

Institution: Plymouth University

Unit of Assessment: 35 (Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts)

a. Context

The non-academic user-groups, beneficiaries and audiences for the Unit's research are wide-ranging and vary according to research grouping. For the Interdisciplinary Centre for Computer Music Research (ICCMR), they include *professional and amateur musicians using our techniques, interfaces, instruments and software* (sometimes open source to download) for their own work (e.g. BAFTA award-winner Nick Ryan); *orchestras for which we have composed* (e.g. Ten Tors Chamber Orchestra and BBC Symphony Orchestra); *organisations concerned with social exclusion and education* (e.g. Association for Culture, Sport & Leisure, Italy; Liverpool Chamber of Commerce; Centre for Innovation & Development in Education, Romania; Plymouth City Council Social Inclusion Unit), who use our ICT strategies for inclusion; and *disabled individuals and their therapists benefiting from our technologies*, such as the ground-breaking brain-computer music interface developed with Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability, London. For members of the Theatre, Dance and Performance Research Group (TDPRG), they include *artists and performers (especially in sited performance, dance, theatre and live art)*, for whom opportunities are created for developing and sharing their work; *emergent practitioners and companies to whom we offer resources and consultancy* (e.g. Hanna Silva, Mars Tarrab, Francesca Steele, Dam Van Huynh); *performer trainers, with and for whom we run workshops* (e.g. Plymouth Theatre Royal's Practitioner Development Scheme); *cultural agencies, companies and institutions* (e.g. Plymouth Arts Centre, ArtsMatrix, Plymouth Art Gallery and Museum, Dance in Devon, National Trust properties) with whom we co-organise events and share expertise and resources (e.g. by sitting on advisory boards); and *specific ethnic, cultural or political community groups* (including Plymouth's Asian and LGBT communities, and Jewish communities in Canada and the UK), with whom we create oral history archives and facilitate cultural exchange. *Audiences benefit from our promotion and facilitation of experimental performance work across media.* We also contribute to the economic prosperity of the creative sector, in the South West, nationally and internationally, through our organisation of, support for, and participation in cultural events.

b. Approach to impact

The following seven pathways largely characterise our approach to impact.

The Unit *presents practice-based research and research-informed creative practices to local and regional audiences, and visitors to the South West*, usually working in collaboration with Peninsula Arts, the university's cultural programming organisation. Our annual Peninsula Arts Contemporary Music Festival has been hailed by the national press as one of the most innovative music events in the UK (*The Gramophone*, 2010; *The Telegraph*, 2011 & 2013). We also work with Peninsula Arts to curate and programme theatre and dance seasons; film screenings and performance events that include Q&As and staged interviews; and lectures and performative presentations to the general public (e.g. by Unit members and also the recipients of our Honorary Doctorates such as Marina Abramovic, Eugenio Barba, Russell Maliphant, and Yukio Ninagawa).

We *host conferences and symposia in which artists/performers, researchers and research-users can engage in dialogue*. These have included 'Music Technology in Education for young at Risk of Social Exclusion' conference, attended by EU policy-makers (2010); ARROW (Art: A Resource for Reconciliation Over the World) symposium (2010); an International Research Forum on Guided Tours (2011); NeuroArts Workshop (2011) and Conference on Noise (2012). We also organise symposia to enrich wider cultural events in the city organized with partners – e.g. Plymouth Mela (2012), the Hidden City Festival (2008), the Live Lab Symposium (2010) – as well as elements within research symposia to which the public is invited (e.g. a film night, discussions and performances as part of our Zombies & Performance symposium, 2013).

We *interact with promoters, curators, technologists and concert organizers*, to render esteemed peer-reviewed research into professional performances of national and international outreach and to inform public perception of the relationships between music, science and technology. Members of the ICCMR have performed in invited concerts at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Arnolfini, Kettle's Yard, Banff Centre (Canada), Sophiensaele (Berlin), Cankarjev dom (Ljubljana) and Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art (Helsinki). Miranda's *Sacra Conversazione* (2011), performed by the BBC Concert Orchestra, used methods developed in the laboratory to suggest the evolution of music and his *Mozart Reloaded* (2011) was composed for BBC Concert

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Orchestra and BBC Radio 3, and was published online. Matthias's *The Fragmented Orchestra* was exhibited at FACT (Liverpool), National Portrait Gallery, Everton Football Club, Bronte Museum, Institute of Psychology. This distributed neuronal instrument won the PRS Foundation New Music Award (2008) and the Wellcome Trust Engaging People Award (2009).

The Unit *fosters new creative practice and presents research to and with non-academic audiences and participants* – e.g. at the Jewish Museum, London; via a 'Free University of the Airwaves' lecture on Resonance FM; at the Metropolis Lab for artists, architects and urban planners in Copenhagen; in Reading Public Library; and in prestigious Royal Institution lectures. In 2011 Miranda was composer-in-residence at the Science Museum in London, where he deployed his research to build music, sound systems and installations at the museum's 'Lates' events. TDPRG works with celebrated practitioners (e.g. Jordi Cortés, 2010; Kirstie Simson, 2011 & 2012), co-leading annual research workshops for performance trainers and professional practitioners. Critical reflection on one of these workshops led to a peer-reviewed journal article by Matthews, illustrating the circularity between research and impact activity. In 2013, Mock presented a keynote lecture to 100 young people aged 16-25 at the Barbican Theatre Plymouth, to commemorate the centenary of the Great Suffrage Pilgrimage.

We develop and sustain strong partnerships. For example, our relationships with Plymouth Pride Forum and Plymouth & West Devon Record Office have led to an AHRC collaborative doctoral project, a range of co-sponsored Peninsula Arts events (e.g. a talk by Peter Tatchell, 2013), an exhibition about Plymouth's LGBT community at the City Museum and the creation of an LGBT archive (awarded the 'Most Inspirational Community Archive' award 2012 by the Community Archives and Heritage Group). HLF are using this project as a Case Study in exemplary partnership. The findings of an earlier CDA (completed 2010) with the regional skills development agency ArtsMatrix, which researched the development needs of mid-career artists in South West England, directly influenced Arts Council England practices. The University worked with a range of partners, including the Hayward Gallery, to bring the British Art Show to Plymouth in 2011; members of the Unit delivered lunchtime lectures about BAS artists in the Peninsula Arts Gallery.

We place our research in the local, national and international media, by working with the University's PR and marketing department. We are especially interested in finding ways to communicate our research directly (building, for example, on Mock's feature about live artist Marisa Carnesky in *THES*, 2012 and Kirke on Dara O'Briain's Science Club, BBC2, 2013), in addition to having our work written about and presented by others. When Miranda participated in a debate on music, medicine and economics on *The Forum* (BBC World Service, 2012), he reached a potential audience of 40 million people. The majority our partnerships (approx. 70%) currently arise from contacts made through press coverage and web presence.

Finally, we always try to *monitor the impacts of our research and the potential for further development.* All Unit members record data relating to the impact of their own research, which is summarized for their research co-ordinator, and included in reflective final reports when in receipt of internal funding. Peninsula Arts captures and provides audience feedback and footfall on events delivered by members of the Unit. Partner organisations also produce final reports and evidence audits including details of communities and individuals reached. The University's consultancy group, SERIO, supports our collation and processing of impact data.

c. Strategy and plans

The main strands of the strategy that underpins this approach, and our plans within them, are:

- 1) *To enhance the reach and ambition of our performances and public-facing events by exploiting new, purpose-designed performance spaces and laboratories.* The University's new performing arts centre (to be completed in 2014) will be a cultural hub for Plymouth's communities, featuring a 220-seat theatre with box office facilities and excellent access for disabled artists and technicians, rehearsal and studio spaces, and a new state-of-the-art laboratory for ICCMR. This will provide a fit environment for innovative, inclusive and participatory creative practices.
- 2) *To strengthen existing and create new partnerships to develop outreach activities and extend the audiences with access to our research and expertise, especially internationally.* We intend to work more closely with Greek consultants World-Cef, through whom we have successfully been awarded EU Culture funding for two large-scale performance projects with a range of European partners over the past 10 years. We also plan to pursue and/or strengthen partnerships with organisations such as the Live Art Development Agency, who invite us to their 'Associates' events, the London Symphony Orchestra and The Musical Brain charity.

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- 3) *To fully exploit the expertise and resources of University departments*, such as SERIO and Innovation for the Creative and Cultural Industries [ICCI]. ICCI undertakes impact monitoring and facilitates research-informed, creative and cultural external projects – e.g. the making and screening in its geodesic dome of 360° panoramic films, alongside multimedia and live performances by members of the Unit during city centre festivals (2010 and 2011) and in Weymouth during Olympic and Paralympic sailing events (2012); one of our curated events welcomed over 2500 visitors. We plan to work with ICCI and SERIO more closely in future to identify projects and partners based on their collation and analysis of impact data.
- 4) *To fund impact activity from within the University where appropriate*. Researchers in the Unit receive funding from the University's Humanities, Music and Performing Arts Research Centre (HuMPA) for travel and teaching remission explicitly to engage in impact activities (e.g., Mock's work in Canada at the Windsor Jewish Community Centre, 2011; Benjamin's work with Adugna Dance Company in Ethiopia, 2013; Kirke's presentation at the V&A on the sonification of David Bowie's career, 2013), as well as to circulate research findings to non-academic audiences (e.g. Smith's Counter Tourism tactic videos). ICCI has provided financial support for Smith's work at Castle Drogo, developing immersive engagement strategies for visitors to this heritage property. The School of Humanities & Performing Arts provides in-kind support for projects that benefit Plymouth communities – e.g., although HLF funded a post to manage the creation of the Pride in Our Past LGBT archive for Plymouth Pride Forum, the School supported the recruitment, line management, mentoring, training and resourcing of this research assistant. The University also contributes partnership funding to innovative community-facing practice-based projects. These have included Plymouth Arts Centre for the Pigs of Today are the Hams of Tomorrow exhibition and programme of events; the publication of Part Exchange Co's *Hidden City Festival Handbook* (Plymouth University Press) and Oreet Ashery's *Dancing with Men* (which was initially conceived as the catalogue to an exhibition we organised during the Hidden City Festival) in partnership with the Live Art Development Agency.
- 5) *To build a strong impact culture within the Unit* by ensuring that discussions of impact potential feature in research mentoring at all levels and that a pathway to impact statement forms an integral part of personal research plans and all internal funding applications. This is supported by the University's recognition of public-facing, enterprising and community research through high profile and prestigious awards: e.g., Miranda and Simon Ible, the Director of Peninsula Arts, shared the Enterprising Research Award 2010 for their establishment of the Music Festival. In 2011, Miranda was awarded the Vice Chancellor's World Class Research Award for his contribution to "the outward-facing agenda of the institution" and Kirke was awarded a Community Engagement Award for his work on the Drive-in-Deco project, a site-specific multi-media drama about social change and transformation in Plymouth.

d. Relationship to case studies

The two cases studies represent our approach to achieving impact in two important ways: 1) working closely with non-academic partners (Dance United and Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability), both of which helped us to tailor our research to specifically identified needs; e.g., the hospital organized an international conference at which Prof Miranda was keynote speaker, sharing his research with an audience that included music therapists and teachers working in special education, community musicians and computer music scientists; 2) enabling individuals and communities, who have thus far lacked access, to make performance. Both embody practical outcomes gathered over an extended period of time and based on innovative laboratory-based research (in the artistic sense) into both the forms and techniques of performance. The research is also pursued, tested and disseminated in the researchers' own professional creative practice, reaches non-academic audiences through live performances in high-profile national and international venues, is recorded for film and CD, and is reported in specialist and mainstream media. All this fosters new kinds of creative practice and perceptions of what types of activity and forms of communication are possible. Both researchers share and exchange their techniques, knowledge and expertise with other performance-makers and those who enable the performance-making of others. These case studies represent what we aspire to achieving consistently for all our colleagues; this reflexivity has informed our approach during the REF period and our future plans to support and enhance pathways to impact through the strategy described above.