

Institution: Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance
Unit of Assessment: 33
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>Institutional context</p> <p>This submission represents the entirety of research conducted at Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance, and the information here covers both the institutional and the Unit of Assessment requirements. The mission of Rose Bruford College (RBC) is to achieve social and cultural impact by delivering the highest quality vocational training in the fields of theatre, live performance and the creative industries; our research focus aligns with this mission through work related to actor training, pedagogy, and performance and production. All our researchers are also teachers with full teaching loads in a teaching-intensive institution that provides performing arts training to a largely undergraduate student body. Research and teaching at RBC are interwoven: the work of our researchers in the studio and workshop feeds directly into the range of research outputs they produce, and vice-versa.</p> <p>RBC has progressively increased its research focus since its founding in 1950. In 2015 following submission to the Research Excellence Framework 2014, RBC sharpened its research focus with the establishment of its current research strategy to guide it through to 2022. This has allowed RBC to further develop its world leading research in contemporary performance practices, including theatre for young audiences, European and American acting techniques, scenography and performance lighting, and Stanislavski and his legacy. In addition to laying a strong foundation for continued research in these areas, we are developing new research areas such as digital performance and theatre and social change, aligned to our strategic plan and vision.</p> <p>RBC employs 45 academic staff on permanent academic contracts. There are 730 undergraduate students (including 115 online part-time), and 100 students are currently enrolled on a growing portfolio of Masters programmes. Six MPhil/PhD students are enrolled in a collaborative research degree programme run in partnership with the University of East London (UEL).</p> <p>Research is located in RBC's two Schools: Design, Management & Technical Arts, and Performance. RBC also has three centres: Theatre for Young Audiences; the new (2020) Centre for Digital Production, and the Stanislavski Centre for Contemporary Practice.</p> <p>Achievement of Strategic Aims for research and impact during the assessment period</p> <p>The strategic aims for research and impact were set out in RBC's strategic plan for research following our submission to the REF in 2014. The primary aim as set out in 2014 has been to establish a practice-led and sustainable research culture; RBC's research culture has continued to develop over the past five years in a way that reflects our identity: vocational, diverse, collaborative and inclusive. Our perspective is international and multicultural, with the potential for intercultural performance in both discipline-specific and interdisciplinary contexts.</p> <p>The size of our submission has increased by 50 per cent to 8.9 FTE since 2014, evidence we are delivering the aim set out in our research strategy to build capacity. Our strategy also</p>

prioritises development of our research in several areas including: the production of high-quality research outputs; the development of postgraduate programmes including a research degree programme; further supporting staff at all career stages to undertake research; the development of funding opportunities; and the development of partnerships in academia of international standing and the performing and creative arts industry at local, national and international levels. Highlights of achievements in these areas include:

Publication: the range and strength of the outputs included in our submission to REF 2021 reflect the progress that we have achieved. Our research strategy encourages practice research that falls outside traditional modes of scholarly output and research timelines, and examples of such long-term research projects are featured in our submissions, including publications by **Wilson** and **Harrison** both created over 15 to 20 year periods. All academic staff are encouraged to publish the outcomes of their research and scholarship, and mechanisms have been put in place to support this (please see section 2 for further information).

Research and taught degree programmes: In 2015 RBC entered into a postgraduate research degree partnership with the University of East London, following a previous arrangement with Goldsmith's, University of London. The programme has flourished over the past five years, including the recruitment of six students to date, and will continue to develop in line with RBC's growing capacity to provide strong supervision and an excellent postgraduate experience.

RBC received taught degree awarding powers in 2017 and has since developed eight postgraduate awards that are aligned with the institution's longstanding research interests. These include the establishment of MA/MFAs in Theatre for Young Audiences and Actor-Musicianship, and most recently (launched in 2020-21) an MA in Light in Performance. Other taught postgraduate programmes are currently in development, including an MA in Creative Practice for Social Change and an MA in Digital Theatre Making, linked to our Centre for Digital Production.

All undergraduate and postgraduate programmes incorporate a 'research orientation', in which creative practice is framed as a process of investigation, informed by established practice research methodologies in the relevant discipline. Students' learning is thus shaped not only by knowledge generated through staff research, but also by the creative practice research methods that staff themselves practise. Several students have gone on to postgraduate research degrees at RBC and elsewhere owing to this embedded research orientation in the programmes. Research objectives are discussed annually with academic staff as part of personal development reviews, including opportunities to make further use of research outcomes and experience in the curriculum and pedagogy of taught programmes.

Partnerships and impact: our strategy foregrounds industry partnerships and community collaborations as part of the research ethos at RBC. Our long-standing expertise in performance and design processes, community and applied theatre arts, new writing and directing has been complemented more recently by an embracing of new technologies working with external partners. An example of the development of successful research partnerships is 'The Round', led by Dr Nick Hunt and James Simpson, which gathers nationwide expertise in motion capture and digital production technologies, and is our first major successful research bid (Innovate UK, total project funding £489,405). Working through creative and professional partnerships is also

central to the strategy of the recently re-launched Stanislavski Centre for Contemporary Performance Practice.

Since 2019 RBC has implemented a series of mechanisms to ensure the long-term sustainability and vitality of its research environment, including:

- the appointment of RBC's first Professor of Theatre and Performance, whose role includes the promotion of the research agenda across the institution, mentoring and support for academic staff, and providing guidance in publication and research funding.
- The appointment of a dedicated Research Manager, whose role is to provide strategic, policy, governance and administrative oversight and support for research and research student matters within RBC. These two staff form the Research Office, and work closely with the Vice Principal, whose remit includes research.
- The establishment of research funding pools. These include the Research Acceleration Fund, which offers financial support on an annual basis to a specific research project or centre as well as an annual fund dedicated to providing small grants to help seed research and develop research activities.
- The establishment of support systems to enable staff to identify and apply more easily for research funding, such as RBC's subscription to GuildHE Research and its relationship with Cause4, a social enterprise that supports grant writing and fundraising for charities. Our relationship with Cause4 will enable our researchers to find alternative modes of funding outside of the traditional UK research councils, in line with the innovative, often community-focused research of the academic staff.

A restructure in 2018 impacted on research staffing during the review period and hence the ability to fully achieve all the 2014 aims. However, as the above actions demonstrate, RBC has since reinvigorated its research programme and support for research, and we are now well placed to continue to develop research as a key element in our institutional Strategic Plan.

Research Objectives over the next five years

RBC's Research Strategy will be fully reviewed in 2021, coinciding with the appointment of the new Vice Principal, Professor Mary Oliver in early 2021, whose remit includes research. This review will build on our previous strategy and include the further development of a sustainable research environment that prioritises the well-being of all researchers, research participants, collaborators and research stakeholders.

Further objectives include:

- To diversify our researchers and research support - with a specific focus on race, gender and disability. We look to ensure a level playing field through bespoke support and personalised plans for all staff members.
- To strengthen support for our scholars to become researchers, and to create additional time for staff who are already research active. A crucial element of this is the implementation of a workload allocation model (currently in development but delayed by Covid-19), which will ensure that a greater proportion of time will be dedicated to research. This new model will be fully implemented by 2022; the model will be flexible and bespoke to the individual, reflecting their needs and personal circumstances and the type of research they are undertaking.
- To strengthen support mechanisms enabling colleagues to frame their work as research and be researchers. This will involve additional training for relevant staff, including within

the PhD programme. A key goal of our developing research plan is to encourage and empower as many researchers as possible, and for more staff to have significant responsibility for research (see section 2).

- To build underpinning structures that enable research, including establishing charitable status/spinouts for specific research centres to allow for fundraising from new sources such as Arts Council England, Hamlyn and the Wellcome Trust.
- To extend the research degree programme in collaboration with the University of East London. A longer-term goal is to achieve research degree awarding powers, but in the meantime, plans developed in partnership with UEL include the further expansion of the programme as research capacity develops, the establishment of a professional doctorate from 2021, and support for academic staff who wish to undertake a research degree to do so.
- To ensure impact is embedded into research activities. Informed by RBC's overall mission towards community engagement and expanded access, our research strategy will prioritise the impact of research. We will seek to maximise institutional possibilities for research impact through tightly-focussed projects in a variety of arenas, as well as through public engagement with local, national and international audiences across age-ranges and socio-political contexts.
- To develop further the potential of RBC's facilities for research. RBC has world-class facilities in the field of theatre, live performance and the creative industries, including theatres, studios, lighting labs, digital suites, scenic workshops, design studios, wardrobe, production offices, rehearsal spaces, archives and collections (see section 3). These will be further developed and utilised in support of RBC's research objectives.

RBC is interdisciplinary in its approach to research, exemplified by our current major Innovate UK-funded project, 'The Round', which brings together practitioners and academics who are variously artists and technologists from the theatre, media and gaming industries. Our submission demonstrates the interdisciplinary nature of much of the research conducted by RBC staff, such as with Arts & Health collaborations (**Lobel** and **Dunne-Howrie**), Arts & Public Policy (**Patey-Ferguson**) and Arts and Social Geography (**Hunt**). Although now well-established in the RBC programme portfolio, and featured as one of our Impact Case Studies, Actor-Musicianship is also a clear example of RBC's commitment to interdisciplinarity.

RBC is fully committed to supporting an open research environment. RBC is a member of GuildHE Research, the research consortium for smaller and specialist higher education institutions, and in 2020 subscribed to its online research repository as part of our commitment to the open research agenda. This has enhanced our ability to make our research open-access, and showcase it to the outside world, and includes provision for the practice-based and non-traditional work which forms a significant proportion of our outputs.

RBC is committed to the principles and requirements of the Concordat in support of research integrity. Our policies and procedures for research integrity, ethical approval and research misconduct were reviewed and refreshed in 2020 and made publicly available on our website. We recognise there is scope for further work, particularly in the training and support for staff and students, and we will continue to engage with this agenda and to develop a research culture and environment with integrity at its heart.

2. People

Staffing and Recruitment Strategy: In its Strategic Plan, RBC is committed to recruiting and retaining a current, industry-engaged and diverse staff cohort, enabled and empowered to develop and challenge the students themselves and the wider industry. In part, this is being undertaken by encouraging and supporting staff to undertake practice research, and by reviewing how staff engage with the wider industry and remain 'current'.

As indicated above, RBC is a teaching-intensive institution and staff have high teaching loads. For this reason, a minority of academic staff had significant responsibility for research at the census date (headcount 11). Over the last two years, in line with its strategic plan, RBC has given research greater priority, meaning that recently-appointed academic staff on permanent contracts will either already have a successful research record or will have clear potential to have significant responsibility for research by the time of the next REF submission. Recent appointments of staff with a track record or research potential reflecting this recruitment priority include: in the School of Performance, Dr Topher Campbell, Raymi Renee, Dr Joseph Dunne-Howrie, Dr Karen Morash and Dr Aphrodite Evangelatou; in the School of Design, Management and Technical Arts, Marina Hadjilouca, Catherine Bedwei-Majdoub and James Simpson, who are pursuing doctorates or are post viva. Four of the eleven staff whose work is included in this REF submission are early career researchers who are new to RBC (Patey-Ferguson and Campbell) or to permanent academic roles (Dunne-Howrie and Simpson).

As set out in our research strategy, one of RBC's key goals is to encourage and empower all our academic staff to undertake research, and to increase the number of staff with a significant responsibility for research. RBC has extended and enhanced its programme to engage and support existing staff members in conducting research and scholarly activity. RBC also supports the research of its hourly-paid lecturers, through access to practical facilities, library resources and mentorship. While the Covid-19 pandemic has slowed somewhat the development of the activities planned, RBC is re-initiating research seminars (and other events for academic staff and research students) including the Symposium (discussed below).

New academic staff are mentored and supported during RBC's ten-month probationary period, which includes bespoke support to identify the most appropriate approaches and outputs to their research. In addition to the normal line management, this research mentorship occurs through progress meetings with the Professor of Theatre and Performance three times during the probation period. RBC continues to offer support to staff after their probation through an annual research appraisal scheme where aims are discussed, training needs are identified, and tangible goals are set. These appraisals and progress meetings also help inform staff development provision through feedback to the Research Committee. For staff with more research and higher education experience, RBC has criteria and procedures for the award of Professorial title (including visiting and emeritus), and Readerships.

To fulfil the research potential of all staff, RBC supports and encourages professional development activities, such as research-related training on publications, conference presentations and similar areas of expertise. Examples of research training for staff include 'digitising non-written materials', and 'practice-based research'. All academic staff were invited to attend two-day symposia on campus in 2017 and 2018 ('Practise, Reflect, Share: Ways into

Research'). All staff have access to LinkedIn Learning which includes research-related training courses. Staff who undertake or wish to undertake supervision of research students have access to the training programme provided by UEL for supervisors. The teaching timetable for the School of Performance allocates teaching-free days for individual staff to support research activity.

The Research Office sends email briefings to ensure research active staff and staff who wish to engage more fully in research are kept up to date on training and opportunities. Targeted emails based on calls for papers, specific funding calls, and so on, are sent to researchers and research groups aligned with those calls. Staff are supported to pursue doctoral degrees through the RBC/UEL partnership, which may be standard, or practice-based. One staff member, James Simpson, is registered on the programme. As mentioned above, a professional doctorate programme with colleagues at UEL is in development, which will provide another route for professional and research development.

In 2020, RBC set aside 40% of its annual research budget to support small research grants, large grants for projects in need of acceleration, and funding for research activities, such as conference attendance, networking, research training and preliminary archival work, among other areas. RBC actively supports staff in applying for external funding (four major bids submitted from 2020, with a successful bid from Innovate UK and a forthcoming decision from Arts Council England). The Research Office has established a peer mentoring scheme to support staff applying for research grants, including sessions for staff on applying for small grants and research funding from funders relevant to performing and creative arts; this was interrupted owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, and will be further developed in 2021 and beyond.

RBC established its annual Symposium in 2003, and it has run every year until 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic caused its cancellation. The annual Symposium is a platform for the initiation, development and dissemination of research and consists of workshops, performances, exhibitions and installations. Staff and students (both postgraduate and undergraduate) are given the opportunity to make presentations about their research based on the year's theme. The Symposium provides an opportunity to present work in a critical but supportive environment and facilitates interaction between students and staff across years and disciplines, as well as artists, companies and organisations from a variety of contexts outside RBC, both UK and international. It offers an important opportunity for the RBC community to interface with the profession and industry in a spirit of enquiry and practical investigation. The annual themes in the past have included 'Here, there, everywhere: making connections through Global exchange' (2014); 'Coming of the New: Revolution and Evolution' (2017); and 'Interactive Experiences: Playful Junctions and Journeys across Borders' (2019). Planning for the 2021 symposium is underway, which will include a day dedicated to PhD research (this was due to have taken place in 2020).

RBC has run regular research seminars entitled 'Regarding Research' in which staff share their research in progress and discuss methodologies. RBC has always had a community of Visiting Professors who enrich the research and teaching activities of RBC, through research presentations, training events and other activities, including at the Symposium. Our current cohort of Visiting Professors consists of Bella Merlin, Rosamund Bartlett, Tony Graham, John Martin, Anatoly Smeliansky, Paul Kleiman and Michael Walling.

Collaboration and partnership with industry is integral in the RBC ethos and the practice research focus of its staff means that impact is second nature. As referenced above, industry partnership and collaboration are central foci for future growth. A current example of such exchange is Simpson presenting his research at industry events (see section 4), leading to a rich network of links that includes the partner organisations in the Innovate UK funded project, 'The Round'. Simpson also writes regular columns and one-off articles for industry journals such as *Lighting and Sound International*, drawing on his research work. Annual staff appraisal procedures are currently undergoing review to ensure that innovation and impact activities are fully recognised and rewarded. RBC's Research Committee now has responsibility for the impact of research beyond academia, enabling pathways to stimulate and facilitate exchanges between academic and business, industry and public or third sector organisations.

Research Students: As noted above, RBC's research degree programme is run jointly with the University of East London (UEL). Students are enrolled at UEL and co-supervised between UEL and RBC, with the involvement of both institutions in the supervisory team. Recruitment has exceeded RBC's expectations, with a total of six postgraduate researchers, five of whom enrolled during the REF period. The majority of postgraduate researchers are enrolled part-time and the programme has not yet seen any completions (one student is in their writing up period).

The supervisory team includes a primary supervisor or Director of Studies, who may be from either institution, and at least one additional supervisor. The students work closely with their RBC supervisors in a close-knit environment and are fully immersed in RBC's academic life, using our specialist resources including the Library, technical resources and working with staff and students on practice research. For example, the research student Deepak Verma runs a weekly class for postgraduate performance students for ten weeks each year as a laboratory for his research. The research of our current postgraduate researchers includes investigations into virtual scenographic visualisations, installation art, and yoga and its integration into actor training, demonstrating the versatility of our academic staff in their supervisory roles. The opportunity to supervise has facilitated the retention and recruitment of research-active staff who can include research supervision as part of their portfolio of activities.

Students have regular supervision meetings with their supervisory team and progress towards submission is monitored by means of an annual monitoring review. The Research Committee at RBC oversees the progress of each student with a report made to each meeting. At RBC, the programme is overseen by an academic director and the research manager, who hold regular meetings with the students (currently virtually) as a group and one-to-one meetings as requested; they also meet regularly with the Link Tutor at UEL.

A key benefit of the collaboration is that students have access to the research and welfare/support services and facilities at both institutions. At RBC, research degree students have access to all the training and development opportunities that are provided to academic staff, and which includes the opportunity to contribute to RBC's annual Symposium. At UEL, support includes the Centre for Student Success, which provides tutoring on study skills and career guidance support from professionally trained careers consultants to support students in considering their career options. It also includes the series of research events and workshops held at the School of Arts and Creative Industries, and other schools at UEL, aimed at research

students. Research students have access to the training and facilities provided by the UEL Researcher Development Unit, which facilitates a variety of generic research skills training, as well as more specialist research or technical training. Examples of the courses on offer include research ethics; referencing; undertaking literature reviews; data management; thesis writing and viva preparation. Research students are alerted to regular training and development opportunities promoted by GuildHE, including their annual doctoral summer school.

The small but growing programme was successfully reviewed in November 2020 by both institutions and approved by UEL for continuation for the next five years. The review panel commended the programme, including the plans to develop the professional doctorate and the excellent support in place for the students on the programme.

Equality and Diversity: RBC's mission, values and strategic aims reflect our long-standing commitment to diversity and inclusion. Our core values are integrity, creativity and inclusion, and they are embedded in all that we do. To support our strategic aim to recruit and retain a diverse cohort of staff who are enabled and empowered to undertake research, we have an equal opportunities policy that covers all the protected characteristics, which is regularly reviewed. The Equality and Diversity Committee, reporting directly to the Senior Management Committee, oversees the policy and ensures it is implemented. The Professor of Theatre and Performance sits on this committee to ensure it pays due regard to research matters.

RBC also has the following policies relating to diversity and inclusion: adoption, dignity at work, fertility treatment, flexible working, maternity rights, shared parental leave, and a policy on transgender staff and students. RBC is aware of the importance of staff and student well-being and has a Well Campus strategy; it has run staff development sessions on wellbeing, and an Employee Assistance Programme is available to all staff. For research students, information is contained in the handbook and students are encouraged to seek help from the facilities available at either RBC (via Student Services) or UEL. As RBC has a small cohort of students, staff in the Research Office meet regularly with them to ensure that they are aware of and have access to the facilities they need.

The Research Office monitors the effectiveness of the activities undertaken from the perspective of research to ensure it is responsive to the needs of the staff. This will be particularly important as plans to diversify further are put in place. RBC has a relatively high proportion of staff on part-time contracts and/or who have caring responsibilities. In granting research support funds, we allow for costs associated with caring responsibilities and flexible deployment to be applied for.

Equality and diversity were at the heart of RBC's REF preparations as set out in the Code of Practice. Regular communication with academic staff ensured that they were able to raise matters impacting on their research. RBC's Research Committee determined an approach to the REF appropriate to a teaching-intensive institution, in which staff were able to self-declare whether they had significant responsibility for research, with the final decision taken by the REF Working Group (which had received training in equalities) on behalf of the Research Committee. Staff with significant responsibility for research were asked to propose which research outputs they wanted to have considered for inclusion; these were assessed by an external reviewer with no prior knowledge of the individual authors to inform the final selection. Nonetheless RBC is aware that the output portfolio for this exercise is not from as diverse a demographic as it would

like and whilst that is a result of the outputs available, not the selection process, this indicates that certain staff groups have greater opportunity to undertake and publish research. RBC will be working actively to resolve this as it further develops its research culture and activity.

RBC's Equality Impact Analysis has indicated that as was understood to be the case, there is a gender gap between research activity and the gender proportions across the College. As stated above, RBC is working towards a position where all new academic staff who join or become permanent academic staff are active in research, and that those on hourly-paid contracts are supported to engage in research. The Equality Analysis has also revealed that the demographic of staff active in research and publishing research is somewhat younger than for RBC as a whole. We will take account of this in the support that is put in place for research for colleagues who are at mid- and later-career stages and who have been engaged in teaching and scholarship. The data set relating to disability is too small to draw reliable conclusions, but nonetheless RBC will put in place facilities and other support for staff with disabilities, including for those who are dyslexic or dyspraxic.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Facilities and infrastructure: RBC has state-of-the-art facilities to underpin research in all aspects of theatre arts. Our facilities currently include the following: a 330-seat theatre-in-the-round; a 100-seat end-stage theatre; a black-box studio theatre; ten fully-equipped rehearsal, movement and voice training studios; four fully-equipped lighting design laboratories; a digital arts complex with two recording studios and offline video and audio suites (see below); a costume/wardrobe complex; a scenic workshop with specialist prop-making facilities; theatre design studios with computer-aided design facilities and individual workspaces; and stage management offices and production teaching studios. Staff and research students are encouraged to make use of these facilities in the development of their research projects.

RBC has made, and continues to make, significant efforts to ensure that the physical and digital resources are 'fit for purpose' and used effectively to aid staff and student research. RBC has a core of high-quality purpose-built estate that was built with capital support from HEFCE. Early in 2018 RBC was successful in a bid to the HEFCE Catalyst Fund for £941,352 towards a new Centre for Digital Creation and Production which opened in 2020. The Centre's teaching and curriculum development feeds into our pedagogic research focus and provides a space for our staff to explore research in relation to digital performance. The Centre's technical capabilities were central to our successful Innovate UK bid, led by Dr Nick Hunt and James Simpson.

New facilities in the Centre include two computer laboratories with workstations for advanced digital creation; one digital studio with motion capture, green screen, projection mapping and (in development) 3D audio. These complement existing digital facilities including two visualisation suites, two recording studios and two audio edit suites.

The RBC Library houses over 50,000 items to support the performance and design research and teaching, and also includes our Special Collections, an IT suite, academic support and equipment and music stores. This period since 2014 has seen an significant growth in the library's commitment to and engagement with digital resources, with approximately £16,000 budgeted for e-resources alone, annually. The e-book provision has grown from 100 titles in

2015 to 2500 titles in 2021. Regular inductions are held for researchers and PhD students throughout the year, and a well-read weekly email highlights for all students and staff the Library's existing and new resources.

The Special Collections have grown over the years and include many specialist research archives. The current holdings include:

- The Stanislavski Collection, comprising a core collection of books and other printed material (mostly in the Russian language), a photographic archive of more than 200 images, and a small collection of material on video and DVD, most of which relate to Stanislavski's own productions at the Moscow Art Theatre. This is regularly consulted by RBC and international scholars.
- The Archive of Clive Barker, an internationally-renowned scholar of contemporary theatre practice.
- The David Bolland Kathakali Archive, primarily an audio-visual collection devoted to Kathakali, the classical dance theatre of South India, and some material on other performing arts of Kerala.
- The Routledge Theatre Arts Archive that comprises publications of material connected to Stanislavski studies in the USA (on extended loan).
- The Archive of Jean Benedetti (1939 – 2012), biographer of Konstantin Stanislavski, translator, director, dramatist, theatre and acting historian and former Principal of RBC. This archive includes much rare material, including: works by Stanislavski and V.I. Nemirovich-Danchenko; Memoirs, letters etc. from actors and directors connected with the Moscow Art Theatre; documents and publications published by the Moscow Art Theatre including a recent donation of the two-volume *Moscow Art Theatre: One hundred years*.
- The Nick Chelton Archive, a significant collection of lighting designs and their implementation for the RSC, National Theatre, Almeida Theatre, London West End, regional theatres and many theatres and opera houses internationally, together with professional papers, production photographs and interviews.
- Theatre for Young Audiences Centre, an advocate for the sector and a resource for practitioners, scholars and students interested in this area of theatre practice.
- The Kate Crutchley archive. Crutchley was a director, actor and theatre programmer at OvalHouse from 1981-1991.
- The Noel Greig Archive (1944-2009). An influential actor and playwright, Greig co-founded The Brighton Combination, worked with The General Will and was a key member of Gay Sweatshop, later writing extensively for and with young people through Theatre Centre.
- The Theatre Centre Archive, archive of the influential and prolific young people's theatre company, founded by Brian Way in 1953 and still running today.

These collections (particularly the Greig archive and Bolland Kathakali films) generate regular national and international interest and visitors, including researchers.

Organisational infrastructure for research: Academic oversight of research within RBC takes place via the Research Committee, which reports to the Academic Board and which is chaired by the Vice Principal, who has research within their remit. The membership includes representation from both the academic schools and a research student representative. The Vice Principal is a member of the Senior Management Team and both the VP and the Professor of

Theatre and Performance sit on Academic Board, ensuring that research is fully integrated into RBC's academic infrastructure. The Board of Governors includes individuals with expertise in research leadership (Professor Mike Saks) which ensures that strategic decision-making involves research in a teaching-intensive institution.

Research income: Whilst RBC has not had extensive research funding in the previous REF cycle, the successful research grant from Innovate UK was an encouraging start and RBC will look to build on this with an increased focus on generating research income with RBC as the lead applicant. RBC is regularly called upon as participants in research bids, and several applications have been submitted to major funding bodies, including the AHRC.

Income received by RBC in support of research but not eligible to be included as income includes the Erasmus+ funded 'Canon of Technical Theatre History' project in which the College is partner, which has a pedagogic research aspect and is public facing. The total project is funded for a total of €449,561 over three years, with RBC receiving €47,120. It includes nine partners across seven countries, and RBC is co-lead institution on the Teaching Methodologies project output.

As noted above, RBC is a member of GuildHE Research, the research consortium for smaller and specialist higher education institutions. This organisation is a collegiate peer-to-peer network of 30 comparable institutions that supports its members to embed a positive research culture, develop robust research and innovation strategies, and establish appropriate infrastructure through which they can drive forward their ambitions. It provides researchers at all stages with opportunities to network and collaborate with peers across the UK and from a broad range of disciplines, facilitating activities face-to-face and virtually, including an annual doctoral summer school, training events, and opportunities to forge new projects and communicate their research.

4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society

Research collaborations, networks and partnerships; relationships with key research users, beneficiaries and audiences:

RBC's three research centres actively participate in research collaborations. **The Stanislavski Centre for Contemporary Practice**, curated by director Irina Brown, creates an international platform for investigating, exploring and sharing innovative and experimental developments of Stanislavski heritage, manifested in the creative work of theatre-makers from a wide variety of disciplines. The Stanislavski Centre was relaunched in 2019, building from the legacy of RBC's previous incarnation of the Stanislavski Centre (led by Professor Paul Fryer). The Centre now focuses on practice research related to actor training, workshops for industry professionals and students, and publications. Examples include a 2019 series of masterclasses by acclaimed director Anatoly Vasiliev focused on Ludic and Metaphysical Theatre techniques. The masterclasses were attended by a cohort of 12 leaders in actor training and directing and included a public talk at RBC's Rose Theatre.

The Stanislavski Centre's activities prior to its relaunch included fora and symposia, such as a forum presented by Stanislavski Centre and the University of California Riverside, in

collaboration with the University of Westminster, held at Pushkin House in 2015. Guest speakers included Katya Kamotskaia and Noah Birksted-Breen (Sputnik Theatre).

The Centre ran an annual lecture programme (sponsored by Routledge) including, in 2018, the lecture given by Professor Andrei Malaev Babel from the University of Central Florida, who talked about his work on Demidov. The *S Word Symposium: Stanislavski and the Future of Acting* took place in March 2016 at RBC, co-convened by Professor Paul Fryer (then RBC) and Professor Bella Merlin (University of California Riverside). The event saw over 100 registrations and 42 presenters giving papers and practical sessions (including four from RBC).

'Contemporary Directions' was a series of research talks under Stanislavski Centre auspices, with practising directors including Mike Alfreds (2015) and Simon Usher (2016).

The **Theatre for Young Audiences Centre** works with a wide range of arts organisations and theatre companies, and its research has had impact locally and internationally on these organisations, as well as the young people and communities they serve. The cascading of the centre's methodologies amongst international practitioners, including world-leading companies such as Punchdrunk (UK), Helios (Germany) and Al Vaccio (Mexico), has led to continued impact for thousands of children worldwide, as well as for arts professionals and practitioners in those countries. This impact is further documented in one of the Impact Case Studies. Other TYA collaborations include *Early Years LAB* (previously branded *Dream: the joy of creating*); the 2019 session focussed on the work of La Baracca and was a collaboration with The Place (London), while *Our Island* was a collaboration with the Primary Shakespeare Company.

Harrison's research and practice in the area of Actor-Musicianship has pioneered a distinctive and unique approach that focusses on the integration and interrelationship between acting and music making. His research, exemplified through his monograph *Actor-Musicianship*, has played a significant role in defining and shaping this area of international theatre practice, set out in the second case study 'Embedding Actor-Musicianship in international training programmes and performance practices'.

The **Centre for Digital Production (CDP)** is a hub for digital production, established in 2020 with support from HEFCE and industry partners including Autodesk, Cast Ltd, Disguise, ETC (Electronic Theatre Controls) Ltd., Philips Lighting and White Light. Enabling new technological research and knowledge exchange with the cultural industries, CDP has a dedicated Head (**Simpson**) whose remit includes interdisciplinary research, research fundraising and public engagement.

RBC is a partner institution in the EU-funded project 'A CANON of Theatre Technical History' (2019-2022) (please see section 3). In 2018 the Czech Arts and Theatre Institute invited RBC staff to join an international (UK, US, Czech) group of professionals and academics to participate in the launch of the 36Q project of the Prague Quadrennial. The project explored digital technologies in performance design and participating staff collaborated on a multi-media installation. The resulting work, displayed in the Lapidarium, a museum of sculpture, in Prague, was developed through workshops with an international group of students. Academic staff from RBC (**Hunt** and **Sandys**) collaborated with professional practitioners from the US and the Czech Republic, investigating creative strategies for the use of sound, light and video projection to

reinterpret the museum for a public audience, further developing Hunt and Sandy's established research in interdisciplinary creative practice.

Our researchers draw from longstanding, deep and interconnected relationships with performance companies, including **Wilson** with Gandini Juggling (which resulted in his research output *Juggling Gandini*), **Hansjörg Schmidt** with Clod Ensemble & Fevered Sleep; **Patey-Ferguson** with the London International Festival of Theatre, **Lobel** with The Sick of the Fringe; **Harrison** with Oily Cart; **Dunne-Howrie** with ZU-UK Theatre, which resulted in the commissioned research report 'Body Brain Bingo' (included as a research output). **Dowling** has longstanding research collaborations with: arthaus.berlin; National Theatre Institute, Connecticut; Uzbekistan Institute of Arts and Culture, Tashkent, Uzbekistan; Shota Rustaveli Theatre and Film Georgia State University in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Other research exchanges with industry during the REF period include professional work directly undertaken by lighting designer **Schmidt** including Requiardt and Oliver's *Dadderr*s (touring, 2020); *Dido and Aeneas* (Stormen Opera, Norway, 2019); *On The High Road* and *Placebo* (Clod Ensemble, 2018); musical direction work for Oily Cart by **Harrison**; and **Lobel's** digital project Sex with Cancer, which was built in collaboration with interactive story designers Coney and a steering committee of health care professionals. **Lobel's** commissioned work *Kicking Up Our Heels* with Dr. Emily Underwood-Lee worked in collaboration with GOSHArts and medical staff at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

The 'Library of Light' is an evolving research project imagined by a group of artists and academics, led by Hansjörg **Schmidt** and artist Joel Joelson. The vision for the 'Library of Light' is a repository for the interdisciplinary investigation of light – a living archive that demonstrates the breadth of lighting practice across disciplines and contributing to our understanding of light as a creative medium and its impact on cultural history. In addition to a growing physical and digital archive, the Library of Light has been the springboard for research projects such as *Traces*, **Hunt** and **Schmidt's** interactive light installation. *Traces* has been presented to academic audiences at conferences and to the public as part of a digital and kinetic art fair. The 'Library of Light' is a manifestation of RBC's strength in performance lighting research.

RBC staff are part of some of the most pressing nation- and sector-wide conversations on arts training, the conservatoire sector, and innovations in production and digital theatre making, exemplified by **Dowling's** membership and leadership in the Federation of Drama Schools and in research spaces such as the Society of Teachers of Alexander Technique. **Simpson's** leadership across spaces supporting digital theatre and production provides a further example.

RBC engages in the local community in the London Borough of Bexley and takes the opportunity to present its research and practice research at local events. The most recent examples were public events held at the Bexley Book Buzz Literary Festival in February 2020 where **Harrison** and **Wilson** introduced and discussed their books to an audience of approximately 35 people.

Contributions to the research base

Conferences and Symposia: The annual Symposium (referenced above) is both a platform for staff and student research and for external panels, performances and presentations. These have included an Uzbek production of *Hamlet*, a talk by leading sound designer Gareth Fry and a

Forum on Privilege and Diversity hosted by theatre company ZU-UK. The Symposium is open by invitation to academic and professional communities.

RBC held two international conferences, 'Music on Stage' organised by Dr Jane Schopf (2016) and co-convened with **Campos** (2018). The conference title 'Music on Stage' was in both instances kept intentionally wide to ensure that all aspects of performance and genres were included and collaboration welcomed. The conferences saw an attendance of approximately 60 researchers and both conference proceedings were subsequently published as books by Cambridge Scholars, one of which was co-edited by **Campos**. Several of the publications included in RBC's REF 2021 submission have resulted from these conferences.

Campos was Convenor for the Theatre and Performance Research Association scenography working group from 2016 to 2018. **Dunne-Howrie** has also contributed to TaPRA and is a member of the TaPRA Documenting Performance Working Group and of the International Federation of Theatre Research (IFTR) Working Group on Intermediality. **Simpson** is a regular contributor to the International Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality conference, and the PLASA Conference. **Dowling** has presented at conferences including: in China – the second Shanghai Theatre Academy International Forum on Actor Training and Education (November 2018); in Poland – Gardzienice, Festival of Wandering Theaters (September 2019); and in the UK – University of Kent International Platform for Performer Training (January 2020). These presentations contributed to her practice research output submitted to REF 2021. **Hunt** has been co-convenor of the Scenography Working Group of the IFTR since 2014. He convenes the working group for each annual conference, and has organised interim meetings of the working group during the Prague Quadrennial in 2015 and 2019.

Journal Editorships: **Campos** is an editor of the journal *Stanislavski Studies*; **Wilson** is Associate Editor (Training Grounds) of *Theatre Dance and Performance Training Journal* (2014-present) and regularly contributes short-form pieces to that section of the journal. He is a member of the Editorial group of *Total Theatre* magazine. **Dowling** is a member of the editorial board of *Theatre, Dance and Performance*. **Hunt** is associate editor of the *International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media*. **Simpson** is a regularly-contributing columnist to industry-focused *Light and Sound International*, *Future Technology*, *Protocol Magazine* (US) and *Digital Immersive Technologies*.

PhD supervision and examining: RBC's current research students are supervised by **Campos**, **Dowling** and **Hunt**. **Hunt** has also acted as a PhD examiner at the University of Leeds (twice) and the University of New South Wales, as well as for Masters by Research candidates for the University of Leeds and Edith Cowan University, Australia. **Dowling** has acted as examiner for PhDs at Trinity Laban and Goldsmiths College, and acts as an external supervisor for a student at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Keynote lectures: **Simpson** provided the keynote lecture at the Disguise Webinar series (2020) and at Zip Scene, Budapest (2019). **Lobel's** UMS Digital Residency demonstrates an equivalent of a Keynote Speech as do his showings of work at major theatres including La Jolla Playhouse (San Diego) and Vooruit (Ghent). **Hunt** has presented his research both in the UK and internationally at conferences throughout the REF period, including the International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR) Conference in Stockholm in 2015 with a paper *Fugitive Light*:

seeing stage lighting through production photographs. He was invited to give the keynote presentation entitled 'Technology is Supremely Unimportant' at the conference *On the New Technical Literacies at Play Within Contemporary Live Performance* at Canterbury Christ Church University. In 2017 he was invited to contribute to the *Thinking Light* conference at the University of Leeds, where in collaboration with RBC colleague **Schmidt**, he created the performative installation *Traces* (see above). **Dr Kathrine Sandys**, now head of Theatre Practice and Principal Lecturer at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, was employed at RBC between 2014 and 2018. She published a chapter 'In the Ruins of the Cold War Bunker' (included as a reserve output in REF 2021), which featured in a subsequent Radio 4 documentary *Cold Art* (premiered September 2018).

Peer review: **Lobel** is a member of the AHRC Peer Review College, and regularly sits on panels for artist grants and has instituted policies to improve feedback, as well as the health and well-being of applicants. In 2020, he served on the committee for the Katherine Araniello Bursary Fund (for Disabled Artists), DIY Bursaries, and the Adrian Howells Award for One-to-One Performance. **Hunt** is regularly invited to review book proposals and manuscripts by publishers in the UK and USA, including Routledge, Focal Press, Macmillan and the Wesleyan University Press. Topics have included lighting design, performance design and stage props. He has been invited to peer review for the *Theatre and Performance Design* journal, and *ETUM*, (the *E-Journal for Theatre and Media*).

Board Memberships: **Wilson** is a trustee of the arts charity CurvingRoad (2013-2021 including chair 2016-2019 and co-Chair 2019-21). **Lobel** has been a Board Member for Fierce Festival (since 2015).

Awards: **Simpson** won the RSC Digital Fellowship (2019), and the award for Immersive Pioneer by *Immersive Perceptions* also in 2019. **Wilson** was a finalist (6 out of 108) of the Society of Theatre Research Book Prize 2016 for *Juggling Trajectories*.

Engagement with diverse communities: RBC is proud of its work in this area, as evidenced above with the TYA focus on disabled audiences and communities, amongst other initiatives. This goes alongside RBC's broader interests in curriculum development, for example its Certificate of Higher Education in Theatre Making and Leadership delivered in collaboration with GRAEAE, and its BA Theatre & Social Change. Both these programmes enable teaching and research related to disability justice, access and inclusion, with the long-term goal of supporting disabled-led research initiatives. RBC is broad in its passions and interest areas, and the work of the unit shows a research pattern which is diverse in its scope and audience, encompassing work from across the theatre industries and communities, with a particular renewed focus on social justice, race, gender, sexuality and disability.

RBC's research-active staff are highly engaged with and contribute to academic, professional and public discourses across a wide variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields. While practice research and industry engagements are particular strengths, RBC's research community is also recognised as making significant contributions to the research base through more traditional means via journals and conferences, nationally and internationally.