



TRINITY LABAN

PG Research in Music Education Symposium: Schedule

9.45am – 5pm Friday 31st October 2025 on Zoom.

[#RMES2025](#)

Trinity Laban's Department of Music Education is pleased to invite delegates to their sixth Postgraduate Research in Music Education Symposium. This event offers a forum for current or recent graduates across music education and community music to present their dissertation or personal project studies in a collegiate and supportive environment.

The symposium is for all interested in the latest research in music education or participatory music from the UK and internationally, and presentations will address a wide range of concerns from instrumental teaching, classroom music and community music. We have a really international community gathering today, with delegates from multiple HEIs across three continents. The team chairing today are: Nicola Tagoe, doctoral researcher at the University of Cambridge, and Lecturer in Music at Trinity Laban and Dr Robert Wells, independent researcher, HE consultant, and Lecturer in Music Education at Trinity Laban.

Trinity Laban has a range of music education and participation modules at undergraduate level, and a Department of Music Education that hosts around 50 students on three different Masters programmes, and a further 55 students on a partnership programme with The Open University. The MA in Music Education & Performance intertwines development as a performer with a rigorous development in music education as both a practice and a subject of study. We also offer a one-year MA in Music Education, and a part-time MEd in Music Education (Online). The online programme is for established professionals and is designed to be studied alongside full-time work. The Department of Music Education currently has 15 nationalities represented within the postgraduate programmes, meaning that study takes place within a truly international cohort.

I hope that you enjoy the day, and even whilst we are online I hope also that we can find time to informally meet and develop a community of like-minded researchers.

Dr Robert Wells
Lecturer in Music Education

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6th Postgraduate Research in Music Education Symposium 2025: Schedule

Friday 31 October 2025

9:45 – 10:00	Introductions	
SESSION 1: Cultural Diversity and Decolonisation in Music Education(Chair Nicola Tagoe)		
10:00 - 10:25	Jiaqi Luo	<i>Chinese Music Teachers’ Understandings and Attitudes Toward Multicultural Music Education.</i>
10:25 - 10:50	Yuhan (Cathy) Liu	<i>The application of free improvisation in Shanghai primary school music education.</i>
10:50 - 11:15	Chen Shiran	<i>Decolonizing the curriculum through Gongche notation in guzheng teaching.</i>
BREAK		
SESSION 2: Student-Teacher Relationships and Educational Structures (Chair Robert Wells)		
11:30 - 11:55	Michelle Robinson	<i>The Music Student-Teacher Relationship Questionnaire</i>
11:55 - 12:20	Naomi Winterburn	<i>Perspectives of school culture at Shireland CBSO Academy</i>
12:20 – 12:45	Huilin Qi	<i>A comparative study of music teacher preparation in China and the UK</i>
LUNCH BREAK		
SESSION 3: Innovations in Piano Pedagogy and Performance (Chair Robert Wells)		
1:50 - 2:15	Jie Li	<i>Lived Experiences of Private Piano Teachers in Singapore: Navigating Parental and Student Expectations</i>
2:15 - 2:40	Dorothy Li	<i>Enduring elements of a PETTLEP imagery intervention for graduate pianists.</i>
2:40 - 3:05	Claire Bowes	<i>Learning Music through Non-Visual Means: Evaluating the Effectiveness and Reliability of Different Memorisation Strategies for Blind Children Learning the Piano.</i>
BREAK		
SESSION 4: Wellbeing, Identity and Creative Expression (Chair Nicola Tagoe)		
3:25 - 3:50	Vanessa Stansall	<i>Listening to mothers: an exploration of maternal voice and experience in early childhood music</i>
3:50 - 4:15	Janos Fabian	<i>Adult male vocalists’ perspectives on the voice change during adolescence.</i>
4:15 - 4:40	Tetiana Kysliak	<i>Group singing for the mental health and social integration of refugees and immigrants.</i>
Closing Remarks		

ABSTRACTS

10am: Cultural Diversity and Decolonization in Music Education

(Chair: Nicola Tagoe)

10am Jiaqi Luo: Chinese Music Teachers' Understandings and Attitudes Toward Multicultural Music Education

This presentation reports on the initial findings from a doctoral study investigating Chinese music teachers' attitudes, understandings, and practices relating to multicultural music education (MME) within the context of nine-year compulsory education. Framed within a pragmatist research paradigm and using an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design, the research began with in-depth interviews to develop grounded insights that will later inform a nationwide survey.

At the current stage, three semi-structured interviews have been conducted with music teachers working in different Chinese provinces. Using a combination of structural, descriptive, and evaluation coding, the data revealed several converging themes. While all participants expressed a generally positive view of MME—emphasizing its role in broadening student horizons and promoting respect for cultural diversity—their interpretations of key concepts such as “multiculturalism” varied widely and were often superficial. Implementation practices were largely shaped by textbook content and curriculum requirements, with few examples of teacher-led adaptation or deep cultural integration. Teachers also identified gaps in professional development, particularly in relation to culturally responsive pedagogy and access to diverse teaching resources.

These preliminary findings highlight a tension between policy intentions and classroom realities. They suggest the need for clearer conceptual framing of multicultural education in both teacher training and curriculum design. By presenting these early insights, this study contributes to international dialogues on culturally inclusive music education and raises important questions about how teacher beliefs and systemic constraints shape practice.

10:25 Yuhan (Cathy) Liu: The application of free improvisation in Shanghai Primary school music education

This study investigates the application of free improvisation in primary school music education to enhance students' creativity, motivation, and collaboration. Grounded in self-determination theory, play theory, creativity research, and improvisation pedagogy, the study adopts an action-based approach through three teaching cycles in a Shanghai primary school. Each cycle explores a different aspect of improvisation: rhythm, melody, and integrated group performance. Lessons were designed to balance teacher guidance with student-led exploration.

Data were collected through classroom video observations, audio recordings of student work, and interviews. These were analysed using time sampling, thematic coding, and comparative methods.

Findings suggest that free improvisation promotes student autonomy, expressive confidence, and positive peer interaction. It supports intrinsic motivation and musical risk-taking, particularly when scaffolded by structure and peer support. The research also highlights challenges in group collaboration, including unequal participation and confusion over roles.

The study reflects on the dual role of teacher and researcher, and how this positioning impacts facilitation and data interpretation. Practical strategies are offered for integrating improvisation into structured music curricula, including theme-based tasks, role rotation, and collaborative tools.

This research contributes to growing interest in informal, creative approaches to classroom music, and provides evidence of how improvisation can empower students within a formal educational setting.

10:50 Chen Shiran: The potential for decolonizing the curriculum through the (re)integration of Gongche notation in guzheng teaching

This abstract is based on a PhD project that explores the reintegration of Gongche notation—an ancient Chinese system using characters to denote pitches—into contemporary guzheng pedagogy, assessing its potential to diversify music education and challenge historical marginalization influenced by Western dominance and China's modernization efforts. The project examines Gongche's strengths in promoting oral-aural flexibility, improvisation, and cultural engagement, compared to Western music notation systems.

Central to the methodology is a mixed-methods approach, incorporating semi-structured interviews and participant observations with educators, learners, and performers from the UK and China, guided by grounded theory; experimental teaching sessions adapting Kodály-inspired techniques; and bilingual literature analysis drawing on decolonial frameworks (e.g., Mignolo's epistemic disobedience) and historical sources. Participants include diverse groups, such as adults without prior music experience.

A key innovation involves gamifying the learning process through Kodály-inspired tools. For instance, an interactive symbol-matching game prompts users to pair Gongche symbols with corresponding pitches or rhythms, resembling a puzzle interface. Correct matches trigger guzheng audio playback, enhancing auditory-visual integration and musical intuition. The game features modes like practice for skill-building and competitive for engagement, adaptable to varied learner levels.

This research forms part of a broader inquiry into notation suitability for 21st-century guzheng teaching. Preliminary interview insights reveal cognitive discomfort with multiple systems, highlighting the need for user-centred adaptations. Through gamification, the project addresses questions of notations' compatibility: which system proves most intuitive in a game-based context? The abstract outlines these elements, contributing to decolonizing curricula in global music education.

11:30 Student-Teacher Relationships and Educational Structures

(Chair Robert Wells)

11:30 Michelle Robinson: The Music Student-Teacher Relationship Questionnaire (MuSTR-Q) for One-to-One Learning Contexts: A Measure of Relationship Quality

Positive relationships are central to human functioning. In music education, the one-to-one student-teacher relationship plays a crucial role, shaping learning and impacting wellbeing through a dynamic that affects both student and teacher. Yet despite widespread acknowledgement of its importance, this relationship has received little empirical attention, leaving a gap in understanding and practice. This study aims to address that gap by adapting and validating the Music Student-Teacher Relationship Questionnaire (MuSTR-Q), a measure derived from the Coach-Athlete Relationship Questionnaire (CART-Q) and grounded in the 3+1Cs framework of relationship quality: closeness, commitment, complementarity, and co-orientation. The MuSTR-Q was designed to capture both direct perceptions (how students and teachers view their relationship) and meta-perceptions (how they believe they are viewed by the other), reflecting the reciprocal nature of one-to-one teaching. Data was collected from 219 participants (117 students, 102 teachers) engaged in regular one-to-one lessons across conservatoires, schools, and private settings. Confirmatory factor analyses supported a three-factor structure (closeness, commitment, complementarity) for both perspectives, with model fit improved following minor modifications. Internal consistency was high ($\alpha > .70$), and convergent and discriminant

validity were within acceptable thresholds, providing initial psychometric support for the MuSTR-Q. The MuSTR-Q represents the first validated tool to assess relationship quality in one-to-one music education from both student and teacher perspectives. Its development provides a foundation for future research and offers educators and institutions a practical way to evaluate, reflect on, and strengthen the relational dynamics that underpin effective teaching, learning, and wellbeing.

11:55 Naomi Winterburn: Perspectives of school culture at Shireland CBSO Academy

Deal and Kennedy's definition of school culture as "the way we do things round here" (1983: 140) is often cited in literature on the subject. Strongly linked to a school's vision and values, leadership plays an important part in shaping school culture, particularly in new schools.

My research focuses on Shireland CBSO Academy (SCBSO), a majority non-selective free school which opened in September 2023 in the wake of concerns about the crisis in music education in England and the acknowledgement from the English orchestral sector of the challenges in workforce diversity, audience development and the talent pipeline. SCBSO operates as a partnership between Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO). The school teaches a balanced curriculum but also gives every student access to unique music opportunities including free of charge weekly instrumental or vocal lessons, membership of an ensemble and inspiration sessions from CBSO musicians and guests. Music at SCBSO is elevated to a core subject and all students will take music or music technology GCSE.

The complexity of SCBSO as a unique but conventional school is explored in my research, considering how school culture is shaped by its musical offering and partnerships. This presentation outlines emerging findings, focussing on perspectives of school culture at SCBSO and some thoughts on what might be learned from this model.

References:

DEAL, T. E. & KENNEDY, A. A. (1983) Culture and School Performance. *Educational Leadership*, 40, 140-141.

12:20 Huilin Qi: A comparative study of music teacher preparation in China and the UK

In the 21st century, global integration, cultural diversification, and multicultural education have introduced new requirements for school music education in China, placing greater demands on music teachers. The United Kingdom, whose education system differs significantly from that of China, offers a useful point of comparison for examining similarities and differences in music and music teacher education between the two countries.

This research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative survey data and qualitative interview data, with analyses informed by Braun and Clarke's (2008) thematic analysis. Themes identified across the interviews, based on the participants' lived experiences, are creativity, aesthetics, and the integration of music with other arts subjects.

Findings suggests that musical aesthetics are highly valued in Chinese music education and are embedded in the national music and arts curriculum standards. The integration of other arts subjects, such as drama and dance, also represents an emerging trend in Chinese music education, and music teacher education appears to prepare student teachers for these aspects to some extent. However, these two areas receive less emphasis in UK music education. By contrast, the cultivation of musical creativity is more strongly valued in the UK, where music teacher training courses seem better suited to fostering creativity, owing to different educational philosophies and the greater flexibility of the music curriculum compared with China. This project therefore compares music teacher preparation in China and the UK, with a focus on elements that are complementary or similar and elements that are strongly contrasting.

1:50 Innovations in Piano Pedagogy and Performance

(Chair Robert Wells)

1:50 Jie Li: Lived Experiences of Private Piano Teachers in Singapore: Navigating Parental and Student Expectations.

This study examines how private piano teachers in Singapore navigate tensions between parental and student expectations in a high-pressure educational culture where music is often associated with achievement and exam success. Drawing on Self-Determination Theory and Role Theory, this qualitative case study used semi-structured interviews with four experienced piano teachers and two parents.

Thematic analysis revealed five interrelated themes: parental expectations, student expectations, teacher strategies, exam culture and societal pressure, and teaching values and professional identity. These themes highlight the complex balance between structured, goal-driven instruction and fostering creativity, motivation, and independence in learners.

Findings suggest that teachers actively mediate between the conflicting expectations of parents and students through value-based communication, boundary setting, and adaptive pedagogy. While exam culture remains deeply entrenched in Singapore's musical landscape, teachers expressed a strong commitment to student-centred learning and long-term musical growth. Their professional identity, as mentors, negotiators, and advocates for student well-being, was central to navigating these dynamics.

This study broadens understanding of teacher agency in exam-oriented environments and highlights the cultural specificity of Singapore's music education. It offers implications for educators, parents, and policymakers aiming to balance excellence with emotional and artistic development in high-stakes educational contexts.

2:15 Dorothy Li: Graduate pianists and the enduring elements of a PETTLEP imagery intervention

The application and benefits of imagery is an expanding yet underdeveloped area of application in music pedagogy and self-oriented creative practice. This research explores how students who were inducted into an initial 12-week (PETTLEP) imagery intervention have developed or relinquished strategic approaches in their continued learning one year later. Research indicates learners can implement a range of imagery approaches and cognitive devices enhancing a spectrum of imagery modalities in their music practice. A phenomenological perspective was used to investigate reflections of three graduate-level performance teaching piano students one year after the initial PETTLEP program. Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) revealed how the participants reported idiosyncratic development and refining of imagery as a learning strategy across Physical, Environment, Task, Timing, Learning, Emotions, and Perspective approaches to the imagery model. Findings offer insights into the personalisation and optimisation of learning strategies and creative approaches to practice that can materialise through sustained imagery use. The findings highlight the value these students now hold towards imagery as a valuable learning strategy, and the bespoke application of mental practice and imagery techniques offer learners. Implications from this study suggest an experiential immersion in imagery and how these can be organised and applied teaching practices.

2:40 Claire Bowes: Learning Music through Non-Visual Means: Evaluating the Effectiveness and Reliability of Different Memorisation Strategies for Blind Children Learning the Piano.

Memorisation is the primary means by which blind musicians learn and perform music. Although music memorisation has been widely studied, there remains a significant gap in research examining how blind people approach the task of memorising. My Master's research (2013) investigated personal experiences of memorisation among blind musicians. The findings revealed that there is no single or universal

approach: rather, participants developed individualised, often unconventional strategies that proved effective to varying degrees in practice. None of the participants recalled being explicitly taught memorisation techniques, highlighting a notable pedagogical gap in music education for blind learners. These findings provided the foundation for my current PhD research.

My doctoral study builds on these insights by focusing on blind children who are learning piano. The research seeks to identify and evaluate effective memorisation strategies to better support blind learners, while also introducing approaches that may enhance both learning outcomes and musical experiences. Framed within applied musicology and zygonic theory, the project will explore how blind children process, internalise, and recall music, as well as how piano teachers facilitate the development of effective memorisation skills.

This presentation will outline the rationale for the study, situate it within existing research on memorisation and inclusive music education, and describe the chosen methodology, including the use of applied musicology, zygonic theory, and reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) for data analysis. The project aims to contribute both to scholarly understanding and to the practical enhancement of instrumental teaching for blind children.

3:25 Wellbeing, Identity and Creative Expression

(Chair Nicola Tagoe)

3:25 Vanessa Stansall: Listening to mothers: an exploration of maternal voice and experience in early childhood music

New mothers interact with a range of childrearing advice, much of which is informed by dominant ideologies of idealized motherhood. This presentation explores how early childhood research and practice, particularly within music education, contributes to that constellation of advice. Research within early childhood music education has explored mothers' musical parenting but very little has addressed how mothers affectively experience being subject to the idealized ideologies of motherhood promoted in early childhood music education or the extent to which mothers' voices are represented in research and practice.

Drawing on insights from an ongoing doctoral project, this presentation highlights mothers' lived experiences in early childhood music groups and their broader engagement with ideologies of musical motherhood. Grounded in matricentric feminism and guided by an asset-based approach, the project aims to affirm new mothers as individuals of inherent value. Data collection is ongoing and involves serial interviews with mothers of children under one year old: walking conversations in phase one, followed by playlist-making and collage-making sessions in phase two.

I consider what questions the initial findings might raise for early childhood music practitioners in moving towards forms of practice which recognize the personhood of both the babies and adults with whom they work.

3:50 Janos Fabian: Experiencing the voice change during adolescence: Adult male vocalists' perspectives

During adolescence, the male voice undergoes significant physiological changes that greatly affect vocal range, timbre, and control (Sataloff, 2022). This study explores how these changes influence the psychological and emotional development of adult male singers and their sense of identity and long-term motivation to sing. Through semi-structured interviews with nine adult male vocalists (aged 25–70) from diverse musical backgrounds, first-hand reflections were collected on the challenges and opportunities they faced during puberty.

Thematic analysis uncovered key themes related to identity formation, emotional resilience, and the therapeutic role of singing. Importantly, participants highlighted experiences in choirs, school environments, and wider social contexts as crucial in either supporting or hindering their development. Stereotypes about boys singing often created obstacles, but ongoing vocal participation during adolescence helped many to reframe singing as a source of passion, self-expression, and career purpose. From a music education perspective, these findings are particularly important. Boys' access to consistent and sensitive vocal training during the voice change can significantly enhance their wellbeing, confidence, and sense of belonging. This research emphasises the urgent need for educators to create supportive, stigma-free environments that encourage boys' singing throughout adolescence. By providing practical and theoretical insights, the study advocates for pedagogical approaches that not only support vocal development but also foster positive identity formation and lasting musical engagement.

4:15 Tetiana Kysliak: Singing Together, Healing Together: Exploring the role of group singing in supporting the mental health, well-being, and social integration of refugees and immigrants – A Qualitative Study.

This study explores how group singing can support the mental health, emotional well-being, and social integration of refugees and immigrants.

Previous research has demonstrated the benefits of group singing for well-being and community cohesion and highlights the benefits of group singing across different populations (Clift, 2011, 2017); however, research on the direct impact of choir singing on a refugee community remains limited and often oversimplifies complex social problems or outcomes (Barlet, 2023). This investigation aims to enrich scholarly and practical understandings of music, specifically group singing, as a therapeutic tool for integrating and supporting forcibly displaced communities, while recognising both positive and challenging aspects of choir singing.

The study adopts a qualitative approach, drawing on semi-structured interviews with members of a Ukrainian refugee women's choir in Cambridge, alongside the researcher's autoethnographic perspective as both conductor and refugee. Thematic analysis is used to identify key emotional, psychological, and social dimensions of participants' experiences.

Preliminary findings suggest that choir participation enhances mood regulation, reduces feelings of isolation, and fosters belonging, cultural affirmation, and confidence in the future. At the same time, participants report moments of emotional vulnerability, underlining the complex role of music in processing displacement trauma and adapting to new environments.

This paper highlights the importance of culturally sensitive, trauma-informed approaches in music education and community practice. The study's findings can inform educators, community leaders, and arts practitioners in developing inclusive participatory singing programmes that support resilience and integration for displaced populations.

BIOGRAPHIES

Jiaqi Luo

Jiaqi Luo is a PhD candidate in Music Education at the UCL Institute of Education. Her research explores Chinese music teachers' understandings and attitudes toward multicultural music education (MME), with a particular focus on the gap between policy expectations and classroom practices in China's nine-year compulsory education system. Using a sequential exploratory mixed-methods design, she is currently conducting interviews with teachers across multiple provinces, which will inform the design of a large-scale national survey.

Jiaqi's academic interests include culturally responsive pedagogy, music teacher education, and comparative curriculum studies. Drawing on her experience as a music educator and performer, she aims to generate context-sensitive and actionable insights for both policy and practice. Her work contributes to international conversations on diversity, inclusion, and teacher agency in music education.

Chen Shiran

I am a PhD Candidate at the University of York, specializing in music education and decolonial approaches to guzheng pedagogy. My research explores the reintegration of Gongche notation into contemporary teaching practices, aiming to diversify music curricula and challenge Western-centric frameworks. With a background in guzheng performance and musicology, my combines practical musicianship with theoretical inquiry, drawing on mixed methods approaches, including grounded theory, experimental teaching, and gamified learning tools inspired by Kodály techniques. I have conducted fieldwork in the UK and China, engaging with diverse learners and educators to investigate notation systems' cognitive and cultural impacts. My work contributes to global discussions on culturally responsive music education, advocating for epistemic inclusivity. I hold an MA in Educational Leadership from the University of Manchester, a degree in Classical Music Industries from the University of Liverpool, and a BA in Music Performance from China, and I speak at international conferences, facilitating conversations on decolonising music education through innovative teaching strategies.

Michelle Robinson

Michelle Robinson is a PhD researcher in the School of Sport, Exercise and Health Science at Loughborough University. Her research explores the one-to-one music teacher-student relationship, drawing on developed frameworks from sports psychology, particularly the coach-athlete relationship, to better understand the impact relational dynamics have on performance and wellbeing in music education. Michelle has twenty years' experience designing and leading a wide range of music projects across schools, workplaces and community settings whilst also providing training experiences for music students. Working for both the Royal Northern College of Music and the Hallé, where she was part of the Hallé's Choral Team working as a choral conductor and vocal specialist with a range of choirs, both on and off the stage. As a result of her doctoral research and career experience, Michelle aims to bring psychological skills training with a focus on health and wellbeing into performance contexts.

Naomi Winterburn

Naomi is a second year full-time Education PhD researcher at Birmingham City University. Her research explores the impact of music on school culture at Shireland CBSO Academy with particular consideration to the nature of the partnership between the multi academy trust and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and what might be learnt from this model. Prior to her PhD, Naomi had a diverse career in music as an instrumental teacher and as a producer for music charities and orchestras facilitating

opportunities for young musicians and managing projects between orchestras and schools. Alongside her PhD, Naomi continues to work with the music education and orchestral sectors in a freelance capacity.

Huilin Qi

Huilin Qi is a fourth-year PhD student in School s of Arts and Creative Technologies (now including the former Department of Music) in the University of York, supervised by Dr Pete Dale. After finishing her bachelor's degree in Musicology in 2018, Huilin became a school music teacher for one year, teaching grade one pupils in a Chinese public primary school. After that, she completed her master's degree in music performance (vocal) in China in 2019-2022. Huilin's PhD research project is a comparative study of music teacher preparation in China and the UK, exploring the differing expectations of music teachers in these two countries and comparing the way trainee teachers are prepared for those expectations.

Jie Li

Jie Li is a pianist and piano teacher with nearly 20 years of international teaching experience in Beijing, Singapore, Melbourne, and the UK. She has worked with students of all ages and backgrounds, inspiring creativity, confidence, and a love of music. Jie received her undergraduate degree in Music Education from Hunan Normal University and holds advanced diplomas in performance and teaching, including ATCL (Trinity College London), ALCM, and LLCM (London College of Music). She is currently completing her MA in Music Education at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and has recently submitted her dissertation, which explores how private piano teachers in Singapore navigate parental and student expectations in exam-driven contexts. Her research highlights how teachers employ role-mediated strategies to balance exam achievement with student autonomy, emotional well-being and long-term musical growth. Grounded in these insights, Jie's teaching and scholarship emphasise student-centred and creative approaches that integrate tradition with innovation in music pedagogy.

Dorothy Li

Dorothy Li is an educator, piano performer and researcher in music. She is currently in her final year as a PhD student in the Faculty of Fine Arts and Music, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne, Australia. Her dissertation studies include the learning and teaching of imagery in music practice and performance. She teaches in the Master of Music Performance Teaching degree program, performs as a piano soloist and has published and presented at conferences internationally in the areas of imagery, cognitive psychology, and qualitative methodologies.

Claire Bowes

Claire Bowes is a second year doctoral researcher at the University of Roehampton, supervised by Professor Adam Ockelford and Dr Megan Loveys. A piano teacher who is blind, Claire's personal experience has shaped her research focus on music memorisation for blind children. She holds a Masters in music psychology for education, performance and wellbeing. Claire is passionate about ensuring equal access and inclusion for anyone learning an instrument.

Yuhan (Cathy) Liu

Cathy Liu is a graduating MA Music Education and Performance student at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. Her research focuses on the application of free improvisation in primary school music education, particularly how improvisational activities can support students' creativity, autonomy, and collaborative learning. She conducted a practice-based action research project in a Shanghai primary school, using classroom observation, audio analysis, and interviews to examine the application of free improvisation on young learners.

Cathy has experience teaching piano, voice, and group music classes. She is currently working at the Arts Troupe of the Shanghai Youth Center, a city-level institution representing Shanghai in performances and

competitions, where she teaches piano and vocal lessons, supports the choir, and assists with interdisciplinary rehearsals.

She aims to continue integrating improvisation-based strategies into music classrooms, bridging research and practice to inspire more creative and student-centred learning.

Vanessa Stansall

Vanessa is a PhD candidate at the Royal College of Music where she is an RCM Studentship holder. Her research takes a matricentric feminist approach to the exploration of the meanings of music for new mothers.

Prior to her doctoral studies, Vanessa gained a MA in Education (distinction) from the Centre for Research in Early Childhood, a PGCE from the UCL Institute of Education and BMus from Royal Holloway. She has worked as both a music and general teacher/practitioner in early years and primary settings in England and Spain for over 20 years. She currently works as for the charities Creative Futures and Sound Connections and is a trustee of MERYC England.

Throughout her research and practice Vanessa aims to counter deficit perspectives of children and families in musical contexts.

Janos Fabian

Janos Fabian is a PhD Music and Psychology researcher, Music Psychologist (MA) and Director of Music (PGCE, QTLS, BA).

Janos Fabian, originally from Hungary, has exhibited a deep-rooted passion for music throughout his life. He earned his BA degree in Solo Singing Teaching and Performing of Vocal Chamber Music from The Conservatory Bela Bartok of the University of Miskolc in 2009. Following this, he completed his PGCE in Further Education and Training at the University of Portsmouth and swiftly secured a position as a Music Teacher at St Edward's Royal Free Ecumenical Middle School in Windsor in May 2017, only two months before graduating.

Since September 2022, Janos has been serving as the Director of Music at St Edmund's School in Hindhead. Keen on continual self-improvement, he pursued an MA degree in Music Psychology in Education, Performance and Wellbeing at the University of Sheffield from 2019 to 2021. His MA dissertation delved into the topic of Boys' Singing, specifically exploring self-representation and identity affected by the change of vocal folds during adolescence.

Currently, Janos is engaged in his PhD in Music Psychology at the University of Leeds, focusing on 'Boys' Singing - the change of vocal folds during adolescence: the psychological impact on identity and motivation for singing activities', a testament to his commitment to advancing his understanding of music and its psychological aspects.

Janos is an active member of various professional associations, including the Royal Musical Association, Chartered College of Teaching, Society for Education and Training, Sempere: Society for Education, Music, and Psychology Research, and the European Society for the Cognitive Sciences of Music.

His research interests span a broad spectrum, encompassing boys' singing and musical development, boys' psychological development, performance science, musical identity, vocal acoustics, musical motivation and expression, performance memory, singing methodology, and music education.

Tetiana Kysliak

Tetiana Kysliak is a postgraduate student at Kingston University London. While in Ukraine, she had a distinguished career as a professional soloist, choral singer, conductor, and teacher at the National University of Kyiv, contributing to curriculum development and vocal pedagogy. She conducted several choirs, delivered masterclasses, and served as a jury in vocal competitions. She was awarded the title Honoured Artist of Ukraine by the President of Ukraine in recognition of exceptional professional expertise and contributions to national culture.

Since relocating to the United Kingdom, she has been directing the Ukrainian Women's Refugee Choir in Cambridge and has served as a vocal instructor at Lincoln University. She is committed to fostering

inclusion and intercultural exchange with the aspiration that her research will support and advance inclusive music education and community singing practices.

Zoom Link:

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