

Institution: Royal Holloway, University of London

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

a. Context

The main beneficiaries of our research are **professional theatre-makers, theatre audiences, communities involved in cultural participation** and those who apply theatre to **education, health and charitable sectors**. The Department of Drama and Theatre's impact strategy supports our commitment to working collaboratively with research users in the creative industries and across the cultural sector, and to taking our research findings to the wider public. Our research is defined by five inter-related research groups, each with national and international reach: Contemporary Theatre, Performance Practices, Applied and Participatory Theatre, Theatre History, Transnational Performance, all of which contribute to **cultural life, the creative industries** and the **social capital** of audiences and theatre-makers.

The Department has a long history of knowledge exchange and public engagement, and this was extended to a **strategic vision for research impact** in the Department's Research Strategy 2009-14. Existing collaborations with theatre-makers, producing houses and non-academic users were consolidated through the five newly-curated research groups and the Centre for International Theatre and Performance Research (CITPR), each of which generates an active programme of events that includes partners within and beyond the academy. From 2012 onwards the Department's research has been supported by a designated **Impact Officer**, who reports to Research Committee and advises colleagues on the potential impact of their research.

b. Approach to impact

During the period 2008 to 2013, the Department has developed an increasingly systematic approach to impact and intensified our impact activities not only through disseminating research findings, but also by conducting collaborative research with partners outside the university.

We have **well established partnerships with professional theatre** companies, producers and artists. Revivals of plays at the National Theatre, Chichester Festival Theatre, the Royal and Derngate Northampton and the Royal Exchange Manchester have benefitted from playscripts edited by members of the department. Partnerships with the Theatre Royal Haymarket have benefitted from research into the history and heritage of the West End, and reconstructions of dance theatre have impacted on professional choreographers. **Collaborations with contemporary theatre-makers** draw on practice-based research to generate impact; Williams' research on dramaturgy, Rebellato's research into new writing and Worth's research in theatre dance has influenced the practices of companies including Lone Twin, Jasmin Vardimon, Graeae and Suspect Culture. Partnerships between contemporary playwrights and academics (Rebellato, Megson) impact on cultural policy; Rebellato's co-authored report on new writing in the British Theatre for Arts Council England has been widely debated, and used to inform Arts Council new writing policy.

Our research has impacted on **training in professional theatre**. Research into theatre dance has impacted on the Royal Ballet School, and Worth's research on movement and the plasticity of the brain has influenced training at Opera in Space and Apocryphal Theatre. Megson applied his research on naturalist theatre to actor training in Japan; Goat Island has benefitted from Williams' research into directing; Cohen's research into *wayang* has been used by puppeteers across South East Asia and Nicholson's research in applied theatre is informing Paul Hamlyn's ArtWorks programme about training artists in participatory settings. The **education sector** (students, teachers in schools and international HEIs) benefit from research by Bratton, Cave, Schafer, McCaw made available as digital archives and web resources on theatre history and performance practices. Scholarly editions of plays and books written for a general readership are used widely as sales figures and Amazon rankings testify; Nicholson's research in theatre education has been used to train teachers in Japan, Singapore, Greece, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

The research of all our five research groups has made a difference to **theatre audiences and cultural participation**. Research-led programme notes are regularly written by Bratton, Megson and Rebellato for theatres including the National Theatre, The Haymarket and the Lyric

Impact template (REF3a)

Hammersmith. Nield and Rebellato are theatre critics who often contribute to The Guardian blog. Worth, Megson, Gilbert, McCaw, Cox, Cave, Goddard, Schafer, Cohen, Rebellato, Nicholson and Williams have given public lectures, research-led presentations, post-show talks and interviews at theatres including the National Theatre, Shakespeare's Globe, Lyric Hammersmith, Manchester Royal Exchange, The Old Vic, The Barbican and the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. McGirr's research on eighteenth century private theatricals led to a public lecture to accompany a series of performances at Chawton House, Hampshire; and Schafer's research on Elizabeth Cary's *Mariam* contributed to the Burford Festival and an installation/ performance at the Hannah Barry Gallery, Peckham Rye. Colleagues contributing to radio and TV programmes, internet podcasts and blogs include Schafer and Bratton on aspects of theatre history, Cohen, Schafer on transnational performance and Rebellato, Megson, Nield on contemporary performance.

Our research is applied to the **health and charitable sectors**, where Brodzinski's work on creativity has informed practice in the health sector, and Nicholson's research into the arts in dementia care led to collaboration with leading NHS charities. Nicholson's educational research informed The Wellcome Trust Public Engagement Strategy 2011-16, where she was a member of the Trust's public engagement strategy group. Gilbert and Cox's research into refugee and asylum is evident in Royal Holloway's *Creativity Research Theme*, advising on the play *Mazloom's* national tour that aimed to raise awareness of the plight of young refugees.

The Department has three strategic objectives to support impact activities; (a) to recognise impact in **appraisal, promotion, teaching and research**, allowing flexibility in workload models and sabbatical leave to accommodate impact events, and research impact was a selection criteria in our three 2013 appointments (Lease, Thorpe, Borelli); (b) to use departmental **research funds** to develop impact activities, including supporting events such as a seminar for policy-makers on new writing for theatre at the Royal Society of Arts; (c) to introduce a **departmental impact officer** with responsibility for the Department's impact culture and liaising with other members of the University to promote impact. Monitored by the Research Committee, these objectives support colleagues at the planning stage to build the right partnerships to maximize the research project's potential for real impact. Collaborations are facilitated by our partnerships with Creative Works London and Culture Capital Exchange whose remit is to foster research with the cultural sector across London.

Managerial encouragement for a more '**outward-facing profile**' has shaped our approach to impact, (through media appearances, blogs, public lectures) and a revitalised website that provides an on-line presence for archives on Richard Brome, the Victorian Clown and Music Hall, and the International Workshop Festival archive. **Transnational Collaborations** have been supported by CITPR's programme. Gilbert has advised on programming for the biennial Origins Festival of First Nations, collaborated with the Horniman museum and the ethnology museum in Berlin to create artists residencies for indigenous performers, and given talks at the National Portrait Gallery and October Gallery. Cohen's *wayang kulit* performances in the US, Canada, The Netherlands and Greece received critical acclaim, and his impact on raising the international profile of Indonesian culture was recognized by the royal title Kyai Ngabehi from the court of Kacirebonan.

Funding for impact is supported by the Faculty Research Strategy Fund (£15K per annum) and by a designated officer from the Research and Enterprise Office who assists with contracts, IP and provides legal and financial advice. Research networks with academic and non-academic partners include: *Creativity in Health and Care* (PI Brodzinski AHRC 2008-9) *Performance Asylum Research Network* (PI Gilbert, Cox AHRC 2006-7, ERC 2011-12); *Eurovision and the New Europe* (Col Fricker, 2011-12), *Landscape and Environment Network, On the Go* (Cols Worth, Nicholson 2008-9). Pathways to impact are integrated into the *Indigeneity in the Contemporary World: Performance, Politics, Belonging, Performance* (ERC, AHRC, PI Gilbert, Gleghorn 2009-14; *Amateur Dramatics: Crafting Communities* (PI Nicholson, AHRC 2013-16); *Theatre Spectatorship and Value Attribution* (Col Rebellato, Megson, AHRC 2013-14), and AHRC CDAs with the Punch and Judy College of Professors (2007-10), The V&A (2012-15) and The Barbican Centre (2012-15).

c. Strategy and plans

The Department's research strategy recognises the potential to generate yet further impact from its

research. As proposed by our Research Strategy 2009-14, we are extending existing partnerships developed from our CDAs, research networks, consultancies, commissioned reports and practice-based research to strengthen the following:

1) Strategic Collaborations with Professional Theatre Makers

Royal Holloway has invested in a new Caryl Churchill theatre, technical workshop and rehearsal rooms opened in 2013. These state-of-the-art facilities complement the Boiler House Theatre, already well used for collaborations with dancers and choreographers. The Research Strategy 2014-19 identifies new opportunities for practice-based research with an ambitious programme of artists in residence, public events and performances.

2) Strategic Partnerships with cognate disciplines and sectors

Inter-agency partnerships with the health sectors and inter-disciplinary research have been strengthened by the Universities' Research Theme, *Health, Human Body and Behaviour*. Collaborations with the Department of Social Work support PGR and postdoctoral research, and our research into creativity benefits MA students in Health Management.

3) Strategies for Transnational Impact

We are extending our existing international academic profile, particularly in Australasia, by strengthening partnerships with indigenous performers and NGOs; The Asian Performing Arts Forum, founded by Cohen and Thorpe, plans to link with networks operating outside the UK to increase knowledge and understanding of Asian theatre in the cultural industries. We will continue to make our practice-based and archival research accessible worldwide on our website.

4) Strategies for PGR training

Our PGR training recognises that new PhD graduates will need a portfolio of skills, including an ability to plan for impact and realize the potential impact of their research. At Faculty and Department level we are developing a programme to support PGR and ECR to acquire appropriate transferrable skills and opportunities to extend their research through placements.

5) Strategies for Funding and Measuring Impact

Faculty funds and new mentoring systems are available to support research grants with clear pathways to impact, and applications are recognized in departmental workload modelling. The Faculty is generating new mechanisms for gathering data, e.g. monitoring sales of editions of plays used in education and for production in the professional theatre; audience figures and reviews of practice-based research; number of hits on digital archives. The ERC Proof of Concept grant awarded to Gilbert supports the public reach and impact of her research by creating resources about indigenous artists, including an interactive digital archive of exhibition material.

d. Relationship to case studies

Our case studies represent three different approaches to impact, and reflect the range and reach of our research groups:

1) **Professional Theatre and Theatre Audiences: Rattigan** (Contemporary Theatre): This case study illustrates how scholarship, published originally in monograph form, contributed to the revival of interest in a neglected playwright. Rebellato's research on Rattigan was first published in 1994, and he has consistently developed the profile of this work by publishing new scholarly editions of Rattigan's plays and acting as consultant for professional theatre.

2) **Health Sector and cultural participation: Theatre and the Arts in Health and Care** (Applied and Participatory Theatre): This case study represents research undertaken on theatre and the arts in health settings. Research funded by the AHRC and Arts Council England supported collaborations with key research users as part of an inter-agency network (Brodzinski); research was commissioned by Age Exchange Theatre, South London and Maudsley NHS Trust and Guy's and St Thomas's Charitable Trust as a result of Nicholson's research on the arts, ageing and dementia.

3). **Professional Theatre, performer training and theatre audiences: Recreating Lost Dances** (Theatre History/ Performance Practices): This case study represents how the Department's integration of historical scholarship and practice-led research generates new methodologies for interpreting and performing historical dance plays, impacting on professional theatre, dance training and public audiences (Cave, Schafer, Worth). This research has changed methods of training at the Royal Ballet School, generated new audiences for dance theatre, and generated digital and published resources for international theatre-makers and researchers.