

**BEYOND 'MESEARCH': AUTOETHNOGRAPHY,  
SELF-REFLEXIVITY, AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE  
AS ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN MUSIC STUDIES**

*Institute of Musical Research, Senate House, London  
16–17 April 2018*

*in association with the School of Advanced Study, University of London  
and the University of Surrey*

**DAY 1: MONDAY 16 APRIL 2018**

9:30am      **Registration** (Court Room)

9:45-10am    **Welcome** (Court Room)

Speaker: Christopher Wiley (University of Surrey)

10-11am      **Keynote Address** (Court Room)

*'Why? What? Where? Questioning the responsibilities of  
researchers and environments in self-reflexive work'*

Professor Neil Heyde (Royal Academy of Music, London)  
Chair: Christopher Wiley (University of Surrey)

11am-  
11:30am      **Coffee break**

11:30am-  
1pm

**Paper session 1**

**Critical Perspectives on Performance** (Court Room)  
Chair: Ian Pace (City, University of London)

Tine Castelein, Sarah Vandemoortele, Thomas De Baets (LUCA School of Arts, Belgium), 'Developing professionalism through self-reflexive research: Two accounts of practitioner research in music performance and education'

Jessica Zhu (Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London), 'Framing Autoethnography: A Performer's Perspective'

Alfonso Benetti and Aoife Hiney (University of Aveiro / Inet-MD, Portugal), 'Autoethnography as a method for artistic research in music performance: dissolving the process/product dichotomy'

1-2pm

**Sandwich Lunch**

2-3:30pm

**Parallel paper session 2**

**Higher Education** (Court Room)  
Chair: Tom Armstrong (University of Surrey)

Monica Esslin-Peard (University of Liverpool), 'Personal learning journeys: Reflecting on the transition from PhD student to lecturer'

Christopher Wiley (University of Surrey), 'From Research-led Teaching to Teaching-led Research: An

**Vocal and Instrumental Performance** (Room 102)  
Chair: Iain Findlay-Walsh (University of Glasgow)

Abigail Sin (Royal Academy of Music, London), 'Mapping Out Sound: Exploring the Piano Music of Charles Griffes'

Barbara Gentili (Royal College of Music,

<p>autoethnographic enquiry into keeping curricula contemporary in higher education popular music'</p> <p>James Williams (University of Derby), 'Towards a "Digital" and "Online" Autoethnography: Using social media as a platform for reflective journalism in music composition and the therapeutic arts in HE'</p>	<p>London), 'How my research is informed by my own practice as an opera singer'</p>
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<p>3:30-4pm     <b>Tea break</b></p>
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<p>4-5:30pm     <b>Discussion groups</b> (Court Room)</p> <p>Group facilitators:  Christopher Wiley (University of Surrey, Chair)  Simon Poole (University of Chester/Storyhouse)  Monica Esslin-Peard (University of Liverpool)  Darla Crispin (Norwegian Academy of Music, Oslo)  Christian Kennett (University of Westminster [retired])  Charlotte Purkis (University of Winchester)  Ian Pace (City, University of London)  Tom Armstrong (University of Surrey)</p>
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<p>5:45pm</p>	<p><b>Adjourn for Conference Dinner</b></p>
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## **DAY 2: TUESDAY 17 APRIL 2018**

<p>9:30am</p>	<p><b>Registration</b> (outside Court Room)</p>
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<p>10-11am</p>	<p><b>Keynote Address</b> (Court Room)</p> <p><i>'Spin, Self-Promotion, Institutional Recognition, and Critical Performance: Notes from the diary of a performer-scholar'</i></p> <p>Ian Pace (City, University of London)  Chair: Natasha Loges (Royal College of Music, London)</p>
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11am-  
11:30am **Coffee break**

11:30am-  
1pm **Parallel paper session 3**

**Education across the years** (Court Room)  
Chair: Monica Esslin-Peard (University of Liverpool)

Peter Gouzouasis and Matthew Yanko (University of British Columbia, Canada), 'Formative assessment for the elementary school music classroom: Autoethnography as a methodological foundation for learning stories and pedagogical documentation'

Clive Harrison (Australian Institute of Music, Sydney), 'Music education: Why autoethnography is vital and quantitative research is not enough'

Minja Koskela (Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki) and Taru Leppänen (University of Turku, Finland), 'Enhancing democracy or advocating for respectability? Negotiations between teacher and lower secondary students in the frames of popular music teaching in Finland'

**Dialogues with History** (Room 102)  
Chair: Ian Pace (City, University of London)

Charlotte Purkis (University of Winchester), 'Continuing the conversation (valuing the past and liberating marginalia on selves encountering practice)'

Yuiko Asaba (Royal Holloway, University of London), 'Unpacking the field or disclosing the researcher's "cultural baggage"?: Reflexivity and autoethnography in studying contemporary history'

Verica Grmusa (Goldsmiths, University of London), 'Autoethnography: Linking Performance, Performance-Led and Historical Research'

1-2pm **Sandwich Lunch**

2-3:30pm **Parallel paper session 4**

**Composition** (Court Room)  
Chair: Christopher Wiley (University of Surrey)

**Reflecting on current practices** (Room 102)  
Chair: Christian Kennett (University of Westminster [retired])

<p>Lucy Hollingworth (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland), 'Storytelling in Autoethnography – <i>The Poetess</i>'</p> <p>Christopher Leedham (Leeds College of Music) and Martin Scheuregger (University of Lincoln), 'The composer's place in academia'</p>	<p>Ian Axtell (Birmingham City University), 'Re-thinking Signature Pedagogy in Classroom Music Teacher Education'</p> <p>Pedro Santos Boia (CIPEM/INET-md, Porto Polytechnic, Porto), 'Connecting the personal and the structural levels in autoethnographic inquiry: A reflection and a proposal'</p> <p>Iain Findlay-Walsh (University of Glasgow), 'Auto tech pilot: On channelling The Fall as autoethnographic rock group'</p>
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<p>3:30-4pm     <b>Tea break</b></p>
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<p>4-5pm     <b>Keynote Address</b> (Court Room)</p> <p><i>'The Mirror and the Lamp: Personal reflection as a source of illumination or self-dazzlement in research'</i></p> <p>Professor Darla Crispin (Norwegian Academy of Music, Oslo) Chair: Ian Pace (City, University of London)</p>
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<p>5:15pm</p>	<p><b>Conference Close</b></p>
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## **Abstracts (Keynotes)**

**Professor Darla Crispin (Norwegian Academy of Music, Oslo)**

**‘The Mirror and the Lamp: Personal reflection as a source of illumination or self-dazzlement in research’**

This presentation approaches the issue of autoethnography through the lens of reflection and its role and status in artistic research. In particular, it examines developments that have consolidated into what is described, especially in the Nordic countries and on the European continent, as ‘the Norwegian model’ of artistic research.

In 2003, the Artistic Research Fellowship Programme was established in Norway in order to fund the research of individuals within arts training schools. In 2010, the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research expanded the remit of this work to include more ambitious funding of advanced team projects led by professional artists. This portfolio of work has since been consolidated and overseen by the Norwegian Artistic Research Programme (NARP).

In January 2018, after an intensive period of lobbying and development within arts training institutions, the Ministry ratified Artistic Research PhDs based upon the NARP structures. Successful candidates for the first cohort will take up their places in Autumn 2018; all PhDs are fully funded and salaried for the three- to four-year duration of study. There is a strong emphasis within this new PhD upon personal ‘reflection’ – a requirement that has precedents in all the artistic research training run by NARP since 2003.

In many ways, the element of reflection has been the most challenging aspect of the programme – often much more so than the art-making which stands at the core of the projects. The tensions between art and its explication, and the credentials of the artist-researcher as a reliable arbiter of these, are often problematic. Long-standing questions about the viability of personal experience and self-scrutiny within the supposedly objectified world of advanced research work remain unanswered as the ‘Norwegian model’ of artistic research moves into the realm of the fully-recognised PhD.

Borrowing, and in the process re-purposing, J. H. Abrams’s metaphor of the mirror and the lamp, this presentation will explore the evolution of the concept of ‘reflection’ within NARP since its inception and will make some more general propositions concerning the promises and the pitfalls of introducing an explicitly personal dimension into the array of tools used by arts researchers.

**Ian Pace (City, University of London)**

**‘Spin, Self-Promotion, Institutional Recognition, and Critical Performance: Notes from the diary of a performer-scholar’**

The concept of autoethnography has become somewhat ubiquitous amongst practitioner-scholars, meaning those whose practice either itself forms an intrinsic part of their research output, informs written outputs, or where more conventional outputs inform one’s own or others’ practice— research through, for, or into practice

respectively, to use Christopher Frayling's 1993 tripartite model. As a practitioner – a professional pianist specialising in avant-garde work – who has also produced written outputs from the beginning of his pianistic career, but only entered academia at a later stage, and as such now has to interact with the research 'economy' in operation in academic institutions, I have been involved with the various questions relating to this area for a long time. Furthermore, I have elsewhere presented and written some sceptical perspectives about ethnography in general, addressing its limitations and some of the more exalted claims made by its proponents.

Central to my investigations is the question of *parity*: how practice-related outputs can be viewed as equivalent to other forms of research. Autoethnography provides one way of presenting one's practice so that it may appear closer to other types of research-based investigation. In this talk, I will consider not so much the question of whether practice, possibly accompanied by documentation, can be considered research (which I believe ultimately to be a rather banal question), but instead on what basis one might assert it to exhibit a comparable degree of significance, originality, rigour, and indeed effort and expertise, as other types of research often thought to be of high value, and the role of autoethnography in this process. Drawing upon my own work and experiences as a performer – and indeed as a performer active in academia – I argue that autoethnography, in the sense of self-investigation and documentation of practice, can indeed produce work of the highest level, but on the other hand it can equally easily produce work characterised primarily by 'spin' and self-promotion. Furthermore, when practitioner-scholars also compete within cultural economies external to academia, some of which may value conformity more than critical questioning and self-questioning, they can become caught between conflicting forces. This can however be a danger for other types of scholars, as was demonstrated in a recent conference on 'Writing on Contemporary Artists'. Furthermore, some forms of autoethnography can amount to a type of mystification, by clothing unremarkable findings in jargon so as to lend them a scholarly veneer, though this can also characterise other forms of ethnography. I conclude by offering a series of suggestions for ways in which autoethnography can serve as a valuable *supplement* to practice on one hand, where the practice itself is a central part of the research, but also how it can become a vital output in its own right when characterised by a high degree of critical self-engagement, so that the work can have research value for others almost independently of the quality or otherwise of the practice. I also argue that many of the problems at stake come about as a result of inflexible structures in academic institutions within which practitioner-scholars can struggle for recognition, and draw some lessons from this.

## Abstracts (Papers)

**Yuiko Asaba (Royal Holloway, University of London)**

**‘Unpacking the field or disclosing the researcher’s “cultural baggage”?: Reflexivity and autoethnography in studying contemporary history’**

‘You have an interesting heritage’. Thus commented a PhD student who attended my presentation on my recent research on tango history in Japan at a conference in 2016. Because my close family member has long worked in the Japanese tango industry, and as I have also worked as a tango musician in Japan, this comment penetrated my thoughts, urging me to unpack my ‘cultural baggage’ and to revisit my positionality in my quest to research tango in Japan. There were indeed multiple instances during my fieldwork in which my background, positionality, and interests intersected (or occasionally clashed) with those of my interviewees, pushing us to react to each other in certain ways that shaped and guided my ethnography. Such instances were valuable because they sometimes opened up key research questions that helped structure my research. Accordingly, this necessary examination on reflexivity is dedicated to exploring and unpicking what Kathleen Stewart has phrased the ‘tangles of association, accrued layers of impact and reaction’ (2007: 129), in particular, in ethnographic and historical researches that study family members. For, to unpack such intricate layers is not a process of unpicking to reveal the *truth* about the ‘field’ nor about the history, but solely to acknowledge the author’s positionality. How can researchers balance the presence of ‘I’ and the field, and can we ever separate them? This paper critically examines methodologies when studying family members as part of a genre history. In doing so, it questions the relevance of truth in ethnography, as well as the role of memory and forgetting in fabricating oral history.

**Ian Axtell (Birmingham City University)**

**‘Re-thinking Signature Pedagogy in Classroom Music Teacher Education’**

Like other fields of practice, education suffers from a dichotomy between constructivism and rationalism (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). Using a critique of my own evocative narratives (Ellis *et al*, 2010), in the style of Peshkin (1988) based on my own life history, I aim to go beyond my own subjectivity and these broader dichotomies in order to re-think signature pedagogy (Shulman, 2005) in classroom music teacher education. After 20 years of experience teaching classroom music in England, I entered Higher Education in 2004 as a music teacher educator. Challenged by the need to go beyond the mimetic pedagogy (Kalanis & Cope, 2008) I used in School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) whilst still teaching in school, my aim is to define pedagogy in classroom music education, and ultimately re-think my signature pedagogy for classroom music teacher education. I have used narratives that define my perceptions of being a musical learner and musician: The Music-Making I; being a classroom music teacher: The Music Teaching I; being a music teacher educator: The Music Teacher Educator I; and, after work in China, being an international music teacher educator: The International Music Teacher Educator I. Praxial perspectives of music education (Elliot, 1995; Regelski in De Baets & Buchborn (eds.) 2014) are important to re-think the social, inclusive and democratic nature of classroom music education through an integration of practice (QCA, 2007) that is under threat in the

current rationalist and populist approach to compulsory education in England. The distinction between music-making for performance purposes and making music that includes performing and composing to stimulate meta-cognition reflects Dewey's instance that 'Give the pupils something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking' (Dewey, 1916: 181).

**Alfonso Benetti and Aoife Hiney (University of Aveiro / Inet-MD, Portugal)**

**'Autoethnography as a method for artistic research in music performance: dissolving the process/product dichotomy'**

Following the implementation of the Bologna process, its consequences for Higher Education Music institutions, and the increasing importance of the rehearsal process in the context of artistic research, autoethnography has become established as a significant method associated with researching music performance.

Practising autoethnography as a method for artistic research in relation to expressivity in music practice and performance was first conducted systematically by A. Benetti (2013) in a work entitled *Expressivity and Piano Performance*. At the same time, in *The Art of Research in Live Music Performance*, M. Dack (2012) reports the results of autoethnographic research in the context of chamber music performance. The first study focused on the rehearsal process and the second on the performance product.

This paper consists of a critical comparative review of the research conducted by Dack and Benetti supported by the following objectives: (1) to discuss autoethnography, its reinvention and adaptation as a method for artistic research in relation to musical practice and performance; (2) to discuss the pertinence of methods that support the practice of music as a valid mechanism of empirical research; and (3) to discuss the role of autoethnography in dissolving the dichotomy between the rehearsal process and the performance.

This study demonstrates that autoethnography could be a fundamental method for artistic research due to its dynamic and transversal nature: it permits the accompaniment of the process (i.e. rehearsal) and the evaluation of the product (i.e. performance) according to objectives previously established during the process.

**Pedro Santos Boia (CIPEM/INET-md, Porto Polytechnic, Porto)**

**'Connecting the personal and the structural levels in autoethnographic inquiry: A reflection and a proposal'**

How can the implications of autoethnographic data be drawn beyond those situated at the level of the personal, localized, and singular experiences of the self? As a method, autoethnography may be accused of its significance being restricted to the individual level and its interest seen as limited. One must acknowledge the importance of autoethnographic insights into the singularity of qualitatively irreducible experiences, as a tool to develop, as Lahire calls it, a sociology at the individual level (2002). It remains nevertheless important to address the problem of what autoethnographic data may further show us when put under the light of broader structural and historical

processes. How can we increase the possibility of making links between the personal and the structural and historical?

I will articulate an autoethnographic study of 'flow' experiences (Csikszentmihályi 1990, 1996) in viola performance with a historically grounded analysis of viola aesthetics, as an example that shows the inherent richness of autoethnography but also the advantages of combining it with other approaches. While stressing the relevance of unique personal experiences which autoethnography is capable of revealing particularly well, it will be shown that there are historical variables that help 'moving one's bow' even when one is alone in a room practising an instrument. These wider implications of autoethnographic accounts, beyond the individual level, must be acknowledged and explored. This interplay of personal experience with structural processes in the construction of viola aesthetics will be framed by a critical reflection on the macro-micro controversy in the social sciences. It will be shown how autoethnographic performance-as-research may be a resource for self-musical development, empowerment and affirmation of an artistic voice and for aesthetic construction. Impact beyond 'me', however, will be also considered by reflecting on the tensions (reproduction versus creativity/change) between the individual and the broader socio-aesthetic reality.

### **Martin Parker Dixon (University of Glasgow)**

#### **'Being disabled and the case for rhapsodic writing'**

I was diagnosed with a rare form of blood cancer in March 2013. This cancer is incurable, but it is treatable. I will, as the phrase goes, 'battle with cancer' for the rest of my – probably shortened – life. I have been left with a disability, a variable physical and cognitive 'impairment' that is associated with chronic fatigue, a side-effect of chemotherapy and my unstable blood chemistry. Chronic fatigue negatively affects concentration, memory, and motivation, the first casualty of which was my capacity to read and write. How, then, is the disabled researcher, whose job it is to think and write, now to do research? And is her/his disability relevant to her/his research? Is it something that s/he ought to talk about?

These can *become* questions for me *qua* researcher because postmodern paradigm shifts have led to the questioning of the supposition that social-scientific and humanities research can and should be conducted in 'neutral', 'objective', and 'impersonal' ways. But these values have not been entirely overthrown and replaced with new ones. The straight inversion of these criteria to the partial, subjective, and the personal is not satisfactory because, apart from setting up new kinds of exclusion, we are not confronting symmetrical value structures.

I want to talk instead of an *expansion* of the set admissible genres of academic writing to include new types, the key example of which is narrative. An expanded set of genres gives a special role to the mixed or 'rhapsodic' genre which was exemplified by Roland Barthes's *Camera Lucida*. Using some ideas from the philosophy of language, in this paper I will try and clarify how *genre differences* might be articulated according to notions of assertoric force and consequential commitment, entitlement, endorsement and justification. And in amongst the crowd of new possibilities this analysis opens up, I want to problematize the challenge of narrating my setting to music a poem by Rebecca Elson, who died of cancer in 1999.

**Monica Esslin-Peard (University of Liverpool)**

**‘Personal learning journeys: Reflecting on the transition from PhD student to lecturer’**

In this paper, I reflect upon my learning journey from starting my PhD in Reflective Practice and Performance in 2012 and my current role as a newly appointed Lecturer in Music.

Taking an autoethnographic approach, I consider in which ways my personal exploration of reflective practice has been produced by, or has contributed to, the pedagogical environment at the Department of Music. What does it mean to transition from an outsider’s position, observing and analysing the reflective practice of undergraduate students to one of teaching (or not teaching – herein lies one of the challenges of reflective practice) and tutoring current undergraduate and Masters students? Is this about taking an emic perspective, or sharing experiences of the process of musical learning to inspire and engage students, particularly those from non-UK cultures such as the Peoples Republic of China? Questions I will raise include considering to what extent reflective practice offers a route to accelerated learning in a cross-genre and cross-cultural musical environment, and asking whether reflective practice can transcend language barriers.

I hope to raise questions about personal identity as a musician, student and teacher, the role of reflection in pedagogy which is enshrined within a HE environment and share best practice in reflection and personal reflection for students, teachers and others involved in music education and HE.

**Iain Findlay-Walsh (University of Glasgow)**

**‘Auto tech pilot: On channelling The Fall as autoethnographic rock group’**

*Then I woke up and I decided to recommence my diary...*

*Distractors, post-doctors behind come in*

*Dressed in suits, grow talons*

*Everyone clenched plaits horror...*

*And sometimes they say “hey Mark you’re spoiling all the paintwork”*

– ‘Paintwork’, The Fall

This presentation borrows and applies the audio-collage format of ‘Paintwork’ to discuss The Fall’s recorded output as a reflexive rock process/project which for 40 years has been at pains to dissect and frustrate the matter of its own reception, while practising a radical hyper-embodiment of rock ‘n’ roll clichés and tropes. Through an examination of tracks across the band’s catalogue, I will discuss The Fall’s studio work in relation to autoethnographic practice, proposing examples of lyrics, songwriting, performance practice, and sound design as elements in fragmentary, self-narrative analyses, through which the band ‘reflexively explore personal experiences and... interactions with others as a way of achieving wider cultural, political, or social understanding.’

At the same time, and in keeping with the challenge and opportunity afforded by autoethnographic method to put something of oneself at stake, I will use documentary

(self-interview) materials to reflect on the question of why I have chosen to bring this particular subject to the table in this academic context. How does my desire to present on this topic resonate with the hopes I have for this event, with my own self-image, and with the impression of myself as a music academic that I hope to disseminate? What connections can be made between the wish to align myself with The Fall in this context, and the wider practices of fandom, idealisation, and self-projection that we might associate with pop and rock music reception more generally?

**Barbara Gentili (Royal College of Music, London)**

**‘How my research is informed by my own practice as an opera singer’**

The flaws and limitations of the acoustical process of recording are well known. However it is also widely acknowledged — notably by Daniel Leech-Wilkinson in his *The Changing Sound of Music: Approaches to Studying Recorded Musical Performance* (2009) — that these recordings are a valuable source of knowledge, notwithstanding their inextricable mix of extraneous noise and distortions.

My contention is that these typical shortcomings of early discs or cylinders are more easily overcome by the expert ear of the professional singer. In this case, the act of listening is inflected by the empirical knowledge of what the recorded voice is ‘doing’, so that the vocalism heard on the disc (or cylinder) is physically decoded by the singer during the listening process. In other words, the singer listens and understands via the body. This decoding process, however, extends to other source material. When reading a vocal treatise, for instance, the same expertise comes into play. The singer calls upon his or her knowledge of the vocal apparatus, in order to test the assertions in the text.

As an opera singer who also performs the repertoire considered in my research, my vocal habits are involved in a circular process. They are instrumental to the interpretation of historical sources which I use to delve into my research questions on one hand, and become objects of self-observation with their emergence as constructs of meaning on the other. When interpreting my sources, the action of ‘decoding through the body’, which at first is almost unconscious, subsequently becomes a prompt for self-reflection and, finally, a signifier of larger socio-cultural implications in many chronological layers. In my paper I intend to explore this circular movement between all the elements briefly described above.

**Peter Gouzouasis and Matthew Yanko (University of British Columbia, Canada)**

**‘Formative assessment for the elementary school music classroom: Autoethnography as a methodological foundation for learning stories and pedagogical documentation’**

In arts education, many teachers struggle with the assessment of creativity and learning outcomes in arts contexts. Historically speaking, assessment and evaluation in education tends to be positivistic in nature and focused on summative criteria. That constricts pedagogies that can provide opportunities for children to engage in unfettered and unstructured play, take risks, show vulnerability, and have the freedom

to experiment. As a result of a need to break away from traditional assessment practices, our inquiry explores learning stories (Carr & Lee, 2012) and pedagogical documentation (Katz & Chard, 1996; Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999) as means of assessment in the elementary school music classroom to enable teachers, learners, and care givers to explore, document, and interpret the creative learning processes.

While engaged in this two-year study, we made numerous connections between learning stories and autoethnography (Ellis, 2004; Gouzouasis & Ryu, 2015) as the interpretative elements of both practices possess a truth-likeness, or verisimilitude, through which readers can immerse themselves in a fictionally styled story, read it as if they are the teacher observing and interpreting the learning experience, and generalize ideas to their personal practices. Banks and Banks (2000) discovered that when we engage in autoethnography, it becomes a pedagogical process because the story becomes both “instructive and instructional: It teaches and can be used to teach” (p. 237). A framework of “autoethnography as pedagogy” (Banks and Banks, 2000; pp. 235–6) facilitates the processes of listening carefully, observing and transcribing ordinary moments, and writing evocative learning stories. This pedagogical perspective extends through teacher and child assessment practices to enable parents to conceptualize narrative maps of their child’s musical development.

This inquiry-based presentation – culminating with a short performative autoethnography – not only brings to light alternative practices of assessing creativity and creative learning outcomes in music learning, but also depicts a network of ‘valuative’ stories that are different for each individual who engages with them – illustrating that these practices are much more than merely an artful depiction of learning experiences. I will also make connections with how this practice may be used at all levels of learning and teaching.

**Clive Harrison (Australian Institute of Music, Sydney)**

**‘Music education: Why autoethnography is vital and quantitative research is not enough’**

For music educators, a key challenge is to establish a robust scholarly structure for discussions of creativity: this paper argues for the validity of autoethnographic research in the creative arts.

When asking, “How does one write a song?” we do not seek a *scientific theory*, for there exists no single, perfect, repeatable answer to that question. At the same time, we reject Romanticist ‘genius myth’ views of creativity (where only a few are chosen/gifted enough), and we bypass Inspirationist views of ‘mysterious enlightenment’ so popular in the media (there is a wealth of research into creativity since the 1950s to move on from that notion). If we accept that students of songwriting are (typically) driven to create meaningful expressions of the human experience that have the potential to become part of contemporary music culture, then songwriting pedagogy requires a synthesis of two perspectives: first, an objective, quantitative ‘scientific’ analytic approach; and second, a nuanced appreciation of subjective, qualitative, and socio-cultural elements of song artefact creation.

Using questions such as ‘how many, how much, who, or where?’, quantitative researchers provide descriptive data, measure songs structures, search for lyric patterns, and make trends and predictions based on study hits, playlists, and chart

activity. Beyond this, the autoethnographer's academic perspective of narrative self-reflection and analytical interpretation provides unique and useful intuitive insights, and research outcomes, as s/he looks to provide prescriptive analytics based on qualitative, exploratory, predictive or propositional questions such as 'how do, how to, why does, and why not?' Unique, 'insider' skills are brought to the research table: the *tacit knowing* and *creative process* of the practitioner; the *habitus* of an expert enculturated and immersed in the domain; and (importantly) the capacity for framing, synthesis, and triangulation of the descriptive data provided by quantitative researchers.

### **Lucy Hollingworth (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland)**

#### **'Storytelling in Autoethnography – *The Poetess*'**

*The Poetess* started out in 1983 as incidental music for a theatre production about the poet Sylvia Plath that was never actually performed. In the meantime I briefly pursued a career as a composer/performer, entered into a marriage which resulted in my giving up music altogether, worked in IT for many years, and finally returned to composition.

As part of my PhD I revisited this music and decided to reinvent it with a new semi-autobiographical script of my own, creating a 50-minute music theatre piece which was premiered at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in 2016.

The eponymous Poetess struggles against early trauma and the oppressive restrictions of her environment in search of self-determination. Gradually it ceases to be a struggle for a satisfactory relationship and becomes a struggle for survival.

By presenting elements of my own story as fiction, I seek to connect with women's experiences and promote a discussion around the difficulties they encounter in society.

In this paper I will describe how *The Poetess* came to be created and performed, how it was received at the première, and how it will function as part of my autoethnography, connecting with the wider experience of women composers. I will also discuss the role of creative and imaginative work as a part of the discipline of autoethnography and explain why it is a valid means of communication in this area of research.

### **Minja Koskela (Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki) and Taru Leppänen (University of Turku, Finland)**

#### **'Enhancing democracy or advocating for respectability? Negotiations between teacher and lower secondary students in the frames of popular music teaching in Finland'**

In this paper, we explore the democracy of popular music teaching in Finnish lower secondary schools. The paper is based on data collected by the first author from her own teaching context. Thus, in the study, the first author is not only a teacher and researcher, but one of the study objects and, hence, the study links to autoethnography, which Ellis (2004, xix) describes as 'research, writing, story, and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social, and political.' Finnish popular music education offers an interesting frame for considering

the democracy of school teaching, since (1) popular music has been argued to be a relatively democratic practice, and (2) the comprehensive use of popular music in Finnish music teaching has been internationally recognized. However, whilst the use of popular music has been advocated worldwide, its hegemonic position in Finnish music education needs to be considered critically to reinforce students' equal possibilities for participation. Hence, in this paper, we explore the teacher's and students' negotiations on gender, sexuality and nationality in Finnish secondary school music education that is diversifying rapidly. To consider the position of the teacher-researcher who, in this case, is a white, middle-class practitioner, reflexive methods will be utilized. Additionally, we use respectability – a concept that contains judgements of class, race, gender and sexuality and that offers differential access to the mechanisms for generating, resisting, and displaying respectability to different groups – as a theoretical and inquisitive lens. Based on the analysis, we argue that the democracy of Finnish music teaching is framed by respectability advocated by the teacher. However, we also argue that by utilizing reflexive autoethnographic methods in the teaching processes, the teacher may enhance the democracy of the school music teaching.

### **Charlotte Purkis (University of Winchester)**

#### **'Continuing the conversation (valuing the past and liberating marginalia on selves encountering practice)'**

My encounters as musician, teacher, critic, academic are not typical of anything or anyone but they are of their time. Because we are alive at the same time, this time is shared. Or is it rather borrowed? What supports the validation of encounters I have with practice in what, for me, is the discipline area in which music resounds, and could facilitate these experiences to be captured in writing worth reading?

'I am doing something in and to the discipline (to shape it in my own image?)

I am exploring, toying, embracing, othering, remembering, consolidating....  
(completing?)

I am in dialogue and duologue with amateurs and professionals (whoever they may be?)

I am Professor in Absentio with my own mirror (signifying nothing?)'

Can such historical reflection help Charlotte to explore her own work and express her future intentions to inspire herself and her students to understand where they are, what they are doing, why and how it might matter?

Navigations of the self are to do with establishing an identity at any one point in one's own autobiography. Scholars who do this usually come and go quietly. Has anyone been listening? What greater effects could there be from inscriptions of experience onto the traces of the discipline's journey, if these become more consciously poetic? What place might ecstatic communication of doings which make up the discipline of music/musicology/performance studies have in shaping this arena of investigation of experience as a significant utopian space? Which past ecstatic writers who have listened, viewed, felt, and captured subjective insights of their responses to encounters with practices of their time should be invited to join this conversation?

**Christopher Leedham (Leeds College of Music) and Martin Scheuregger (University of Lincoln)**

**‘The composer’s place in academia’**

This paper draws on an ongoing research project investigating the place of the composer within academia, focussing on the PhD by composition pathway common to many UK higher education institutions. Composer-practitioner Christopher Leedham and composer-analyst Martin Scheuregger will present an overview of the written requirements of composition PhDs in the UK – the de facto ‘apprenticeship’ for many aspiring composers – and suggest that the ‘scholarisation’ of composition presents a number of challenges to the legitimacy of composition as an academic discipline.

The requirement for PhD composers to write about their own work may have created unhelpful aesthetic expectations – whether institutionally specific or more widely – and even fetishized quantifiable compositional procedures. Composers may feel the need to explain their musical decisions too objectively and in doing so create teleological justifications that tacitly assert idealised notions of genius. The authors will discuss these issues and reflect on the limitations of the current PhD system, suggesting ways that it could be made to reflect more truthfully the messy, unplanned realities of working as a composer. The current UK research climate – as reflected by governmental and institutional obsessions with REF – will provide a context for wider reflections on the place of, and future for, composition in academia.

**Abigail Sin (Royal Academy of Music, London)**

**‘Mapping Out Sound: Exploring the Piano Music of Charles Griffes’**

The discourse surrounding the music of American composer Charles Griffes (1884–1920) raises similar issues to the discourse on performance as research. There is a sense of distrust as to where insight is to be found and a lack of a shared language by which to investigate and communicate such insight. With Griffes, the language and lenses used to discuss the works of more famous contemporaries such as Debussy and Ravel are artificially imposed onto Griffes’s works in an attempt to familiarise and legitimise them, instead of discussing them on their own terms. In performance-related discourse, a performer’s decisions are still measured against traditional notions of musical structure, instead of considering how the physical experience of performance can itself inform and shape notions of structure, or indeed whether new parameters ought to be developed to discuss performance.

In this presentation drawn from my ongoing doctoral research, I will discuss how I as a performer have set out to develop my language and toolkit for exploring Griffes’s solo piano music. Using *Clouds* and *The Night Winds* as case studies, I will examine issues of sound production in Griffes’s music, using both piano and orchestral scores as an entry point to qualifying Griffes’s soundworlds. I propose that a performer’s relationship with instrumental sound colour can be a means of perceiving, defining and navigating the structural pillars and building materials in the music.

My research on Griffes’s solo piano music could serve as a model for performers exploring similarly under-researched repertoire. In a wider context, this project could also serve as a case study on exploring a performer’s process and practice, using the music of Griffes as an entry point.

**Tine Castelein, Sarah Vandemoortele, Thomas De Baets (LUCA School of Arts, Belgium)**

**‘Developing professionalism through self-reflexive research: Two accounts of practitioner research in music performance and education’**

In this joint presentation, two musician-researchers undertaking PhDs in the Arts explain how they employ their own practice in a self-reflexive context in order to lay out and further develop their own ‘personal interpretative framework’ (Kelchtermans, 1994, 2013). Author 1 is a music educator who conducts her research in a non-formal educational music project with as its principal aim to explore her own professional development when coaching musical creation processes with children. Author 2 is a violinist who investigates the gazing behaviour of musicians in a chamber music context, combining data on her own practice with data on that of others. Both PhD projects are similar in that they combine their practice (and observational data) with their views on their respective professions (via self-reflections). Interestingly, the emphasis of both researchers is slightly different. The first author’s self-reflections are rather future-oriented: the aim is to stimulate her professional development by systematically confronting her personal interpretative framework with her “enacted professionalism” (Kelchtermans & Vanassche, 2014). The second author uses her own practice to discover, remember and develop a personal (aesthetical) stance toward gaze behaviour, an obscure aspect of chamber music practice. Admittedly, in both projects the researchers’ practices as well as their views on practice undergo changes through the research. By presenting recognisable accounts of their developments, they eventually hope to enhance the learning processes of their peers. Both presenters discuss their research methods in detail, while exploring the ways their practitioner research links with the broad spectrum of ‘mesearch’. Indeed, their projects contain dimensions of self-study (Lassonde, Galman, & Kosnik, 2009), autoethnography (Austin & Hickey, 2007; Vasconcelos, 2011), interpretive research (Radnor, 2001) and narrative writing (Riessman, 2008). They will especially endeavour to address the opportunities and frictions that arise when endeavouring to apply the ‘ethno-’ and the ‘-graphy’ of ‘autoethnography’ to their own research.

**Christopher Wiley (University of Surrey)**

**‘From Research-led Teaching to Teaching-led Research: An autoethnographic enquiry into keeping curricula contemporary in higher education popular music’**

This paper employs autoethnographic approaches to reconsider the fundamental relationship between teaching and research with respect to the delivery of taught university curricula that endeavour to incorporate genuinely up-to-the-minute content. It departs self-reflexively from the author’s experience of designing a first-year undergraduate module devoted to Adele’s *25*, initially presented in the 2015–16 academic year during the period in which this album topped the UK charts. This endeavour raised substantial pedagogical challenges concerning the teaching of a topic so newly emerged that no scholarly discourse had yet appeared to address it, since its history was still unfolding while the module was being delivered. Successful realisation of such innovatory teaching required the undertaking of substantial original research on the lecturer’s part, such that the result may be more accurately regarded as ‘teaching-led research’ rather than ‘research-led teaching’. Correspondingly, its

subsequent public dissemination has fallen primarily within the realm of pedagogic research instead of musicological research. This unanticipated consequence invites reconsideration of Skelton's (2012) tripartite model of teacher identities in higher education, as well as calling into question the perceived dichotomy between subject-specific and pedagogic research, in which the latter has traditionally been held to be the less worthy endeavour (Yorke 2000). Moreover, it illustrates autoethnography's vast potential to shed light on more fundamental issues within a given cultural context (in this instance, probing the very relationship between teaching and research in UK higher education) through maintaining a focus on a single case study.

### **James Williams (University of Derby)**

#### **'Towards a "Digital" and "Online" Autoethnography: Using social media as a platform for reflective journalism in music composition and the therapeutic arts in HE'**

This paper reveals current practices in the overlapping space between autoethnography, technology, pedagogy, and music. It examines the significance of online reflective journals in the learning and development of compositional practice, using Level 6 students reading the Music pathway of the BA (Hons) Creative Expressive Therapies programme (University of Derby) as a case study. The degree is anthropologically inclined: students focus on the 'process' of their therapeutic artwork, reflecting and documenting towards a final product. Final-year students spend two semesters working towards the submission of a composition portfolio, accompanied by reflective commentaries drawing on autoethnographic documentation. With the rise of online social media, 'Generation M' students (Thompson, 2010) are beginning to use online platforms such YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Vimeo, Instagram, and WordPress to document their compositional process. Using these sites/applications autoethnographically not only allows students to host/capture multiple dimensions of their working process, but also facilitates richer reflexivity. Such autobiographical methods are also encouraged in analytical, research-based modules, e.g. 'Independent Scholarship', where music students may opt for a 'Body of Work' (instead of a dissertation). Here, students 'self-research' ('me-search') their chosen topic (e.g. Performance and Anxiety) and provide reflective and analytical commentaries, using social media as a platform for autoethnographic method. The paper finds social media to have a positive and enriching impact on the autoethnography of music composition and performance in HE. Recommendations for its methodological and analytical use(s) are presented alongside a discussion on the positives, negatives, and limitations of social media's place in 'me-search', whilst additional concluding remarks prompt further research trajectories in this extremely significant area of study. The paper is a developed exegesis of a chapter 'Ethnography, Autoethnography, and Social Media: Pedagogical Practices in Music and the Therapeutic Arts' by the author for a book on anthropology, pedagogy, and the arts in HE (Routledge, forthcoming 2018).

**Jessica Zhu (Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London)**

**‘Framing Autoethnography: A Performer’s Perspective’**

In recent years, the rise of autoethnography in academic research has been met with demands of valid framing and rigorous critical thinking. My autoethnographic project developed from my own desire to frame the process of a musician’s preparation for concert performances in a disciplined, critically thought-out way, while remaining true to my work and perspective as a concert pianist.

To contextualise my autoethnographic work, I examine current literature and studies that address performers’ reading beyond the score, ranging from the fields of performance psychology such as embodied cognition, to first-person artistic research. This framework reveals a current lack of academic perspectives on interpretive decisions made by performers beyond the score, which further highlights the importance of performers conducting critically thought-out and rigorous autoethnographic studies.

In my own musical practice, I combine autoethnographic processes of writing with a practice diary, as well as sound and video recordings, in order to determine which facets of performance preparation have the highest impact on the musical outcome. Via the perspective of a performer, I aim to present the piano music of Maurice Ohana to the academic community, and in turn, contribute to the current body of studies on how musicians make decisions, and further to emphasize the benefit of autoethnography in the development of practice as research in the arts.

# Keynote Biographies

## Professor Neil Heyde

### Keynote Address:

‘Why? What? Where? Questioning the responsibilities of researchers and environments in self-reflexive work’

Professor Neil Heyde is Head of Postgraduate Programmes at the Royal Academy of Music in London and for over twenty years has been the cellist of the Kreutzer Quartet. Around the quartet’s special contribution to the 21<sup>st</sup>-century evolution of the medium he has developed a unique approach to the instrument, played out in work as an improviser and in his work with composers. A long-term project on instrumental choreography (exploring the physical delivery of the music as a fundamental element) has produced many outcomes, including a film and documentary of his work with Brian Ferneyhough on the extraordinary *Time and Motion Study II* for solo cello and electronics (available on iTunesU) and a DVD, *Quartet Choreography*, (MSVDX101). He has edited Faber’s series of nineteenth-century music for stringed instruments and is currently completing the volume of Debussy’s sonatas for the *Œuvres Complètes de Claude Debussy* in Paris.

## Ian Pace

### Keynote Address:

‘Spin, Self-Promotion, Institutional Recognition, and Critical Performance: Notes from the diary of a performer-scholar’

Ian Pace studied at Chetham’s School of Music, The Queen’s College, Oxford and the Juilliard School, New York, where he studied with György Sándor. He has pursued a parallel career as both a pianist and musicologist since returning to the UK in 1992, with a particular focus on contemporary music. Since 2010 he has been Lecturer in Music and Head of Performance at City, University of London.

He has played in 25 countries, recorded over 35 CDs, and given over 250 world premieres, by composers including Patrícia de Almeida, Julian Anderson, Richard Barrett, Luc Brewaeys, James Clarke, Chaya Czernowin, James Dillon, Pascal Dusapin, Brian Ferneyhough, Michael Finnissy, Christopher Fox, Volker Heyn, Horatiu Radulescu, Frederic Rzewski, Gerhard Stäbler, Howard Skempton, and Walter Zimmermann. He has also played with major orchestras including the Orchestre de Paris under Christoph Eschenbach, the SWR-Orchestra Stuttgart under Rupert Huber, and the Dortmund Philharmonic under Bernhard Kontarsky, and given many workshops and masterclasses, including as a teacher at the festivals in Acanthes, Metz, Impuls, Graz, and the Akademie für Neue Musik, Munich.

Ian co-authored and co-edited the volume *Uncommon Ground: The Music of Michael Finnissy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), and the monograph *Michael Finnissy's The History of Photography in Sound: A Study of Sources, Techniques and Interpretation* (Swarland: Divine Art, 2013), and has published widely in *Music and Letters*, *Search: Journal for New Music and Culture*, *The Musical Times*, *Tempo*, *Contemporary Music Review*, *International Piano*, *Open Space Magazine*, *Liszt Society Journal*, *Classical Music*, *Musiktexte*, and *Musik und Aesthetik*, as well as authoring many programme and CD liner notes.

## Professor Darla Crispin

### Keynote Address:

**'The Mirror and the Lamp: Personal reflection  
as a source of illumination or self-dazzlement in research'**

Professor Darla Crispin is Vice Rector for Research and Artistic Development and Director of the Arne Nordheim Centre for Artistic Research (NordART) at the Norwegian Academy of Music (NMH), Oslo. A Canadian pianist and scholar with a Concert Recital Diploma from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and a PhD from King's College, London, Darla specialises in musical modernity, especially the works of the Second Viennese School. She is an acknowledged expert in the developing field of artistic research, having co-authored one of the seminal books on this subject, *The Artistic Turn: A Manifesto* (Leuven University Press/Orpheus Institute, 2009). Her forthcoming book, *The Solo Piano Works of the Second Viennese School: Performance, Ethics, and Understanding* will be published by Boydell & Brewer.

## **List of Conference Participants**

David Aldred, Leeds Beckett University  
Tom Armstrong, University of Surrey  
Yuiko Asaba, Royal Holloway, University of London  
Kit Ashton, Goldsmiths, University of London  
Ian Axtell, Birmingham City University  
Thomas De Baets, LUCA School of Arts, Belgium  
Emily Baines, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London  
Dan Banks, University of Hull  
Rachael Barnes, University of Surrey  
Guy Baron, London South Bank University  
Alice Barron, University of Oxford  
Alfonso Benetti, University of Aveiro, Portugal  
Mira Benjamin, University of Huddersfield  
Pedro Santos Boia, CIPEM/INET-md, Porto Polytechnic, Portugal  
Richard Bolley, Goldsmiths, University of London  
Sarah Callis, Royal Academy of Music, London  
Tine Castelein, LUCA School of Arts, Belgium  
Esther Cavett, Kings College London  
Santiago Cimadevilla, Codarts University of the Arts, The Netherlands  
Tim Cotterell, BIMM  
Darla Crispin, Norwegian Academy of Music, Oslo  
Benjamin Davis, Cardiff University  
Martin Parker Dixon, University of Glasgow  
Doris Dornelles de Almeida, University of Roehampton/UFV  
Litha Efthymiou, University of Lincoln  
Monica Esslin-Peard, University of Liverpool  
Grace Faure-Bryan, Durham University  
Lindsey Fillingham, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London  
Iain Findlay-Walsh, University of Glasgow  
Barbara Gentili, Royal College of Music, London  
Peter Gouzouasis, University of British Columbia, Canada  
Verica Grmusa, Goldsmiths, University of London  
Job ter Haar, Codarts University of the Arts, The Netherlands  
Bethan Habron-James, Royal Northern College of Music/Bangor University  
Clive Harrison, Australian Institute of Music, Sydney  
Neil Heyde, Royal Academy of Music, London  
Aoife Hiney, Inet-MD, Portugal  
Lucy Hollingworth, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland  
Nicole Jordan, Codarts University of the Arts, The Netherlands  
Matthew Kaner, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London  
Zubin Kanga, Royal Holloway, University of London  
Christian Kennett, University of Westminster (retired)

Minja Koskela, Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland  
Alex de Lacey, Goldsmiths, University of London  
Christopher Leedham, Leeds College of Music  
John Lely, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance  
Mary Lennon, DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama  
Taru Leppänen, University of Turku, Finland  
Gerry Lewis, BIMM  
Natasha Loges, Royal College of Music, London  
Soosan Lolavar, City, University of London  
Adam McDonagh, University of Cambridge  
Úna Monaghan, University of Cambridge  
Stephanie Oatridge, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance  
Ian Pace, City, University of London  
Simon Poole, University of Chester/Storyhouse  
Charlotte Purkis, University of Winchester  
Sue Richardson, University of Surrey  
Tim Robinson, BIMM  
Francis St John, University of West London  
Clare Salaman, Goldsmiths, University of London  
Martin Scheuregger, University of Lincoln  
Kirsten Sheldrake, Birmingham City University  
Abigail Sin, Royal Academy of Music, London  
Jackie Small, Durham University  
Greg Stott, Australian National University, Canberra  
Bartosz Szafranski, London College of Music, University of West London  
Wiebke Thormählen, Royal College of Music, London  
Sarah Vandemoortele, LUCA School of Arts, Belgium  
Christopher Wiley, University of Surrey  
James Williams, University of Derby  
Russell Wimbish, University of Edinburgh  
Naomi Woo, University of Cambridge  
Matthew Yanko, University of British Columbia, Canada  
Pei Ann Yeoh, Kings College London  
Saiyyidah Zaidi, University of Glasgow  
Jessica Zhu, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London

## **BEYOND 'MESEARCH': AUTOETHNOGRAPHY, SELF-REFLEXIVITY, AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AS ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN MUSIC STUDIES**

### Organising Committee:

Christopher Wiley (University of Surrey, Chair)

Iain Findlay-Walsh (University of Glasgow)

Tom Armstrong (University of Surrey)

### Conference Supporters:

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