

<b>Institution: University of Salford</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 33</b>
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p><b>Unit context and structure</b></p> <p>Music, Performance and Film research at Salford has been characterised in this cycle by exploratory creative practices, technological innovations, collaborations with industry and community partners, as well as a number of invitations to external researchers and stakeholders across our disciplines to be part of our findings and their impacts. Research in these areas is a longstanding strength at the University, with RAE/REF submissions since 2001. For our 2021 submission, the Unit is comprised of researchers in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Music:</b> 5.8 FTE, including research in composition, interactive music technology, recording, instrument interfaces and popular music (<b>Brissenden, Hart, Spelman, A.Williams, B.Williams, Wise</b>)</li> <li>• <b>Performance:</b> 6.85 FTE, including research in interactive, intermedial, small scale, applied and comic performance, technical theatre and digital curation (<b>Adams, Matthews, McCormick, Sant, Scott, Talbot, Wilkie, Wilson, Zezulka</b>)</li> <li>• <b>Film:</b> 3.0 FTE, including research in Chinese language cinemas, self-reflexive European filmmaking and the industrial formation of Marvel Studios (<b>Flanagan, Kosmidou, Willis</b>).</li> </ul> <p>This active and collaborative group of researchers has contributed 5 books, 5 edited collections, 28 journal articles, 28 book chapters and 15 Practice as Research (PaR) projects to their respective disciplines during this REF cycle, as well as 20 individual compositions - 3 premiered by the BBC Philharmonic (<b>A.Williams</b>) and 9 studio CD recordings including for Blue Note (<b>B.Williams</b>).</p> <p>Music, Performance and Film research is located within the Arts, Media and Communication Research Centre (AMCRC), which supports and governs research activities across the School of Arts, Media and Creative Technology (SoAMCT). Both the School and Centre have supported the recruitment and development of staff, leading to growth in the number of researchers submitted to this assessment (18 individuals in 2021, compared to 12 in 2014) and a vibrant, open and collegiate research environment has emerged from the University's investment in research-active staff in our areas. This has resulted in hosting large-scale academic conferences (Theatre and Performance Research Association Annual Conference 2017 – over 300 visiting researchers), plus a range of smaller scale symposia and events. A strong feature of research in Music and Performance has been the development of PaR, supported by the establishment of an interdisciplinary research group: the PaR Centre of Excellence.</p> <p><b>Research strategy and achievements 2014 – 2020</b></p> <p>The strategy articulated in the REF2014 submission to UoA 35 (Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts) was to intersect with the establishment of MediaCityUK - an event which placed Salford at the centre of one of the largest hubs of digital content creation in the world. The strategy aimed to take advantage of this opportunity in order to develop collaborations and partnerships, opening up research opportunities and income sources to create impactful outcomes through innovations with emergent technologies, furthering knowledge as to how the 'digital turn' impacts on, and is transforming, our disciplines.</p> <p>This strategy has been implemented across the areas of research submitted here. In Music and Performance in particular, research in digital culture and its applications has been a significant area of development. Across all three areas, collaborative partnerships have been established during this cycle and will sustain beyond 2020, for example with the BBC Philharmonic, HOME Arts Centre and Ridiculusmus Theatre. Research income has also diversified, with funding from sources including the British Academy, Wellcome Trust, Maltese Government, Arts Council England and British Film Institute. This in turn aligns with the current University and School</p>

strategic focus on industry collaboration and research that engages with the new possibilities and challenges of the digital age.

In Performance, a notable example of the digital focus is **Scott's** research, exploring the intersection of digital and performing practices, which since 2014 has contributed 10 outputs to the discipline, including articles, PaR, book chapters and a monograph. Equally, **Sant's** research in digital curation and documentation of live events and establishment of the Digital Curation Lab at Salford are a key part of research in this area. Also, in the performance area, a subject-specific aim from 2014 was to develop research in the area of interaction and participation in performance. This has been furthered through research conducted by **Adams, Matthews, Talbot** and **Wilson**, including a chapter by **Talbot** developing ideas about intimacy and risk in immersive performance, an article by **Wilson** and PaR produced by **Adams** and **Matthews**. There is also a continuation of successful research in clowning and comedy, which develops from outputs **Talbot** submitted in 2014 and has been supported through the recruitment of **Wilkie** (editor of Comedy Studies journal since 2014), whose research contributes significantly to the discipline both through original writing and edited collections of essays. Other themes have emerged through recruitment of research-active staff following REF2014, including **McCormick's** work in applied theatre and ageing/dying, which resulted in the key text *Applied Theatre: Creative Ageing* and **Zezulka's** research, which addresses often overlooked areas of our field in the processes of collaboration and creation in technical theatre and design.

Music research has shown clear growth in areas related to digital creativity and industry collaboration. At the same time, key areas of strength for Music, which in 2014 were in popular and critical musicology and in composition, especially for classical ensembles, have continued to flourish. The British and Irish section of IASPM (The International Association for the Study of Popular Music) held its conference in 2019 in Salford; Salford popular musicologist **Wise** collaborated with Visiting Professor Philip Tagg in founding the Network for the Inclusion of Music in Music Studies; and Popular Musicology has become a cross-disciplinary area through collaboration with researchers from other Units in hosting the Purple Reign International Conference on Prince in 2017 at the University, in collaboration with Middle Tennessee State University. **Spelman** also collaborated on an edited collection with researchers from the School on The Arena Concert. Composition for classical ensembles continues in strength, but emphasis has shifted away from brass and wind music towards contemporary classical genres. A new strand in interactive technologies and new musical interfaces has emerged in the work of **Brissenden** and **Hart/A.Williams**.

Film studies is a well-established area of research at Salford and has developed in significant ways during this cycle. A core strand of engaging and impactful research has been pursued by **Willis** through his ongoing role as Senior Visiting Curator: Film at HOME Arts Centre in Manchester. In addition to this, **Flanagan** and **Kosmidou** have published widely during the period. Notably, Flanagan's co-authored book *The Marvel Studios Phenomenon* was published by Bloomsbury in 2016 and described as 'an important industrial analysis and history' by the Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television. In addition, Kosmidou has published a range of outputs, which cross film and cultural history, with a focus on cinematic representations of civil war, while also engaging in local-authority funded workshops in public schools in Greece that addressed the use of film in teaching.

#### Future research directions

Moving forwards, the strategy for the Unit is to develop research that opens up new areas of scholarly study, through exploring innovations in creative and technological practice and through collaborations with stakeholders across our disciplines, both nationally and internationally. The following are key areas of focus:

- the intersection of emerging digital technologies and performance/creative practice (Music and Performance)
- exploring marginal and overlooked identities and practices in music, performance and film making (Music, Performance and Film)
- participatory, collaborative and interactive music and performance practices (Music and

Performance)

- PaR in music and performance, including documentation and dissemination (Music and Performance).

This strategy aligns with the direction of the School, which changed its name from the School of Arts and Media to the School of Arts, Media and Creative Technology in 2020, signalling a concerted move towards research and teaching that engages with emerging technologies in creative ways. In addition, our strategy is informed by Salford City Council's Culture and Place Partnership, established in 2020, which aims to prompt significant changes in the next cycle, specifically through cultural activity and its 'intersections with other industries and strategies, needs and aspirations across the city'. As much of our research is through creative practice in this City, and with our campus at the heart of proposed changes to cultural and physical spaces in Salford (see Section 3), we envisage our strategy being developed in tandem with this partnership that includes the University, Arts Council England and Salford City Council.

### Research impact achievements and future impact strategy

Our collaborations with industry and community partners prompt focus on real-world applications of research. The expertise in Music and Performance in researching through creative practice leads to outputs being publicly shared with non-academic audiences, addressing questions in the making and presenting of creative work and its intersection with new technologies, health, climate change and urban environments.

Our REF3 submission has arisen from Music, reflecting the established nature of music research and the reach of our partnerships. **A.Williams'** work on non-standard accents in classical singing culminated in his opera with Ian McMillan: *The Arsonists*. This work received national media attention and led to several similar projects including 5 new commissions by professional music ensemble, Psappha, and a translation into a Yorkshire accent of *The Barber of Seville*. **B.Williams'** work in producing and engineering GoGo Penguin's CDs for Blue Note received worldwide airplay and sparked a new genre name - 'acoustic electronica' – whilst also changing practices for capturing and recording the jazz trio. Both case studies demonstrate substantial reach to diverse audiences and reflect the strength of our researchers' creative expertise and exploration of innovative techniques, which attracts collaboration with industry partners. These research projects reach into a range of spaces, changing audience perception and awareness, creative practice and generating a legacy of findings that can be taken up and used by other practitioners, extending their impact on the discipline's future.

Support to generate impact from our research is provided by a School Impact Coordinator, who works with researchers to develop annual impact action plans, with 5 currently in place for research taking place within this Unit. Internal funding has also resulted in music research with impact that will develop into the next cycle, notably **Hart's** and **A.Williams'** Paynter project, which developed an interactive digital platform for collaborative composition and **B.Williams'** Low 4 recording studio - a project with the potential for considerable impact on music venue infrastructure in the Manchester/Salford region.

In Performance, research impact is currently being tracked through a range of projects including:

- **Adams'** ongoing research, where performance practice intersects with current scientific thinking about water resource management, leading to greater engagement with, and understanding of, conservation and environmental issues (submitted as part of REF3 in UoA12).
- **Matthews'** work on VR documentation, influencing professional practice in capturing small-scale performance work
- **McCormick's** *Death, dying and performance* project, demonstrating impact in shaping and shifting attitudes towards the subject
- **Talbot's** virtual clown project, employing combinations of digital technologies and clown practice to improve the wellbeing of isolated individuals

These projects are united in their explorations of new, hybrid modes of performance practice,

offering fresh ways of making and presenting that have the potential to influence industry practice while also benefitting their audiences and other stakeholders.

Impact in the area of Film is mobilised through the research-informed curatorial practices of **Willis**, in collaboration with HOME and a range of other organisations, including the British Film Institute, Hong Kong International Film Festival, Cervantes Institute and International Anthony Burgess Foundation. Through his work with HOME, co-curating and programming 23 special film seasons, the annual Viva Spanish and Latin American Film festival and retrospectives, including tours around the country and over 200 public facing events, **Willis's** research has shaped viewing habits for cinema-goers in Manchester and beyond. His collaborative work has directly informed programming practices at HOME and other venues where the seasons and events have been shown. In addition to this, **Kosmidou's** ongoing work in the use of civil war films in schools and their integration into learning materials, informing teaching practice in this area.

### Supporting interdisciplinary research

The PaR Centre of Excellence, convened by **Matthews** and **Scott**, prompts interaction between different disciplines in its focus on research conducted through creative practice. The PaR Centre supports and makes visible this work, as well as fostering connections between practice-based researchers across SoAMCT. This was evidenced in a recent exhibition of PaR for the University Festival of Research in July 2019, which included public exhibits of work by practitioners in Media, Music, Dance, Creative Writing, Visual Arts and Performance. The Festival of Research was established in 2018, as an annual event to support the visibility of research across the University and has proved a valuable space for sharing and exchanging outputs, ideas and processes for our researchers. The Digital Curation Lab, directed by **Sant**, is an interdisciplinary centre, focused on digital modes of creation and curation - a place for all University of Salford activities associated with the field of Digital Humanities to be brought together in a collaborative environment. Though newly formed (in 2019), the lab is already opening up opportunities for sharing research through internal and external events, as well as supporting postgraduate study in related areas and hosting the Digital Research in Humanities and the Arts (DRHA) conference in September 2020. In addition to these ongoing research projects, which are developing impact in a range of ways, projects also involve collaboration with colleagues in the areas of science and health research, including the Salford Institute for Dementia and Ageing.

### Promoting research integrity and an open research environment

To support research integrity, new ethics processes and digital infrastructure have been established during this cycle. In a development of the existing processes that were in place for ethics approval, researchers across our Unit now review ethics applications, with Chairs of Ethics Committees liaising with panel members in relation to all aspects of ethical conduct. This shared responsibility for ethical research practice is an important part of ensuring research integrity.

Throughout this period, researchers in this Unit have engaged in practices that contribute strongly to an open research environment: firstly, leads of research groups work closely with colleagues in scholarly communications and research data management to disseminate policy and good practice. This includes liaising on Open Access issues specific to PaR outputs and feeding this into relevant consultations (e.g. UKRI). Secondly, all researchers in the Unit have ORCID identifiers that are linked to the institutional repository, making their research outputs more easily discoverable and accessible. Thirdly, a major innovation in open research practices has been led by our researchers via an open online database of PaR established in 2017, using the University's data management platform, Figshare.

In contrast to previous REF cycles, all those who research through creative practice have Figshare accounts for disseminating outputs. Through the work of the PaR Centre of Excellence, processes, workflow, guidance and training have been established to enable use of this platform and now all research conducted through creative practice is open, searchable and accessible for other researchers, through collections including a range of textual and audio-visual materials. To



date, researchers in this Unit have published 15 PaR outputs in this way and our PaR page on Figshare has accrued 60,096 views and 12,086 downloads, attesting to how much this research is being viewed and accessed in the 3 years since it was established.

## 2. People

### Staffing strategy

Investment in people has been core to developing the research environment in this Unit since 2014. Seven of the nine performance researchers whose work is submitted in REF2 have been hired since the last REF (**Matthews, McCormick, Sant, Scott, Wilkie, Wilson, Zezulka**), as a direct result of a staffing strategy of recruiting research-active staff. They joined **Talbot** and **Adams** to form an active and engaged group of early and mid-career researchers. All staff are employed on permanent contracts, supporting the sustainability and stability of research over this period. Of those that joined as lecturers during this period, two (**McCormick** and **Scott**) have been promoted to senior lecturer, reflecting the recognition offered to the achievements of research-active staff. In addition, these staff have taken on significant responsibility for developing the research culture (**McCormick** – performance research lead; **Sant** – director of the Digital Curation Lab; **Scott** and **Matthews** – PaR Centre of Excellence conveners and **Scott** – Postgraduate Researcher (PGR) Director 2017-19).

Alongside Performance's strategic investment in research-active staff, Music has maintained and developed existing strengths in popular and critical musicology and composition and developed significantly in the area of music technology and recording. We have supported existing members of staff to become research-active, with three of our submitted staff members (**Brissenden, Hart, B.Williams**) gaining PhDs during the REF period. The submission in Film represents a maintenance of staff numbers researching in this area, alongside the development of a new generation of film researchers who have joined the University during this period and who contribute to the new BA (Hons) in Film Production.

### Staff support and development mechanisms

Staff are supported in developing their research through a range of strategies, including bespoke training packages, sabbatical schemes and internal funding, all of which have been vital to research activity during this period. Not including sabbaticals, £23k of internal funding has been awarded to support public engagement, generation of impact and conference attendance. In addition to this, **Matthews** and **Scott** both benefitted from the Vice-Chancellor's Early Career Scholarship – a 2-year programme providing mentorship, training and £2k worth of funding. Through this scheme, **Scott** was able to develop PaR in intermedial place-making in East Salford (submitted in REF2) and supplement this with £1k of HEIF funding, alongside £1.5k of internal research impact funding to develop the aspects of the research that intersect with community partners, the Broughton Trust. **Matthews** combined this internal funding with a grant from Arts Council England to develop the research project, through which her small-scale performance piece *The Ballad of Isosceles* has been developed and documented (also submitted in REF2). Other researchers in performance have benefitted from University impact funding, including **Talbot** (£1.5k for developing outputs from the Virtual Clown project).

The School runs an annual sabbatical scheme, where research-active staff, with outputs that have been internally peer reviewed at 3\* or above, can put forward a proposal for a programme of research activity. Proposals are reviewed and judged by a panel of senior researchers in the School, with successful applicants granted 5 months of research leave in the following academic year. Four researchers within the Unit were awarded sabbaticals to conduct research during this REF period (**Matthews, McCormick, Scott, A.Williams**), which have been crucial in the development of PaR outputs (**McCormick** – *Death, Dying and Performance* project, **Matthews** – *The Ballad of Isosceles*, **A.Williams** – *Northern Voices* project), alongside written outputs (**Scott** – two chapters for *Intermedial Theatre* (2019)).

Staff can apply for up to £500 per year for conference attendance and those presenting at events are prioritised. This has enabled researchers to present across the world, offering keynotes in Australia (University of New South Wales – **McCormick**), speaking at international

conferences in Stockholm (IFTR – **Scott**), Helsinki (SAR – **Matthews**), Utrecht (Society for Intermedial Studies – **Scott**) and Tallinn (International Humour Studies Conference – **Talbot** and **Wilkie**). The University support fund is also available to researchers to apply for money to support pilot project costs and research trips/field work. In Music, **B.Williams** has been supported to attend the Art of Record Production conference in 2017 (Stockholm) and 2019 (Berklee, Boston), alongside two researchers at the start of their PhDs. **Hart** was supported to attend the Nordic Educational Research Conference in Copenhagen and the Athens Institute for Education Research conference in 2017, as well as the 2019 British Education Research Association conference in London.

### Supporting the career development of researchers

The alignment of support, workload allocation and mentorship for research activity within the newly established Salford Academic framework means that those within the Unit who identify research as a primary part of their career pathway are now supported through a more formal professional development process, including the three-year plans that are submitted by all research-active staff. This allocates research workload on a consistent basis relating to an individual's past achievements and future plans. Equally, the process outlined in the University's Code of Practice for REF2021 is designed to support colleagues from all backgrounds to develop their research careers. This has been particularly successful in establishing a strong and active group of 'next generation researchers', many of whom have gained new support for their research through the allocation of time, training and mentorship provided by more senior researchers in the group. Staff three-year research plans have informed discussions and objective-setting with line managers within the existing annual Performance and Development Review process.

Within the research group, a collegiate and supportive environment is generated through systems of informal peer review, in writing workshops and training specifically for the curation of PaR outputs. These opportunities are provided through funding offered from the AMCRC to research groups and has also supported our invitations to senior researchers, such as Professor Sally Mackey and Professor Robin Nelson, to share their expertise in PaR, which has supported early career staff in developing processes for disseminating their research effectively. Researchers meet regularly (at least once a term), to discuss funding plans and specific bids, to support presentations by staff researchers and to hear external speakers. Furthermore, the outputs of creative research, in the form of performances, installations, operas and practical demonstrations, are always well supported and an important part of our thriving research culture.

These formal and informal support mechanisms intersect with centrally supported research mentorship for all research-active staff, alignment of performance development conversations with research aims and targets, central research training (as detailed in the institutional-level statement) and the creation of an environment within the Unit for researchers to develop, refine and test out research ideas. This includes the aforementioned research seminar series and collaborations where researchers with more developed profiles work with early career colleagues, for instance **Hart** working with **A.Williams** on the Paynter project and next generation researchers collaborating with **Matthews** on her *Ballad of Isosceles* PaR project.

### Ensuring an excellent postgraduate research experience

Supervision in the School is organised in teams, which include a primary supervisor, co-supervisor and personal tutor. The three points of contact for the student ensure that there is support for their work and wellbeing, diverse perspectives in play as well as providing crucial development opportunities for staff new to supervision, through the role of co-supervisor. The central training, provided by the Doctoral School for postgraduate researchers, is combined with a School programme of events and seminars, including an annual graduate training week, opportunities to take part in organising seminars and events, as well as subject-specific content through masterclasses and research group seminars. There is a School Coordinator of Postgraduate Research who liaises with the Doctoral School, as well as research group leads within the School. Postgraduate researchers are integrated into the research events and activities of the Unit through attending and presenting at these events. They are encouraged to

attend external conferences through a School fund that offers them up to £300 a year to support conference presentation, in addition to central funding. Postgraduate students are given the opportunity to contribute to teaching and learning at UG and PGT level in the Unit to provide valuable training experience for those wishing to secure a permanent academic position after they graduate.

In 2019, the performance pathway at Salford was awarded its first AHRC North-West consortium Doctoral Training Partnership place and, in 2020, was awarded a second funded AHRC place. During the census period, Music also benefitted from an AHRC Northwest Consortium funded PhD studentship for **Hart**, who is now employed full-time as a lecturer. A further AHRC-funded place was awarded to Pavel Prokopic for his research in film practice. The award of these four fiercely competitive and prestigious bursaries demonstrates real growth and development in the quality of our PGR provision. In addition, all successful candidates pursued PaR projects, which underlines the expertise of the staff involved in this field. A further AHRC-funded PhD, undertaken at the University of Manchester, was co-supervised by **Willis** and explored the distribution and exhibition of Chinese language films in the UK.

In addition to external funding, the School runs a yearly 'Pathway to Excellence' Scholarship. During this period, it has resulted in 5 doctoral candidates in this Unit being supported. The new MA in Contemporary Performance Practice (established in 2017) has, alongside the well-established MA in Music, consistently fed candidates through to apply for and register on PhD programmes, primarily engaging in PaR methodologies. Equally, the increase in research-active staff is attracting excellent postgraduate researchers to our subject areas, which in turn enriches our research culture.

Overall, the number of postgraduate students is high given the size of the submission, with 34 PhDs awarded in the Unit over the census period – more than twice the 15 degrees awarded during the last REF cycle. We also currently have 9 music researchers registered on the practice-focused Doctor of Musical Arts programme. This programme is important in recruiting students from the brass and wind band areas, maintaining our long-standing strength in performance and composition in this field. In addition, we have successfully implemented a PhD by distance learning, with four candidates currently studying in this way, all from North America.

### Equality and diversity

In embedding inclusion, equality and diversity in our Unit, we actively follow and enact the University's vision to '*create an inspirational, inclusive learning and working environment, celebrating the diversity of our University community in our everyday conversations*'. This is particularly supported by cross-disciplinary research groupings, such as the 'Women in Research' group - a peer-support network, which operates in the School to create spaces for research by women to be visible, but also to explore the specific needs of women researchers and to respond to these with mentoring and training opportunities.

The Unit includes colleagues at a range of different career stages and levels (9 lecturers, 6 senior lecturers, 1 reader and 2 professors). 44% of the researchers submitted to this Unit are women, nearly double the 25% proportion in the 2014 submission. In addition, nearly a third of researchers submitted are on fractional contracts, which attests to the support such colleagues receive for conducting their research. During the production of REF2, an equality impact assessment determined that 41% of outputs are attributed to women (-3% compared to our staff submission) and 8% of outputs are attributed to staff from a BAME background (-3% compared to 11% BAME staff in our submission). We recognise that this reflects our lower proportion of female and BAME staff at higher grades and that there is still substantial work to be done to address systemic issues contributing to under-representation of staff with protected characteristics, which we are committed to addressing in the next cycle.

A factor of our research environment that will support this aim is that many of our ongoing research projects have equality, inclusivity and diversity designed into them. For example, the ACE-funded project with Psappha being led by **A.Williams** will be the first time that Nigerian

Pidgin has been set to contemporary classical music, featuring the creative writing of one of our English PhD students. In addition, in January 2020 **A.Williams** collaborated with PhD student Rakesh Joshi to create a cross-genre piece for Indian choir and string ensemble to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Gandhi's birth; other PhD projects include a Yoruba opera (for premiere in 2022). A commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is particularly evident in the recent Celebrating Women in Global Cinema project, a year-long programme of films and events curated by **Willis** and the head of film at HOME, Rachel Hayward, that aimed to 'explore and challenge the place and space of female filmmakers from a variety of cultural, social and political perspectives'.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### Income

Music, Performance and Film researchers have generated £325k of income from a variety of sources during this REF cycle to support their projects. Within this, £200k is research income in the scope of REF4b requirements and has been awarded to support five individuals: **Talbot's** virtual clown project; **Willis's** curated seasons of films (various written submissions comprising underpinning research submitted in REF2); **Sant's** work with the National Centre for Arts in Malta; projects examining jazz culture across Europe (Whyton – *left in 2015*); and work on developing new mechanisms for collaboration with community cultural and heritage organisations contributing to urban regeneration within Salford (Slee – *left in 2019*).

**Sant's** work as the Artistic Director of the National Centre for Arts in Malta (Fondazzjoni Ċentru Għall-Kreattività) has intersected with research into digital documentation and curation, in collaboration with the Centre, and is supported by funding from the Maltese government. This project represents a long-term creative partnership with a large arts organisation, where research meets, informs and impacts on the creative practices created and shown, supporting our long-term goals to be outward-facing, collaborative and industry-focused in our research. In his collaborations with HOME and other organisations (detailed below), **Willis's** research-informed curatorial and programming practices have attracted funding from the British Film Institute to support touring, widening the impact of this work. In addition, funding from the Hong Kong and Economic Trade Office has supported the dissemination of this practice and the films curated.

Whyton was PI on a HERA-funded project in collaboration with academics from Denmark, Norway, Austria and the Netherlands plus the University of East Anglia. The project studied practices within jazz cultures across these countries to facilitate cultural exchange and understanding of the variety of identities and traditions within European jazz culture. The aim of Slee's AHRC-funded project 'Building the Hive in Broughton' was also to create a space for knowledge exchange, this time between the University and the wider community within Greater Manchester, to support the development and sustainability of a centre for creativity and the arts within a culturally diverse community.

External research funding has supported our strategic focus to explore the influence of digital technologies on our respective creative disciplines. Examples are the British Academy/Leverhulme award **Talbot** received to develop virtual clown practices in conjunction with Claire Dormann (a visiting fellow at the University's Institute for Dementia and Ageing) and funding from Arts Council England for **Matthews' PaR** in small scale and one-to-one performance, which developed a strand focusing on Virtual Reality as a mode of documenting such performances.

Since REF2014, practice-based researchers have received £125k in funding supporting their artistic practice, and commercial income related to their PaR, not included in REF4b. This includes £86k of Arts Council England funding applied for by our researchers as individual artists (**Adams, Matthews, A.Williams, B.Williams**), reflecting our core strengths in research that is conducted through making creative work, which is disseminated primarily to non-academic audiences. This generates both wider impact and significant insights in our areas of speciality.



The Unit has also benefitted from significant contributions in kind, as part of its collaboration with external partners, including access to space, professional performers and specialist equipment.

### Infrastructure and facilities

Music and Performance researchers are physically positioned in the New Adelphi building, a state-of-the-art facility opened in 2016, representing £55 million of investment in the arts at the University and comprising technical resources, performing and rehearsal spaces that are vital to the practice-based research we undertake. Film researchers are located at another specialist facility – MediaCityUK – where technical spaces and equipment allow for research in media practices and mediated performance making.

Situated within New Adelphi is The New Adelphi Theatre, which is a crucial resource for our practice-based researchers. It also aligns with Salford's wider Strategy for Creativity, Culture and Place in its contribution to the city's 'vibrant and sustainable creative ecology', through programming public events and the connections it is forming with local community groups, such as DIY Theatre – a company of performers with learning disabilities based in Salford. Established as a public-facing venue for performance in 2017, the 3 years ensuing have opened up a range of possibilities for our practice-based performance researchers, with work by **Adams, Matthews, McCormick** shown in the venues, alongside wraparound activity related to their respective research projects and events that have allowed for collaboration between researchers, industry partners and other academics in the field and for the development of practice-based findings represented in REF2.

The New Adelphi Building's facilities mean that the Music directorate boasts the largest collection of commercial-standard recording studios in the HE sector, with five complete Live and Control room pairings and a control room attached to an acoustic performance space suitable for large ensembles. In 2020 work began on converting Peel Hall, a 300-seater concert hall located on the University's main Peel Park Campus, to include an acoustic treatment and control room for orchestras and large ensembles. We also benefit from outside spaces with which we partner – in particular Low 4 studios which is run by **B.Williams**. This emphasis on recording has led to our researchers recording Psappha, the Manchester Camerata, the Manchester Collective, as well as GoGo Penguin, Everything Everything, Dutch Uncles, and jazz ensembles for the Blue Note and Gondwana labels. Much of this work has been presented at the Art of Record Production conference, with 8 papers representing Salford music research group's recording PaR over the census period. It has also contributed to the practice-based elements presented in REF2 and **B.Williams'** impact activities (REF3).

As the above testifies, the creation of the spaces and facilities in the New Adelphi building has had a hugely beneficial impact on research in Performance and Music and feeds directly into our strategic focus to develop research that furthers creative practices in our area, making use of emergent technologies in our field, opening these out through the theatre venue and our activities with local communities. An example of the creative applications of our infrastructure is a current postgraduate researcher's work which draws on the capacities of new motion capture technology and software to conduct research in improvised movement practices. The new flexible studio theatre space is also regularly used for symposia and research events, alongside performances by **Adams, Matthews, McCormick** and **Talbot**, enabling us to open up the processes and findings of our research to fellow researchers and non-academic audiences. The New Adelphi building itself has been employed regularly since its opening to host large research events such as the 2017 annual TaPRA conference and smaller symposia, such as two Salford Comedy symposia (2014 and 2015) and the Sick! Festival symposium (2019). Equally, investing in the New Adelphi Theatre as a public-facing programmed arts venue has opened up the possibilities for research in this Unit to be visible, impactful and collaborative in its nature. Moving forward, the theatre programming continues to intersect with staff research and is a significant longer-term investment that, in the vision of the Salford Crescent Masterplan, helps to 'celebrate and enhance the area's wealth of green, blue, cultural and heritage assets and establish strong physical links between the University campus and surrounding communities'.

The existing infrastructure and facilities at MediaCityUK continue to develop as spaces for our

research to be conducted and presented. Film research is housed at this campus, where its associated programmes in film studies and film production take advantage of the specialist spaces and equipment made available for students and researchers in this area. Specifically, the Digital Performance Lab has been occupied by **Matthews** and **Scott** for PaR performances and spaces at MediaCityUK continue to be used to exhibit PaR, alongside music and performance research seminars. Postgraduate researchers also use these spaces for practical experiments with technology and performance facilitated by the available resources. MediaCityUK is also the home of the new Digital Curation Lab, which is directed by **Sant**.

Investment in physical infrastructure and facilities that support us in achieving our strategic aims is set to continue into the next cycle, as the Campus Masterplan is developed, including the planned refurbishment of the historic Maxwell Hall as a music and events venue and the opening of a 'visioning' research and innovation facility. This new investment is a key part of Salford's Strategy for Culture, Creativity and Place.

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

##### Collaboration and partnerships

Music, Performance and Film research activities are guided by the University's Industry Collaboration Strategy. Researchers in the Unit build networks and external partnerships relevant to their research in a range of ways. A three-day workshop project around VR performance in 2019 was facilitated by the New Adelphi Theatre and brought industry practitioners (Lundahl and Seidl) and researchers into an active conversation about immersive technologies and their use in making art and performance. Another example is Sick! Festival, where an individual's research interest (**McCormick**) aligned with the festival's theme for 2019 and was brought together under the auspices of the New Adelphi Theatre as part of a joint symposium, including research presentations and performances.

A key research collaboration and partnership is that between the University and HOME, primarily activated through the secondment from 2015 onwards of **Willis** to the role of senior visiting curator of film at the Arts Centre. This 2 day per week commitment throughout this REF period facilitated **Willis's** research in film and its dissemination through his curation activities at HOME. **Willis's** research (recognised through a promotion from Reader to Professor during this REF period) is an example of outward-facing, collaborative and industry-focused activity, establishing a vital, long-term project where film research becomes active and accessible to the public.

Other key collaborations and partnerships are with Ridiculusmus Theatre Company, with whom **Talbot** has collaborated throughout this cycle. Acting as co-investigator on a project supported by £40k of Wellcome Trust funding (2017-2019), this research informed a new production and tour of socially engaged comic theatre by the company. This also led to four separate residencies and performances at Salford by the company, contributing to the vibrancy of the research environment across this REF period. In addition, **Talbot's** research in virtual clowning is aligned with ongoing collaborations with researchers at Edge Hill University, with whom he developed the State of Play symposium (2018), which explored clowning practice through a range of events and discussions. The outputs of his interdisciplinary research into virtual and live 'Elderclown' practices represent new ways of using comic practices in the context of social care provision and dementia care, aligning with our strategic focus on both the development of new modes of creative practice and the opening up of such practices to a diverse range of stakeholders.

Other collaborations with performance practitioners include **Matthews'** work with Adam York Gregory, as well as **Zezulka's** research exploring the processes associated with lighting design, programming and technical theatre, alongside her longstanding collaboration with the Association of Lighting Designers and field work with Red Ladder Theatre Company in Leeds. **Zezulka** also co-convenes the Performing Light network, an informal network of light scholars and practitioners across theatre, dance, opera, music and fine art. At the heart of developing strategic partnerships with practitioners and venues is the New Adelphi Theatre, which supports

research events and PaR, including **Adams'** recent collaborations with Professor Miklas Scholz (Chair in Civil Engineering at Salford, and Professor in Water Resources Engineering, Lund University, Sweden), a research project which was supported by the New Adelphi Theatre and Arts Council England funding. The PaR conducted through this collaboration explores 'speculative non-fiction' as a mode of presentation through which to weave together scientific facts and personal stories, exploring our relationship with water in light of the climate crisis.

Music's partnerships are based around the two core strands of Recording Studies and interactive music creation. The University has a memorandum of understanding with the BBC Philharmonic and this has resulted in a concert series – branded as 'The Red Brick Sessions' – taking place in Peel Hall and at the New Adelphi theatre which has included **A. Williams'** opera *The Arsonists*, commissioned by the BBC Philharmonic in partnership with Salford City Council. This has developed into a research partnership in the last 2 years (2018-2020), resulting in the Paynter project, a collaboration between **Hart** and **A. Williams**, BBC Philharmonic players, and a local primary school to create an interactive tablet-based model for collaborative composition. During the BBC Philharmonic's Red Brick Sessions, music researchers and students tested BBC Research and Development's interactive smartphone-based technology, "Notes", which is now in use in the Philharmonic's Bridgewater Hall concert series. **A. Williams** is creating content for this interface, to be investigated as part of a broader study into the language around contemporary music and audience development. Brissenden and A. Williams have also collaborated with researchers from the University's own Acoustics Research Centre on projects for the Manchester Science Festival and the results of these collaborations can be found in the group's Figshare collections.

There are also ongoing collaborations with the Vonnegut Collective, the Manchester Collective and Psappha. Within the Music Group, the Adelphi Contemporary Music Group provides a forum for experimental work and works in progress and includes regular contributions by Music Research group staff (**Brissenden, Hart, A. Williams, Wise**) as well as regularly featuring music by postgraduate researchers. In line with our strategic aims, composition has become more collaborative and interdisciplinary – **A. Williams'** compositions have seen collaboration with researchers from Acoustics, from English and Linguistics, as well as with technologists from within music (**Hart**).

### Contribution to culture and society

Collaboration with a large-scale international arts organisation (Spazju Kreattiv, Malta) has been a feature of **Sant's** research during this period, where exploration of practices of digital curation, programming and documentation has also impacted on the programming of events at this national arts centre and the legacy such events leave behind.

Our research is also embedded in, and impacts upon, local communities in Greater Manchester. Both **Scott's** and **Talbot's** practice-based research has been conducted in collaboration with the Broughton Trust, a local charity engaged in training, support and community development in East Salford. Here, **Talbot** has worked with community groups and dementia cafés in developing his virtual clown project, while **Scott** conducted a project working with young people and using digital mixing practices to express and explore relationships with the River Irwell, in the wake of the floods of 2015. This led to further workshops at community events and to **Scott** being part of the Salford Cultural Organisations Network, hosting this group of local creative organisations in meetings at the University and contributing to Arts Council England bidding. The Red Brick sessions (**A. Williams**) are also predicated on engaging the local Salford community with classical music.

In another Salford-based initiative, a collaborative PhD between the University and the Lowry Theatre was established in 2019, with the researcher now contributing to the Stage Directions project, an Arts Council England Youth Performance-funded programme, which focuses on theatre-making with young people in Salford across 12 schools and 3 community settings. Through our research activities, we connect with our immediate local community and this is reflected through Sarie Slee, one of our former dance research colleagues, going on to take up

the role of Head of Salford City Council's Culture and Place Partnership. In this role, researchers from the Unit continue to connect with Slee's vision for Creativity, Culture and Place, particularly through the types of 'place-making' activities described above.

### Contribution to the discipline

Performance, Music and Film researchers at Salford make significant contributions to the discipline through their wider activities, for example:

- As co-convener of the Performance and New Technologies working group at TaPRA and co-host with **McCormick** of the annual conference in 2017, **Scott** has gone on to be elected and serve as conference officer on the executive committee of TaPRA
- As co-conveners of the PaR Centre of Excellence at Salford, **Matthews** and **Scott** have been invited to share their expertise with researchers at various other institutions, including the University of South Wales, University of Essex, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and University of Leeds
- **Scott's** monograph *Intermedial Practice and PaR* was shortlisted for the TaPRA Early Career Research Prize in 2018 and she co-edited a special issue of the International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media in 2020, when she was also appointed as the reviews editor for the journal
- **Hart** has been appointed convener of the Arts Education research strand of the British Educational Research Association and was awarded best ECR paper as well as best abstract at the BERA (British Educational Research Association) 2019 conference
- **Flanagan** and colleagues were invited to the University of Oxford to talk about Marvel Studios, in the wake of the publication of their book on this topic.

**Wilkie** is a longstanding editor of the journal *Comedy Studies* (since 2014) and **Sant** is an associate editor for the International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media and serves on the standing committee of the DRHA (Digital Research in the Humanities and Arts). **Kosmidou** co-edited the Special Issue themed 'Studies in Cultural Memory' for the *Journal of Media and Cultural Politics*, published in June 2016 and **Willis** regularly operates as a visiting professor at the University of Auvergne. He also co-edits the book series 'Spanish and Latin American Filmmakers', is a founding member of the Chinese Film Forum and along with other academics and practitioners, curates a series of academic and public-facing events in this area through the Forum.

Performance, Music and Film researchers peer review for various journals, namely *Research In Drama Education (RiDE)*, *International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media (IJPADM)*, *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training (TPDT)*, *Platform*, *Contemporary Theatre Review*, the *Scottish Journal of Performance*, *Contemporary Music Review*, the *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, the *Journal of Media Practice* and the *BERA Review of Education*. In addition to this, **Scott** and **Talbot** review book proposals for Bloomsbury and Routledge and **Wilkie** for Palgrave Macmillan.

The Unit has hosted seminars, symposia, research events and conferences (e.g. TaPRA, Sick! Festival symposium) throughout this REF period, inviting external researchers to present work, alongside showcasing the research conducted within our research groups. Also, this Unit and its researchers have responded with resilience and energy to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, showing our agility and determination to continue our work, looking to digital solutions to facilitate this. The Performance Research Group Seminar Series went online in April 2020 and presented six panels with a total of 11 external guest speakers, 9 internal speakers to an international audience of 250, that included participants from Australia, USA and France. **B.Williams'** collaboration with The Manchester Collective has resulted in the release during lockdown of their first commercial recording, produced by **B.Williams**. Meanwhile, **A.Williams** has been generating content for individual players of the BBC Philharmonic during lockdown and his work with Psappha went ahead but shifted online. Finally, in May, **Talbot** and The Performance Research Group, in partnership with New Adelphi Theatre and Enableus, Sheffield, hosted the *Ridiculusmus* Virtual trilogy, which included specially curated screenings, expert talks



and discussion.

These continued connections with, and contribution to, the wider research base, related industries and local communities are part of the collaborative, outward facing focus of our research, which sustains even when we cannot physically be together. It has resulted in a range of research events being hosted at Salford, generating a lively open space for research to be shared and to come into active conversation with that of other researchers in the field. All our researchers will ensure that this open, generous and collegiate environment for sharing research continues.