Samantha, who look like me, who look like Dolores.'

Indeed, it is exciting to belong to a new generation of Price scholars and performers. To have my work unfold in dialogue with that of my predecessors and peers makes me feel as though I, too, am a part of this deep and dynamic history. I have felt this profoundly with the release of my most recent album, *Fantasie Nègre: The Piano Music of Florence Price*.

In addition to deepening Price scholarship through performance, I am building on the musicological work of Price biographers such as Barbara Garvey Jackson and the late Rae Linda Brown. I have been contracted to co-author Price (Master Musicians Series, Oxford University Press) alongside Douglas Shadle (Vanderbilt University). I will also be working alongside my colleague A. Kori Hill (UNC Chapel Hill) as we co-edit *The Cambridge Companion to Florence Price*.

Our work emerges amid a revival of interest in Price's music. But this is not a new awakening. Since Price's death in 1953, there have been several renaissances in which she has been 'rediscovered' in the mainstream musical consciousness, only to be routinely consigned to her

'neglected' and 'overlooked' status once the fad inevitably runs its course. Will things be different this time? Will Black classical lives matter without social justice movements to remind listeners of our humanity? All I can hope is that in presenting Price to new audiences and sounding her story for a new century, my work will resonate deeply and, to echo Baiocchi, inspire another generation to take these legacies on.



Left-Right: Dolores White, Samantha Ege, Regina Harris Baiocchi, pictured at the Chicago Cultural Center, 7th of April, 2019



Jennifer Ronyak



Minjung Baek

VISITING SCHOLARS TO THE FACULTY OF MUSIC

Almost every year the Music Faculty is joined by Visiting Scholars, often established academics on funded research leave from their home institution. They are required to nominate a member of the Music Faculty as their mentor and to offer a lecture, recital, or some other contribution to the community, while they work on their own project. Visiting Scholars come from around the world and greatly enrich the academic and creative life of the University.

MINJUNG BAEK

As soon as I graduated from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, I started working as a professor at one of the top universities in Seoul alongside my busy concert career. As a performer, I have performed extensively in the US, Europe, and Asia at concert halls such as the Barbican, the Wigmore

Hall, Carnegie Hall and festivals like the City of London, and Schleswig-Holstein Festivals. I have also served on the juries of several national and International Piano Competitions.

In Oxford, I am recording two CDs: one at the end of May and the second, on Beethoven's piano sonatas, in December. I will also give lecture-recitals in November in Oxford and London about Beethoven.

JENNIFER RONYAK

I have taken leave from my post as Assistant Professor of Musicology at the University of Music and Performing Arts, Graz to join the Faculty of Music at the University of Oxford as a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual European Fellow. At Oxford, I will conduct the research project "Composing Philosophy: Amateurism and Aesthetics in Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century Music." The project will look at how

classical composers mined philosophical works for musical material, such as texts for vocal works or programmes for instrumental ones. It offers a new view of this 'composing philosophy' as something done from the standpoint of philosophical amateurism—the state of engaging deeply with philosophy while being inexpert in it—irrespective of whether composers are students, canonical figures, or something in between.

My research has been in various subjects related to art song, including amateurism. I have written journal articles, book chapters and the book *Intimacy, Performance, and the Lied in the Early Nineteenth Century* (2018). I am co-editor, with Benjamin Binder, of the book in progress *The Lied at the Crossroads of Performance and Musicology*.

FIND OUT MORE

More information about visiting scholars:
www.music.ox.ac.uk/apply/visiting-scholars/

Diversity and the British String Quartet



Joanna Bullivant

Diversity and the British String Quartet is a wide-ranging collaboration between the Villiers Quartet and the University of Oxford supported by TORCH (The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities) as part of the Humanities Cultural Programme. In Oxford, it is led by the Faculty of Music's Dr Joanna Bullivant and Professor Samantha Dieckmann. The project has used the British string quartet as a focus to explore larger debates around inclusivity, access, and identity in classical music in Britain. These debates are urgent and resonant in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and controversies over representation and British musical identity at the Last Night of the Proms following the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests.

While the British string quartet may prompt ideas of elitism and exclusivity, throughout its history it has attracted an extraordinary diversity of composers and performers. Diversity and the British String Quartet has sought to explore these issues through a combination of research, new music commissioning, and educational work. In educational terms, we have worked with young people aged 14-18 around the country, helping them to compose their own string quartets, working with professional performers, academics, and composers. With regard to research, we have

simultaneously evaluated the impact of the project on young people in terms of changing their perceptions of classical music and their own relationship thereto. In terms of commissioning, the Villiers Quartet have commissioned five contemporary British composers to write From Home quartets, exploring the experience of writing music in Britain in the current historical moment.

A live-streamed symposium was the culmination and public

presentation of these activities through a series of talks, workshops, and performances. The symposium's concerts featured an array of rarely heard British quartets, plus the world premiere performances of works by the From Home composers:

Florence Anna Maunders, Philip Herbert, Robert Fokkens, Alex Ho, and Jasmin Kent Rodgman. The student quartets created during the project were also performed.

Expert speakers from the music industry and academia addressed a range of issues in the history of the British string quartet.

They included Laura Tunbridge, Des Oliver, Kadiatu Kanneh-Mason, Roz De Vile, Nate Holder, Leah Broad, Amanda Harris, Florian Scheduling and Paul Watt.

As advocates for British music, the Villiers Quartet bring to light the stories of British composers largely ignored within the chamber music canon. With the leadership of Dr. Bullivant and Prof. Dieckmann, the Villiers Quartet present these composers and explore difficult truths around why these impassioned voices have been overlooked, and they collaboratively reflect with researchers, students, educators, and audiences on Diversity and the British String Quartet.

FIND OUT MORE

This project has been generously supported by TORCH as part of the Humanities Cultural Programme, Arts Council England, the RVW Trust, The David Willets Fund for Teaching Innovation, and supporters of the Villiers Quartet's From Home Commissions Fund.

You can find full details of the Programme here: www.torch.ox.ac.uk/diversity-and-the-british-string-quartet-0#/



STEREOPHONICA

SOUND AND SPACE IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE ARTS

**GASCIA OUXOUNIAN
WAS INTERVIEWED BY
THE FACULTY'S EVENTS
AND COMMUNICATIONS
OFFICER ABOUT HER
LATEST PUBLICATION.**

It has been wonderful to read about your new book, *Stereophonica: Sound and Space in Science, Technology, and the Arts*, published by MIT Press. What motivated you to write this book?

I wanted to write a book that rigorously examined concepts and technologies of sound and space from an historical perspective. Where did ideas of acoustic and auditory space come from, and how did they evolve at the intersection of science, technology, and the arts?

You also write about space in experimental music and sound art.

Yes, I'm interested not only in examining concepts of physical space in connection to sound—but also concepts of social space and political space, which are very important to sound artists and composers. There's a chapter that considers what Edgard Varèse called 'spatial music'—music in which space is a key compositional parameter—to more extended forms of sound sculpture and sound installation art after 1960. Mid-twentieth century composers used geometrical and mathematical language to describe sonic space: 'angles' and 'planes' of sound. I trace a shift from this Euclidean and Cartesian approach to the work of sound artists who approach space as something that is socially and politically constructed.

The book ends with a chapter on sonic urbanism, which is something you're exploring in your new project *Sonorous Cities*. Can you tell us more about that project?

Sonorous Cities is a 5-year research project funded by the European Research Council. I'm collaborating with an outstanding group of researchers—Dr Ruth Bernatek, Dr Matilde Meireles, and Dr Christabel Stirling—who work across the fields of architecture and urban studies, sound art, and music and sound studies. The aims of the project are to develop critical and creative approaches to sonic urbanism as a way of intervening in the built environment professions: architecture, urban planning, and urban design. These are mainly concerned with noise mitigation and acoustical control when it comes to sound. We seek to bring a deeper appreciation of sound's political, social, and creative capacities to those professional communities.

How do you see the project developing in the next year?

There are a few phases to the project. We're currently conducting ethnographic research on people's experiences of sonic environments in London. Do people feel a sense of acoustic citizenship in their sonic environments? How do they participate in creating them? How are sonic environments managed and governed, for example through noise legislation? Are certain types of sounds or sonic behaviours policed more heavily, and if so, what is driving that policing? What happens when neighbourhoods undergo rapid change? Are there forms of sonic segregation or division that emerge, and, if so,

how is that manifested and experienced by residents? Soundscape has historically been examined as an object: as the 'set' of sounds that can be heard in a place. We're interested in furthering a conception of soundscape as product and investigating the social, political, and economic bases of that production. This ethnographic work will feed into our co-authored book *Critical Studies in Sonic Urbanism*, which will critically evaluate the state-of-the-art and bring fresh perspectives from our collaborative research as well. We will animate this work through workshops and Design Weeks for architects, planners and urban designers in different cities. The first workshop, which will explore the theme of sonic materialities and energies, will be held at Cité de l'Architecture in Paris in January 2022.

SONICITIES



Professor Gascia Ouzounian is a sound theorist and practitioner who specialises in experimental music and sound art, music technology studies and sound studies.

FIND OUT MORE

Visit www.soncities.org.



Celebrating Oxford's

WOMEN CONDUCTORS

Over the last few years, the conducting profession has quite rightly come under intense scrutiny for its lack of gender equality. The Royal Philharmonic Society has shed light on this issue with concerning statistics. Notably, only one British orchestra has a female principal conductor and out of 371 conductors represented by British agents, a mere 5.5% were female. Frequently, this is blamed on a lack of encouragement in music education and role models to inspire women to take up arms and beat. Despite this often-quoted status quo, Oxford University has established a considerable reputation for supporting young women conductors, many of whom now enjoy impressive careers and are proactively bringing about much-needed change.



In the Queen's 2021 New Year's Honours, Professor *Dame Jane Glover* (St Hugh's College, 1968) received a

damehood for her services to music. Whilst a student, Glover conducted a number of opera productions, most notably the first modern performance of Francesco Cavalli's *Rosinda*, first premiered in Venice in 1651. Glover continued to make history as the first woman to conduct Glyndebourne Opera and the second woman to conduct at the BBC Proms. She is without doubt a role model for future generations of women conductors.



Alice Farnham (St Hugh's College, 1989) similarly enjoys an impressive international conducting career with an operatic focus. Farnham is championed in Classic FM's Today's Ten Best Women Conductors and in the BBC Woman's Hour Music Power List. In addition, Farnham has received renown for her work supporting the next generation of women conductors. Farnham is the Co-Founder and Artistic

Director of Women Conductors with the Royal Philharmonic Society – a ground-breaking program to encourage women into conducting. Despite the almost continuous shutdown of our musical world, Farnham has continued to teach the next generation of women conductors by producing online resources and delivering virtual masterclasses and workshops.

While studying, *Chloe Rooke* (St Catherine's College, 2015) directed the University Wind Orchestra, winning the Gold Award at the National Concert Band Festival in the USA. She is currently undertaking a prestigious Dutch National Masters in Orchestral Conducting and working with orchestras in the Netherlands and throughout Europe. This year, Rooke took part in the Donatella Flick Competition with the London Symphony Orchestra. She reached the finals and was awarded the Audience Prize.

The Faculty of Music hopes to see more women conductors emerge in the coming years.



Leo Geyer is a composer and conductor currently studying for a DPhil in opera-ballet composition. Leo is also the Artistic Director of Constella OperaBallet and has worked as a guest artist with the Royal Opera House, National Theatre and English Chamber Orchestra.

In this piece, composer Luke Lewis (Stipendiary Lecturer in Music, New College) talks about his recent work using archival research and cutting-edge software to unlock the compositional potential of our everyday speech.

The ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax is best known for recording North American folk music that fed the folk revival of the 1960s, yet his interviewing of former miners in Treorchy Miners Club in South Wales in 1953 offers a remarkable insight into an extinct way of life. Lomax's recordings are at the centre of my composition 'The Echoes Return Slow', named after the final collection of poems from Welsh poet R.S. Thomas.

The work is a commission from the London Sinfonietta, whose 'Writing the Future' project looks at extending the traditional chamber music format.

I'll have the Treorchy interviews played back – often cut up and manipulated – and accompanied by the Sinfonietta, who play music based on transcriptions of the miners' singing and their speaking. I'm sure many will be familiar with the idea of transcribing music and bringing it into a composed piece, but you can do the same with speech. Trickier and reliant on computer software, it yields revelatory results: often someone has been speaking in a musical key; using only a few intervals; or the rhythms or

pitches of different phrases in a sentence appear as variations of one another.

What's crucial is that a basic compositional principle is established: get musical material from the archive's singing and/or speaking yet also take a formal or rhetorical lead from the story being told in the source. Archives shouldn't just be storage facilities for things we feel obliged to keep. They ought to be engaged with artistically, of course, but also critically. I say this because a dispiriting absence from Lomax's fieldwork is women. The labour of wives and daughters was as fundamental to the community as the mining itself and here we have yet another example of women's

work being unacknowledged. However, I'm hoping to redress this through interviews in Treorchy this summer.

Rarely is writing music simply a person sitting at a desk and getting on with it. It's more often like foraging, going out and finding things. The hope is that you bring these together, that through your instincts and decisions there are chemical reactions and, suddenly, a piece before you. Then, the hard part: writing it out. To help this all along I'm working with Michael McCarthy (Music Theatre Wales) on staging concepts and have composer Cassandra Miller as an inspiring mentor. The plan is to premiere it at the Southbank Centre, London in early 2022.

FIND OUT MORE

Discover more about the project at <https://londonsinfonietta.org.uk/luke-lewis-0>



THE ECHOES RETURN SLOW

Composing from Song and Speech

Alumni PROFILES

SAM POPPLETON *(The Queen's College, 2010)*

Sam Poppleton is a singer, conductor, and vocal leader. He runs the Inclusive Choir for adults with special educational requirements at CityLit College, is a baritone lay clerk at Southwark St George's Cathedral, directs the Zeitgeist Chamber Orchestra and leads a range of amateur and school singing. He co-hosts The Classical Music Pod and contributed vocal arrangements to the 2012 Oscar-winning rescoring of Les Misérables.

What are some of your favourite memories of your time as a student at Oxford?

During my second year, I lived at the top of a winding staircase with three other bass choral scholars. In that relative isolation, we forged great friendships that are still central to my life. I often think back to hearing the rumble of early-morning warm-ups through the paper-thin walls.

In the past few years, you worked with the Junior All Saints Singers from All Saints Fulham Church. What was the best thing about that experience?

All Saints Fulham Church is a wonderful creative environment full of musicians and clergy willing to try something experimental. I lead the Junior All Saints Singers (JASS) in composing their own JASS Mass for the first communion service last year. Seeing the children's reaction as the adult choir and congregation sang music that they had dreamt up was hugely rewarding.

Part of your career has included leading City Lit College's Inclusive Choir for adults with special educational needs. What are some of the key challenges and rewards of working with musicians from different backgrounds?

Inclusive Choir is always a

highlight of my week. The great joy, and challenge, of sessions is that careful preparation and planning can go out the window at any moment. Spontaneity, improvisation, and flexibility are required to make the most of all the unpredictable creativity sparking around in the room. I've been leading the group in writing their own music as well as performing some of their favourite hits. The aim is to build interpretations that only they could have created. If we've got a member whose neurodiversity or medical condition means that they can create unusual sounds, the music should harness that unique possibility.

What has it been like creating and developing your podcast 'The Classical Musical Pod' with Timmy Fisher?

The Classical Music Pod started off as a Sunday afternoon hobby, wittering away with a friend from primary school. We wanted

to have conversations about music in a way that could help our listeners build confidence in expressing their own opinions on what they hear, irrespective of their level of expertise. So far, I have traded David Attenborough impressions with Jess Gillam and got book recommendations from Tom Service and Errollyn Wallen.

What advice would you give to Oxford students looking to pursue a wide-ranging career in the arts?

In my experience, there are lots of generous people working in music. If you ask to go and shadow, carry the bags, set out the chairs, make the tea or play some rehearsal piano, then you can see how some amazing musicians work. The hardest part is organising and financing that often-unpaid time to build up experience and make those vital personal connections.



JOHN MOREHEN

(New College, 1961)

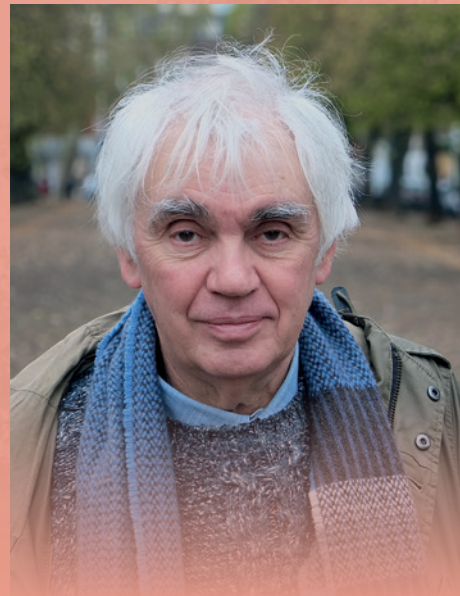
This submission was received early in 2021.

The Faculty of Music was later saddened to learn that John had subsequently passed away. Our thoughts are with John's family at this time. If you have any memories of John that you would like to share, please email oxfordmusician@music.ox.ac.uk.

On leaving school (Clifton, 1960) I headed for a 'gap year' at the Royal School of Church Music, where I honed my organ-playing and choir-training skills. I then became New College's first Organ Scholar, expecting on graduation to move into the cloistered world of Cathedral music. Working daily with a professional choir stood me in good stead when I later trained choirs for conductors such as Yehudi Menuhin, Sir David Willcocks, and Sir Charles Mackerras.

Approaching graduation (1964) my Tutor – Dr (now Sir) David Lumsden – warned me that my career trajectory might well differ from that which I planned. I did not really believe him, but how correct he was – I had no idea that I would spend the next twenty years writing computer code to analyse Renaissance music. Following my Ph.D (Cambridge, 1967) I was offered two linked academic positions in Washington DC. I jumped at the opportunity, which led to one of the happiest periods in my life. But after just a year in Washington, a telegram arrived offering me the post of Sub-Organist at St George's Chapel, Windsor, with a 'grace and favour' penthouse apartment and spectacular views towards Eton. My duties included playing the organ or directing the choir at Chapel services. Among many memorable occasions were the impressive Services of the Order of the Garter, and the funerals of royalty and of military heroes.

In 1973 I was appointed Lecturer in Music at Nottingham, then Professor (1989) and first Head of the new School of Humanities (1998). Founding ab initio a coherent academic School embracing five disciplines was an exciting challenge. I rapidly learned the foibles of archaeologists, classicists, philosophers and theologians, and concluded that musicians were not nearly as eccentric as I had hitherto supposed.



CHRISTOPHER WINTLE

(St Catherine's College, 1963)

In 2000, I found my path blocked. Central to understanding modern music analysis and criticism was to recover the thought of the European thinkers dispersed in WWII.

I had been to Princeton University to work on 'Schenker and sets', helped found Music Analysis, and after the death of the London-based but Austrian-born Hans Keller in 1985, become his literary executor. Keller integrated Freudian psychology with Austro-German form-theory and is an important figure in music analysis. Although CUP had published my edition of Keller's *Essays on Music* in 1994, it would commit no further. So, I founded my own academically refereed press, Plumbago Books, with international distribution through Boydell & Brewer. I have since edited multiple works of Keller, including *Jerusalem Diary*, *Music and Psychology* and *Film Music and Beyond*. I have published three collections by Keller's closest British allies, Hugh Wood, Bayan Northcott and Leo Black. I have also written a book on Britten, *All the Gods* and another titled *What Opera Means*. My latest edition, *Bojan Bujić's Arnold Schoenberg and Egon Wellesz*, includes an account of the Viennese background to the founding of the Oxford Music Faculty. There is still much more to publish.

SEND US YOUR NEWS

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Professor Robert Saxton
**COMPOSER AND PIONEER
OF NEW MUSIC AT OXFORD**

The Faculty of Music looks back at the legacy of renowned composer Robert Saxton, who retired as Professor of Composition and Fellow and Tutor at Worcester College in 2021.

Robert Saxton was born in London in 1953 and started composing at the age of six. Guidance in early years from Benjamin Britten and lessons with Elisabeth Lutyens was followed by periods of study at both Cambridge and Oxford Universities with Robin Holloway and Robert Sherlaw Johnson respectively, and also with Luciano Berio. At the age of twenty-one, Robert won the Gaudeamus International Composers Prize, and in 1986 he was awarded a Fulbright Arts Fellowship, allowing him to reside at Princeton and work as Oliver Knussen's assistant at Tanglewood. Robert became a DMus (Oxon) in 1992 and was elected an Honorary Fellow of St Catharine's College, Cambridge in 2015.

Robert has been a member of the Music Faculty and

Tutorial Fellow in Music at Worcester College since 1999. Previously, Robert was Head of Composition and Contemporary Music at the Royal Academy of Music (1998-99), and prior to this, Head of Composition at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama between 1991 and 1997. Robert's research interests include large-scale harmonic/structural issues in music from the late-18th to the late-20th centuries, and the relationship between tradition and contemporary compositional thought and practice.

During his time at the Faculty of Music, Robert pioneered opportunities for students to specialise in the field of New Music composition. He founded the Composition specialisation within the DPhil in Music course; allowing students to pursue New Music composition at the



*Robert Saxton and
John Traill (left)*

highest level at Oxford. In 2002, Robert established the student group Ensemble ISIS with Dr John Traill (Director of Music at St Anne's College); the Faculty of Music's contemporary music group dedicated to performing new works by world-class composers, as well as the music of talented undergraduate and postgraduate composers in composition workshops and public performances. Robert also convened the 'Composer Speaks' series, which has brought composers such as Howard Skempton, Anne Dudley and most recently Roderick Williams to Oxford to discuss their works.

A farewell for Robert (necessarily modest, due to COVID-19 restrictions) was held in the grounds of the Music Faculty in June and was attended by a small number of present and past Faculty members.

Alumni NEWS

Michael Uy (Merton College, 2009) published *Ask the Experts: How Ford, Rockefeller, and the NEA Changed American Music*. His work demonstrates how ‘expertise’ served as an exclusionary form of cultural and social capital that prevented racial minorities and non-dominant groups from fully participating in shaping the direction of music-making in America.

Andrew McAnerney (Magdalen College, 1995) has released a new recording *L’homme armé* with the Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal, a musical journey into the music of the Court of Burgundy in the 15th century.

British soprano **Robyn Allegra Parton** (Worcester College, 2005) has been awarded the ‘2021

Soloist Award’ by the Friends of Folkoperan in Stockholm. In 2020, Robyn made her debut at the Folkoperan as the title role in *Coraline* by Mark-Anthony Turnage in Swedish translation.

Michael Papadopoulos (Trinity College, 2009) has recently made his debut on the main stage of the Royal Opera House conducting Kurt Weill/Bertolt Brecht’s *Seven Deadly Sins* and *Mahagonny Songspiel*.

Amelia Anderson (Exeter College, 2012), **Betty Makharinsky** (Exeter College, 2012) and **Jonathan Darbourne** (Magdalen College 2006) established The Vache Baroque Festival in 2020. Its core mission is to engage new and more diverse audience members and performers and help to reimagine classical music in a

more accessible, sustainable, and enjoyable way for future generations.

Oxford Bach Soloists, founded by **Tom Hammond-Davies** (Hertford College, 2004), collaborated with Positive Note to produce episodic releases of the *St John Passion* ‘from Isolation’ and the *B minor Mass* ‘Breaking the Silence’. They also created the *St John Passion* and the *Easter Oratorio* with director Thomas Guthrie and Tall Wall Media.

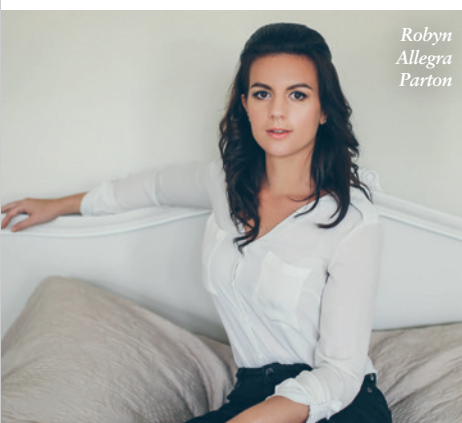
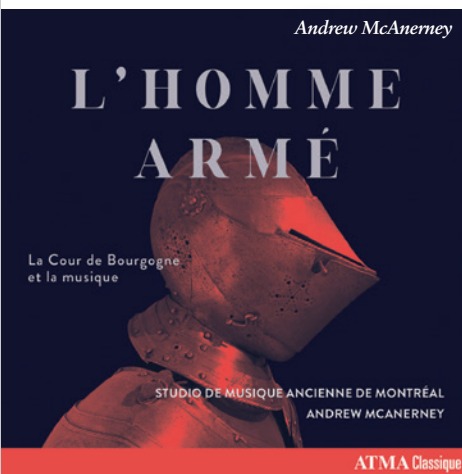
Two Faculty alumni, **Ellie Blamires** (New College, 2015) and **Patrick Bolton** (Christ Church, 2015) are members of Ensemble Renard which has been awarded a Chamber Music Fellowship at the Royal Academy of Music for 2021/22, the Academy’s bicentenary year.

Alumna **Bryony Morrison** (BA Music, 2005) launched a series of music-making resources for primary-aged children with CBSO violinist Charlotte Skinner. ‘Race Through Space’ explored orchestral repertoire and different elements of music to design a musical spaceship built from the interrelated dimensions of music.

Wasfi Kani OBE (St Hilda’s College, 1975), Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Grange Park Opera, was awarded a CBE in the New Year’s Honours List for services to Music.

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Student NEWS

Oxford Contemporary Opera, founded by **Zerlina Vulliamy** (New College, 2020), **Sam Padfield** (St Anne's College, 2017) and **Priya Radhakrishnan** (University College, 2017), created the virtual panel series 'Opera in Conversation', a series of virtual talks with composers, directors, conductors, singers and executives in the opera industry.

Leo Geyer (St Catherine's College, 2019), director of Constella OperaBallet, has worked in partnership with Derbyshire's Darley Abbey to bring its heritage to life through a series of seven short films with newly commissioned dance, music and drama.

Carol Jones (St Catherine's College, 2018) exhibited her work 'Tree Listening' as part of 'The Secret World of Plants' at the Royal Botanic Gardens. Her installation allowed visitors to listen to the hidden sounds within oak trees through a series of suspended sound domes.

Leoni Hughes-King (New College, 2018) was awarded the Philip Bates Prize for Composers and Songwriters 2020. Her song cycle, 'Time', is a setting of text from Dylan Thomas's 'Fern Hill'. The poem tells of Thomas's nostalgia for his rural childhood.

Hannah Schneider (St John's College, 2016) directed

CHRYSLIS, a series of six multimedia videos, spanning six countries, featuring original choreography set to new compositions recorded by the Oxford Alternative Orchestra.

Explore Ensemble, directed by **Nicholas Moroz** (St Hilda's College, 2017), was featured in two live sessions for BBC Radio 3's New Music Show, in which Kate Molleson and Tom Service present exclusive recordings, new releases, composer interviews and features from around the world.

Ellen O'Brien (St Hilda's College, 2018) organised six introductory Makaton signing sessions in

February for OUMS with a tutor from Hands Aloud.

Yijia Tu (St John's College, 2020) has been featured in the documentary series 'One Voice: A Journey Through the Past and Future of Human Voice', which showcased the diversity of vocal styles from around the world and explored the issues facing vocalists in the music industry today.

At the ICTM Dialogues 2021 conference, **Caetano Santos** (Merton College, 2019) chaired a panel on 'Appraising Haitian Music-making in Brazil and Projecting Futures Amidst Pandemics and Precarity'.



Carol Jones



Hannah Schneider



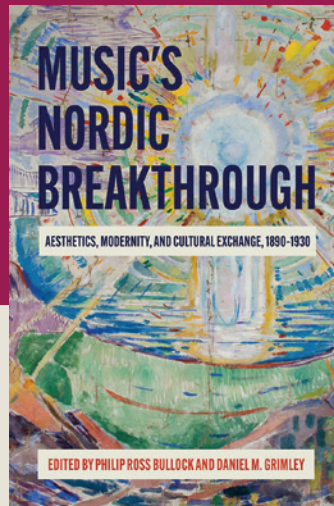
Yijia Tu



Leoni Hughes-King



Caetano Santos



STAFF *publications*

The Choir of Merton College, conducted by **Benjamin Nicholas** released *Sleeper's Prayer: Choral Music from North America* in May 2020. The album was described in BBC Radio 3's Record Review as 'a real feat of excellence and precision'.

In January the book *Music's Nordic Breakthrough: Aesthetics, Modernity and Cultural Exchange, 1890-1930* was published by Boydell & Brewer. The book was edited by Professor **Philip Ross Bullock** and Professor **Daniel Grimley**, and features a chapter by Dr **Leah Broad**.

The new album by Contrapunctus, a professional vocal consort directed by Professor **Owen Rees**, was released in February. '*The Sweetest Songs*' is the third and final release in Contrapunctus's

series (begun in 2015) presenting music from the Baldwin Partbooks, the richest manuscript collection of Tudor polyphony, preserved in Christ Church library.

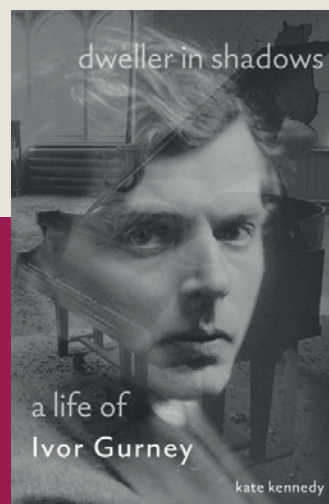
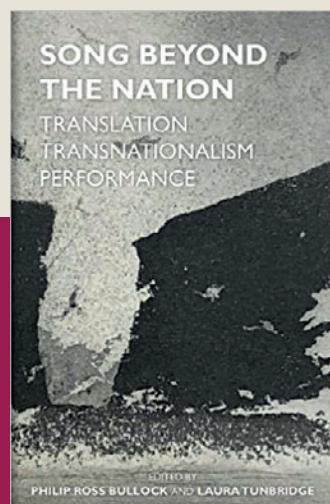
On International Women's Day, Dr **Samantha Ege** released an album of piano music by the trailblazing yet overshadowed African American composer Florence Price. Her album includes the first full recording of all four of Price's virtuosic *Fantasia Nègre* showpieces, following her rediscovery of Price's *Fantasia Nègre* No. 3.

Professors **Philip Bullock** and **Laura Tunbridge** have written *Song beyond the Nation: Translation, Transnationalism, Performance* published by Oxford University Press in May 2021 as part of the Proceedings of the British Academy series. This collection of essays grew

from a conference at Wadham College in 2019, which brought together researchers from music and modern languages to discuss the ways in which poetry can be transformed and translated in song.

In June 2021 Dr **Kate Kennedy** published *Dweller in Shadows: A Life of Ivor Gurney*, the first comprehensive biography of the extraordinary English poet and composer, whose life was haunted by fighting in the First World War and, later, confinement in a mental asylum.

Dr **Leah Broad** will be publishing her first book, *Quartet*, in Spring 2023 with Faber. The work is a radical feminist history of four trailblazing women composers: Ethel Smyth, Rebecca Clarke, Dorothy Howell and Doreen Carwithen.



KEEP IN TOUCH



Alumni Benefits

Oxford alumni are eligible for a wide range of benefits and services, from discounts associated with the *My Oxford Card*, a virtual book club, and opportunities for professional development.

Meeting Minds: the Oxford Alumni event series

The Alumni Office also organises exclusive alumni events throughout the year, in-person and online.

Our jewel in the crown, Meeting Minds, uncovers some of Oxford's most fascinating insights from award-winning scientific research to ground-breaking television and everything in between, as well as the chance to reconnect with fellow alumni.

To find out more, visit: www.alumni.ox.ac.uk or search oxfordalumni on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Alumni Careers Service

The Oxford University Careers Service provides careers support for life for matriculated alumni of the University. To see details of all relevant services please go to the dedicated webpages: www.careers.ox.ac.uk.

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Faculty of Music

St Aldates, Oxford, OX1 1DB
01865 276125 • www.music.ox.ac.uk