

<p>Institution: Oxford Brookes University</p> <hr/> <p>Unit of Assessment: 35 Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts</p> <hr/> <p>a. Context</p> <p>The Music UoA has a long-standing commitment to engaging with non-academic users. The UoA's research is concentrated primarily in three areas: composition and sound art, opera studies, and popular music studies. Impact activities have been undertaken both by individuals and by the research units in each of the three key areas: OBERTO (Oxford Brookes Exploring Research Trends in Opera) with Chowrimootoo, Cormac, Eichner, Shirley and Wilson, PMRU (Popular Music Research Unit) with Butler, Griffiths, Webster and Dale (now at MMU), and SARU (Sonic Art Research Unit) with Dibley, Eastley, Ford, Newland, Schaefer and Whitty. Many of the research practices used by composition staff (including compositions, performances and exhibitions) necessarily involve interaction with non-academic users. In particular, research by the opera and popular music studies staff attracts considerable and widespread public interest. Staff have fostered relationships with partner organisations locally (e.g. Oxford Contemporary Music; local schools), nationally (e.g. the BBC; the Royal Opera House; the Music Publishers' Association) and internationally (e.g. Greek National Opera; the Bilbao Opera, STEIM Amsterdam) which have disseminated their research to a wide range of non-academic users, including local school children, concert and opera audiences in the UK and overseas, and music industry practitioners. Staff in composition and sound art have engaged with audiences through live events, broadcasts, podcasts, recordings and exhibitions. Musicologists have disseminated their research via opera house programme essays, pre-performance talks, broadcasts on national radio, public lectures and conferences that bring together academics, industry experts and the general public.</p> <hr/> <p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>Staff have developed their research projects for dissemination to wider audiences both individually and collaboratively through the three specialist research units. In particular they have sought local and national collaborators, including OCM (Oxford Contemporary Music) which is the key partner to SARU in the production of <i>audiograft</i>, the festival of experimental composition and sound art, and the Royal Opera House, which has regularly featured Wilson's essays in its programme books. The three research units are the key vehicles for promoting and supporting impact activities.</p> <hr/> <p>Individual activities</p> <p>Staff members have received commissions from leading arts organisations in the UK and abroad to present their research findings to wide audiences. For instance, Whitty exhibited his sound art work at the 54th Venice Biennale (<i>The Swimmer - A True Story</i>, with novelist Roma Tearne, 2011), and Ford has been working with wool producers and cultures of wool production in Cumbria, the Shetlands and Estonia through her project <i>Knitsonik</i>. Webster was commissioned to produce the annual report for the UK Festival Awards conference in 2010, produced a comprehensive audience analysis for GuilFest in 2012, and is currently working on a five-year report for the Association of Independent Festivals. Wilson has written a book entitled <i>Opera: A Beginner's Guide</i> (Oneworld, 2010), in which she presents a simplified version of her research to demystify opera for students and general readers, and to demonstrate the relevance to daily life. She has also adapted her research for a series of opera house programme essays for the Royal Opera House, Pafos Afrodite Opera Festival (Cyprus), Greek National Opera, the Bilbao Opera, the Gran Teatre del Liceu, Barcelona and Wexford Festival Opera. Wilson and Eichner have disseminated their research findings on Puccini and Wagner respectively to a large audience by presenting broadcasts on Radio 3 (Wilson) and through interviews on Radio 3 (Eichner and Wilson), Radio 4 and BBC4 (both Wilson). Wilson has also used her research as the basis for pre-performance talks (English National Opera, BBC Proms) and a Glyndebourne podcast. All of these media and opera house activities introduce audiences to unfamiliar works and place operas, whether well or lesser known, into new historical contexts that aid audience understanding and encourage them to explore further repertoires. Shirley combines his academic activities with employment as a professional opera critic, writing for <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> and acting as Assistant Editor of <i>Opera</i> magazine. He has used his research findings as the basis for numerous reviews and articles that reach a wide audience of opera enthusiasts as well as singers, directors, conductors and agents.</p>

Research unit activities

The three specialist research units facilitate staff to collaboratively disseminate research to wider constituencies.

SARU (www.sonicartresearch.co.uk) has worked closely with non-academic organisations including Oxford Contemporary Music (OCM), an Arts Council England (ACE) national portfolio organisation (<http://www.ocmevents.org/>). OCM has produced and promoted large-scale performance works by **Whitty** (Vauxhall Pleasure, 2009), whilst **Ford** collaborated with OCM on the Sound and Music minute of listening initiative. OCM are co-producers of the annual festival of experimental composition and sound art audiograft providing a public platform for the activities of the researchers in the SARU (www.audiograft.com). The festival which has received ACE funding (£45k, 2011-14) seeks to develop new audiences and reach the broadest possible constituency for the innovative sound practices in SARU. As part of the planned dissemination of the findings of the AHRC-funded project Aeolian Sound (PI: **Eastley**), **Whitty** has collaborated with OCM on a successful funding bid to 'Without Walls' (an ACE-funded consortium of Festivals including Brighton Festival, Greenwich and Docklands Festival and Norfolk and Norwich Festival) to support a tour of **Eastley's** Aeolian Devices throughout 2013 and 2014. SARU has undertaken a series of pilot projects in local schools to test resources for exploring auditory awareness amongst pupils aged 7-11 and has been awarded funds from HEIF (£5k) to undertake a feasibility study. The schools project relates specifically to Sound Diaries (www.sound-diaries.co.uk) an online project and archive that documents everyday experience in sound. Co-authored by **Ford** and **Whitty**, the project engages with listeners through a variety of web-platforms including audioboo, facebook, twitter, and soundcloud, with several of the many hundreds of collected sounds attracting between 1200-1500 listeners.

OBERTO, the opera research unit founded by **Eichner** and **Wilson** in 2011 (<http://obertobrookes.com/>), has sought to engage with non-academic audiences for opera through a variety of conferences and public lectures held at the University as well as through individual staff members' publications, talks and broadcasts aimed at a wider public. Annually OBERTO holds a one day conference on an area of cutting-edge opera historiography: new approaches to reception studies (2011), operatic masculinities (2012) and operatic anniversaries (2013). These events seek to shape directions in future operatic research and have also attracted a mixed audience, including many members of the general public who have had an opportunity to hear contributions both from academics and from members of the opera industry (including the Commissioning Editor at the Royal Opera House, John Snelson, tenor Benjamin Hulett, journalist Hugo Shirley and blogger Mark Berry). OBERTO has also hosted public lectures, such as a talk on Verdi given in spring 2012 by International Visiting Fellow Roberta Montemorra Marvin.

PMRU (<http://arts.brookes.ac.uk/research/pmru/>) was established primarily with the aim of developing impact activities that explore relationships with music journalism and publishing. Through a project entitled *Shifting Ground* instigated by **Butler** and **Griffiths** in conjunction with the Oxford International Centre for Publishing Studies, PMRU has hosted a series of study days focusing on contemporary music publishing, music journalism and issues in copyright surrounding the film *Anyone Can Play Guitar* (Canal Cat Films, 2011). Keynote speakers and participants have included industry figures Barney Hoskyns, Fiona Maddocks, Alyn Shipton, Jon Spira, Hank Starrs, Barbara Zamoyska, and Stephen Navin, Chief Executive of the Music Publishers' Association. Jon Spira, director of *Anyone Can Play Guitar*, invited PMRU to develop a short film exploring issues of copyright that accompanied the DVD release of the film. The self-publishing project 'Editions of You' supported by ACE in collaboration with OCM engaged with 'zine' culture and handmade releases through a series of public engagement events including exhibitions and a 'zine' fair. Evidence of the impact of these activities is included in the ACE evaluation.

Institutional support mechanisms

The University's RBDO (Research and Business Development Office) supports researchers in the dissemination and commercialisation of their work to achieve maximum impact. Eight staff and consultants work with academic staff to advise on commercialisation and knowledge exchange, the

Impact template (REF3a)

development of commercial propositions, and engagement with external stakeholders, including the public and business communities. Two staff members are assigned to work on developing Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.

The development of the research unit structure within UoA 35 has assisted researchers in focusing on outward-facing activity. Staff have made successful applications to Central University Research Funds and School of Arts (SoA) QR funds in support of their impact-related activities, particularly organising events that bring together academics, industry experts and members of the public. In September 2012 the SoA, of which UoA 35 is a part, appointed a research assistant to support the impact agenda across the three UoAs within the School (34, 35, 36). The SoA will be seeking to maintain this role and also appoint an outreach officer (0.5fte) to provide an interface between the research practices of the SoA and non-academic users including music education hubs, schools, arts audiences, online audiences and industry partners.

c. Strategy and plans

Impact is a key element of the research planning process within Music. Each researcher completes a three year research plan outlining proposed outputs, applications for external funding and impact generating activities. Impact is a standing item on the School of Arts' Research Committee agenda. Research units will continue to foster links with performing arts organisations, the music industry more broadly and educational institutions to expand the audiences they currently reach. A particular focus for OBERTO is to establish formal links with the opera industry, especially with local opera companies and music critics and a Knowledge Transfer Partnership is currently being explored. Several funding applications with a substantial impact element are pending or in progress. **Wilson** has applied to the BA Mid-Career Fellowship scheme for a project on opera's interactions with popular culture in the 1920s. Proposed impact generating activities, including a reconstruction of a historical concert, radio documentary, blog and conference for a mixed audience, will reflect upon the present-day implications for historical debates about opera's cultural categorisation. PMRU (**Butler, Griffiths, Webster**) has applied to the AHRC networking scheme for a grant to support its 'Shifting Ground' network. As a part of this project the unit will organise four symposia, open to the public, at which attendees will explore practical solutions to real-world problems. Topics to be covered include music copyright; online and offline music publishing; plagiarism, imitation, and originality; and how music journalism changes how music is listened to. A website will facilitate knowledge exchange between academics and non-academics from a wide range of fields and backgrounds, including publishers and journalists, musicologists and economists. The network will also produce advisory reports for policymakers, including government agencies responsible for dealing with copyright and publishing issues, most significantly the DCMS. Beyond the UK, the network will closely follow legal developments in music and publishing in other countries (within and outside of the EU) to usefully compare such developments with those in the UK. The Network will develop notions of 'best practice' for use both by policymakers and law enforcers. Several projects are being developed as impact case studies for 2020, including **Ford's** work with the soundscape and culture of wool production and **Whitty's** project *somewhere a field* that engages farming communities in discussion about the rural soundscape.

d. Relationship to case studies

The case studies stem from the activities of two of the UoA 35 research units OBERTO and SARU. Research from **Wilson's** CUP monograph *The Puccini Problem* has transformed the way in which Puccini's works are written about for a general audience. Her work has deepened audience understanding, particularly of Puccini's lesser-known works, encouraging audiences to explore other unfamiliar repertory. It has helped both operatic newcomers and seasoned audience members to engage more effectively with the art-form as a whole and influenced the way in which opera is written about in the media. **Ford** and **Whitty** designed Sound Diaries specifically to engage a non-academic audience with exploration of the everyday soundscape basing the approach on research that took place from 2004-09 that included *Vauxhall Pleasure* an auditory and sonic archaeology project investigating everyday sound from the 18th century and the 21st.