

**Institution: University of Sussex**

**Unit of Assessment: 33: Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies**

### 1. Unit context and structure, research, and impact strategy

At Sussex, Music and Drama form a new and dynamically evolving unit. We have doubled in size since 2014 and now comprise the equivalent of 15FTE. Our diverse unit includes musicologists, theatre historians, composers, performers and dramaturgs, performance theorists, software writers, and even a meta-magician. The unit prides itself on its critical acuity, its historical attunement, and its engagement with technology. Each of these elements (criticality, history, technology) is simultaneously an occasion for scholarly reflection and an invitation for imaginative creation. For us, scholarly reflection leads to creative invention while imaginative production is the empirical test of theoretical abstraction: this symbiosis is fundamental to the way we engage research as critical practice. 'Critical practice' names our understanding that all performance cultures are intrinsically social; it designates our belief that the task of performance research is to intervene in the social by expanding the imaginative resources of a society; it drives our commitment to provide innovative critical and creative tools for new and evolving circumstances and environments.

Three overlapping interests define the unit and fuse theory and practice, research, and creativity:

- The critical identifies a sensibility that cuts across all our work. It describes our belief that research often involves risk – that to be critical is to put established understandings and practices into crisis so that they can be seen afresh. We engage with failure, understanding it as a condition that underpins creative exploration and the production of knowledge. This is articulated in different forms: in McEvoy's destabilising of the *coup de théâtre*, for instance; or the ways in which the improvisational practices of Bright and Kiefer ride the edge of chaos; while Bailes understands absence and dramaturgical precariousness as the very possibility of dramatic force and innovation. When we deploy the critical categories of class, race, gender, ability, environment, sexuality and age we do so not as 'perspectives' but rather as fundamental ruptures in how we know and perform.
- The unit's approach to the historical is never antiquarian. For instance, Price's investigation of popular theatre purposefully works to recover the popular from its association with populism; Barnett's landmark history of Brecht's Berliner Ensemble (2015) traces a living legacy of radical experimentation rooted in Brecht's historic company. We write counter-history so as to reveal hidden aspects of our recent past. So, both Haddon and Stranger reveal an erased Black poetics at the heart of Post Punk and within the culture of the Black Mountain College. The historical also informs the musical compositions of Hughes and Ficarra, not as citation but as a generative, living musical language.
- The technological is an elastic orientation attuned to performance culture as a history of techniques and instrumentation. It is also a recognition that today's technically saturated environment is a fundamental challenge and recalibration of sensory engagement and understanding. The technological can include Till's investigation of the relation between early opera and science; Corrieri's deconstruction of the techniques of conjuring; Fowler's work on the technological intermediality of Katie Mitchell's theatre as well as Eldridge, Kiefer and Magnusson's design of new instruments, new notational systems, and coding as composition and improvisation.

Although closely connected in disciplinary and practical terms as performing arts, this unit was structurally divided until the faculty-led merger of the three Sussex Humanities schools (between 2018-20) into a single, multidisciplinary School of Media, Arts, and Humanities (MAH).

Previously, Drama and Music were situated in two different schools: English; and Media, Film and Music (MFM). As a small group Drama was submitted with English to UoA27 in REF2014.

The subsequent strategic growth of performance at Sussex – identified as a priority in 2014 – has taken place at undergraduate, postgraduate and faculty level, Drama doubling in size with 4 new FTE and Music with 5 FTE appointments since 2013. This has been enabled by substantial institutional investment, in particular the refurbishment of the university's Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts (ACCA, formerly Gardner Arts Centre), the appointment in 2016 of its Creative Director, Laura McDermott, and several new performance spaces across campus. Faculty working in performance-based research have produced four significant monographs; open access digital essays, interviews, and recordings; catalogue and performance programme essays; over thirty chapters, articles, and edited collections and more than twenty substantial practice-based outputs. Combined, we have generated nearly £1.01 million in grant income over the past seven years (detailed below). Such developments have led to this combined submission to UoA33, a move which reflects growing momentum in collaboration. The emphasis upon theory-practice based research is evident in our three specialist research groupings, previously funded by the respective schools: the Centre for Research in Opera and Music Theatre (CROMT, established 2006), the first UK research centre of its kind, promoting creative, critical-theoretical and historical research in this expanded field; the Experimental Music Technologies Lab (EMute, 2014) connecting research taking place in Music, the Sussex digital Humanities Lab (SHL), and Informatics; and Sussex Performance Events and Research (SPEAR), a curated programme attracting world-leading artists and scholars to contribute to a programme of politically engaged, public-facing performance research events. Faculty from across the unit collaborate with ACCA through post-graduate events and consultation on its live art and theatre programming.

### Research Strategies

Since 2014 the unit has sustained four interconnected research strategies: extending the scope of interdisciplinarity; the development of practice as research; the expansion of expertise around opera and music theatre; and increasing and deepening external partnerships in order to reach diverse communities and foster impactful research (the latter is detailed under 'Impact').

### Interdisciplinarity

The extension of well-established interdisciplinary approaches to research, in accordance with Sussex's institutional history of innovation, has partly been achieved by appointments in music technology that have generated close relations with Sussex Humanities Lab (SHL), a digitally-focused research hub in which Sussex has invested £3 million since 2015. 'Digital Technologies/Digital Performance' is one of SHL's four key research strands, exploring aspects such as real-time sensors and algorithmic processes, motion capture and live coding, artificial intelligence and life, and new modes of performance emerging via locative and distributed media. Unit member Norman (2010- 2018) was one of three SHL directors, and two of the new Music Technology appointments were previously SHL research fellows (Kiefer, Eldridge), ensuring continuing research initiatives between the unit and SHL, such as Kiefer's 2016, 2-day 'Designing Interfaces for Creativity' symposium, a Music/SHL collaboration funded by the British Academy, and Eldridge's Humanising Algorithmic Listening (HAL) network.

A good example of interdisciplinarity is Eldridge's collaborative work with colleagues in Life Sciences. As well as being a musician, Eldridge has developed ecological practices that combine sound technologies and deep listening (ecoacoustics). History, anthropology, and technology combine through her research in Ecuador into Kichwa indigenous practices of singing and listening to the forest and the sea. With fellow researchers at Sussex, she works with Ecuadorian partners to preserve traditional indigenous knowledges that maintain crucial biodiversity and uses smartphone technology to listen to the rainforest and help monitor ecological change. In the field of composition for film and other screen-based media, valuable collaborations have developed. Hughes composed music for *Brighton: Symphony of a City*, commissioned by Brighton Festival (2016) and directed by colleague Lizzie Thynne (Film). The film proposes a modern re-engagement with Ruttman's 1927 classic *Berlin: Symphony of a City*. Ficarra's soundtrack for SHL Visiting Fellow Ian Winter's 2019 time-lapse film, *Summer, Winter, Spring*, questions filmic temporality by stretching and compressing sound time. Collaborations

with Cultural Studies (CROMT/Sussex Centre for Cultural Studies two-day conference on 'The Operatic' as critical and cultural mode in 2016) and with Sound Studies (Eldridge's 2020 'Acoustic Ecologies' festival at ACCA, celebrating the work of soundscape artist Hildegard Westerkamp, including discussions, concerts, films and installations) consolidate local interdisciplinarity. Collaborations within the unit recognise not only the intrinsic role that music and sound play in theatre (Till on the "sceno-sonic" in contemporary theatre, *Theatre and Performance Design*, 2015; Drama's 'Unsettling Sound' conversation series with POC composers, dancers and performers, ACCA 2020), but also shared preoccupations with the musicality of theatre (Bailes and Till's collaboration on the 'Beckett and Musicality' symposium and 2014 volume of the same title). Faculty further collaborated with colleagues in Film on a major 3-day international 'Disco!' conference (2018), organised by Haddon, Stanger, and Lawrence (Film), involving presentations and performances from 50 researchers/artists ranging from music, dance, queer studies, sociology, fashion and film, with a forthcoming edited volume (under review, OUP). Collaborations have also taken place with Life Sciences (CROMT Dementia Research Public Engagement project), Informatics (CROMT/Ficarra 'Robot Opera' project), and researchers from Biology, Genetics, Computing and Mathematics in Eldridge's and Kiefer's 'Artificial Life' project.

### **Practice as Research**

Strategically we have set out to develop new methodologies and epistemologies for practice as research. Faculty across the unit have applied critical and methodological reflection to experimental research processes: Hughes, Magnusson, Eldridge, Kiefer and Bright have published extensively on their creative research projects demonstrating diverse methodological approaches, and Till has written the introduction to an edited collection, *Collaborative Practice as Research* (Palgrave 2020), drawing on his extensive experience in this field. Corrieri and Bailes' research involves solo and collaborative professional performance projects in stage-based research. Corrieri's practice has included collaboration with the Royal Danish Academy Fine Art MA (2018) leading to a performance lecture developed from his 2016 monograph, *In Place of a Show*, and consultation with Artistic Director, Francisco Fazao (Teatro Bairro Alto, Lisbon 2019), on future uses of their empty theatre in conjunction with public lectures and events related to sustainability and reconceptualising abandoned spaces. In 2019 he was commissioned by Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs/SAIC to create a new performance work responding to the archives of Goat Island Performance Group. His practice, performing a 'meta-magic' show under the pseudonym Vincent Gambini, has produced two successful Arts Council-funded shows (*This is Not a Magic Show*, 2015, and *The Chore of Enchantment*, 2018), and uses humour and absurdity to investigate the bathetic enchantments of conjuring and close-up magic. Bailes' work as dramaturg with Reckless Sleepers (*Negative Space*, 2014-17, which toured internationally) adopted methodologies of generative negation and creative destruction in building an environment under a state of constant siege, collapse and reparation, extending her scholarship on failure and performance. She collaborates as creative advisor and co-producer with New York-based African American poet, curator, and performance artist, Jaamil Olawale Kosoko: *Séancers* (2017) and *Chameleon* (2020) (New York/Brighton, international tour, multi-media artwork with episodic digital iterations and events).

### **Opera and Music Theatre**

The development of research expertise in this area has enhanced impact in the industry. CROMT collaborated with Glyndebourne Opera on a major international conference on opera and new media (October 2014), attended by both academics and professionals from the opera world drawing notable industry attention ("Anyone looking for signs of the next big thing in opera and new media should look to Sussex University's Centre for Research in Opera and Music Theatre." *Musician's Union Journal*, Spring 2015): the conference and two 'digital operas' newly commissioned following an international competition are published on our open access online platform *REFRAME*. This generated further engagement with opera companies on the creative use of new media, e.g. Hopkins speaking on digital content for new digital audiences at the 'Opera Europa' annual conference in 2015, his work as consultant on the development of digital platforms for Scottish Opera, and an online opera project "Occupation" for Welsh National Opera (2016). Till's internationally recognised expertise in the future of opera as both institution and art

form led to his appointment in 2019 as Professor of Opera and Music Theatre at the University of Amsterdam (0.2 secondment from Sussex), funded by the Dutch National Opera with whom Till is working on dramaturgy, research and development for new areas of creative work and social engagement.

### Future Strategies for Research and Impact

The faculty-led merger of the three Humanities schools at Sussex into MAH in 2020, following extensive consultation, represents an expansive opportunity for faculty across the unit to develop new interdisciplinary research. We have worked closely with new research structures in MAH and the Associate Dean for Research (Watts) to identify strategic priorities for the coming decade and all research objectives connect to and inform 'Research with Impact', a key pillar of the University of Sussex's 2025 strategic framework. A crucial development for such research initiatives is the establishment of an Institute of Advanced Studies in the new School of MAH which will recruit an international advisory board from academia, the culture industries and from grassroots civil society organisations (community activists, anti-racist organisations, LGBT+ advocates, and environmental campaigners). The Institute will provide a home for MAH research centres and the Sussex Humanities Lab, building significant impact capacity by offering visiting fellowships to non-academic cultural workers and provide an income base, infrastructure and support for the numerous ad hoc artist residencies that we have procured and sustained over the past 7 years. The unit further seeks to expand its research specialisms and appoint new staff with expertise in non-western music and performance, in particular concerning musicking and performance practices of the Global South, Black and queer performance practice, indigenous epistemologies and globalisation and creative practice.

Music and Drama are, by nature, public facing practices. They are also inherently collaborative, often demanding co-creation with external partners who in turn seek research expertise and knowledge. These affordances open substantial and diverse pathways to impact. We have formulated a multidisciplinary research and impact strategy that encourages and actively supports different varieties of public engagement and collaboration with external bodies and organisations as the first step towards creating impact. Our strategic priorities include:

- Sustainable partnerships with external bodies to develop impactful research that addresses real-world concerns, such as Hughes' *Syncthonía* project that arose from observation of his own children's difficulty following notated musical scores when playing in ensembles. Working with East Sussex Music Service and local schools he has trialed a prototype app that is now being developed commercially (Impact Case Study). *Syncthonía* has established further, unforeseen, impact in the Covid era, enabling school ensemble performance to take place with appropriate distancing (*Music Teacher*, Oct 2020). Alice Eldridge's adaptation of techniques derived from soundscape recording as a method for the acoustic mapping of the health of environments and species habitats, ranging from the Amazon to the Arctic, offers a new tool for other environmental researchers and campaigners.
- Research into new technologies that reach beyond academia: specifically focused on new compositional algorithms, performance software and instruments easily adopted by creators/performers and used in their own work. In 2020 Magnusson was awarded a European Research Council Consolidator Grant worth €2 million shared between Sussex and its Icelandic partner institution. The five-year project, titled 'Intelligent Instruments: Understanding 21st Century AI Through Creative Music Technologies', will be the cornerstone to sustaining and energising this strategic priority. It builds on Magnusson's involvement in the MIMIC project – celebrated in the UKRI's 'Transforming our world with AI' review – which offers a platform for the artistic exploration of musical machine learning and machine listening. MIMIC seeks "to develop and disseminate creative systems" for musicians to produce "entirely new music and sound", developing apps that allow non-experts to work with live coding in music through public demonstration, user-uptake and engagement, creating a research feedback loop since users test the apps

iteratively (Impact Case Study). In the field of instrument design, PhD student Halldór Úlfarsson's hybrid acoustic-electronic Halldorophone was used in the Oscar-winning score for *Joker* by Icelandic composer Hildur Guðnadóttir (2019).

- New interventions in race and performance. This has been initiated by Bailes' contribution to the 'Black Joy' project (culminating in 'Black Joy Sessions,' ACCA, 2019) with Marlborough Theatre ("Brighton's home for queer art and culture") extending from initial meetings with POC curators and artists in Chicago (IN>TIME 2014) and co-funded by a Teaching Award for radical inclusive pedagogies that actively implement diversity in research and teaching with match-funding from ACCA. 'Black Joy' supported a 2-year programme of artist residencies and events aimed at fostering new initiatives among QTIPoC artists from the UK, Europe, and North America. This was further developed in Stanger's collaborative 'Whiteness and Contemporary Dance' project, initiated through a BA/Leverhulme Small Research Grant and partnered institutionally with Independent Dance (ID, London) which undertook research with 9 artists and ID directors. It has led to ongoing consultation with ID. From these foundations new anti-racist, cross-disciplinary projects with POC artists and scholars are currently under development.

Faculty receive financial support to develop impact from HEIF funds, whether or not they are selected as Impact Case Studies (e.g. Corrieri received a total of £5,000 to develop the impact dimension of his solo meta-magic shows). Faculty also work closely with the University Press Office to generate media interest in research as a means of extending impact potential, e.g. the widespread media engagement with the first iteration of the on-going CROMT/Ficarra Robot Opera project.

### Openness and Integrity

Our Open Access policy for publications is compliant with REF requirements and aspires to Green Open Access wherever possible. A commitment to other forms of open access is supported by our research centres, which hold free public events (talks and performances; SPEAR events are, where possible, recorded, captioned and made available to the public for free), and by the crucial work of *REFRAME*, a MAH-funded open-access academic digital platform for the online practice, publication and curation of internationally produced research and scholarship in the Humanities, established in 2012 (<https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk>). Flexible publishing formats allow *REFRAME* to support, publicise, and archive a range of academic research outputs spanning grant-funded projects, formal academic publications, smaller scale outputs, and multi-media, innovative and impactful forms such as video essays. In relation to the unit's research *REFRAME* has provided a platform for four projects: *Musical Materialities in the Digital Age* (initiated by Elliott), *Opera and Media of the Future*, including two commissioned digital operas (CROMT), *Testament of Cocteau: Orpheus on Film and Opera* (a *REFRAME* Conversation around a new Hughes Cocteau opera); *Composing the Historical* (Hughes, conversations with 8 composers - including Butler, Ficarra and Judith Weir - who have "recomposed" music of the past, including extracts from relevant compositions). The ACCA functions as an internal and public facing venue, providing a hub for Brighton International Festival with Spring and Autumn programmes (combining academic and professional work and collaborations) open to the public. ACCA operates a 'pay what you wish' policy for all events. All Music Tech projects are Open Source compliant.

The university has several internal policies to ensure we consider the ethical implications of research and rigorously address potential instances of academic and research misconduct. We fully endorse the UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity, which demonstrates what is expected of researchers and their employers to ensure the highest standards, and this is reflected in our Strategic Plan. Full details can be found in the university's Research Integrity Statement, a summary of how Sussex upholds institutional research integrity and transparency. In addition to a dedicated Ethics Officer, MAH (and the Schools preceding it) has a robust ethical monitoring process that escalates all research projects from self-evaluation to School-level to university-level scrutiny.

## 2. People

### Staffing Strategy

The unit carefully balances the teaching needs of small ambitious programmes with relevant research fields and practices in its recruitment strategy. We particularly emphasise the integration of theory and practice (in both teaching and research), and interests that have synergies with existing research specialisms. Drama has been strategic in seeking scholar-practitioners and researchers with disciplinary knowledge that sits adjacent to theatre (e.g. choreography, sound, live art, visual cultures) to complement the team's knowledge of US and European 20<sup>th</sup> century experimental performance traditions. Barnett departed for a Chair in Drama at the University of York and was replaced by Butt, made Attenborough Chair in 2016 (who took up a Fine Art-focused Chair at Northumbria in 2019). As outlined in our REF 2014 commitments, Drama made three early-career-researcher (ECR) appointments: Corrieri (contemporary performance practice, ecologies of theatre, magic); Fowler (European and early modern theatre, directing and adaptation); and Stanger (dance, spatial politics, sexuality and race). Fowler's work on contemporary adaptations of early modern drama added expertise to Sussex's long-established Centre for Early Modern and Medieval Studies. These staff appointments also bring new expertise to Sussex's celebrated Centre for the Study of Sexual Dissidence.

For Music, staffing has progressed with the development of the new Music Technology BA programme, which created an opportunity for four new full faculty appointments in Music (Magnusson, Kiefer, Eldridge, Bright). The permanent appointment of Ficarra in 2016 (formerly on a temporary contract) consolidated compositional research in music for screen and experimental music theatre, as did the conversion of opera and music theatre Research Fellow Tim Hopkins's position from a fixed-term to a permanent contract (0.5) in 2017. As an aspect of contemporary music that had been overlooked during its more Adornian-Modernist era, the department appointed its first popular music specialist (Elliott) in 2012, replaced by popular music and gender specialist Haddon (2017). All new appointments have been at ECR level. In line with our practice-theory emphasis, Music has a predominant representation of practitioners – Haddon is the only conventional musicologist – but all practice appointees are required to demonstrate an engagement with critical and theoretical enquiry in relation to their practice.

All faculty undergo an annual research progress meeting with the DRaKE (Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange) to discuss aims, objectives, and achievements, with advice and support offered and focussed planning agreed. For this meeting they complete and/or update a five-year Personal Research Plan (PRP) which forms the basis for discussion. Identified needs are fulfilled via the University's staff development programme, which offers research training courses (topics include 'Costing your research proposal'; 'Funder success stories: Charity Funders'; 'Research Governance and Ethics').

Under the previous multiple school structure, policy for the allocation of funds from research budgets was agreed by School-specific respective Research Committees, chaired by the DRaKEs, with all allocations scrutinised for the purpose of transparency by the Research Committees. Approximately £1,000 per annum was available to faculty for conference attendance and other research costs by application. In MAH, a single research committee (chaired by the Associate Dean for Research) consisting of representation from across the School, as well as ECR representatives and the School's Race Equality Officer, allocates leave and disburses research funds. The merging of the Schools has enabled the establishment of new structures that foreground transparency, fairness, and renewed commitment to creating sustainability (in line with Sussex's 'Go Greener' campaign).

Since presentation at conferences (of both practice and academic scholarship) is crucial for sharing and disseminating research within the wider research community, the most common allocation of monies to individuals from the research budget is for conference attendance but also to support artist residencies, attendance at important festivals, and fellowships focused on

creative practice. In line with sustainability and budgetary priorities, for international field association conferences, such as IFTR (International Federation for Theatre Research) and PSi (Performance Studies international), School Research Committees expected subject groups to turn-take rather than group annual attendance, with fair distribution of resources for early career and senior researchers (recognising that senior researchers receive more opportunities for funded conference attendance). The new MAH school, with its larger group of performance-based practitioners/researchers, enables a more equitable disbursement of resources across its 150+ faculty. Conference attenders are expected to opt for lower carbon travel options, and where flights are unavoidable, researchers have been encouraged to combine visits with other research activity. Faculty can apply for funds for research costs or conference attendance (usually conditional upon giving a paper/performance).

The long-term investment in ECR recruitment necessitates a robust system for career development, and Sussex has a strong and supportive record in this regard. New faculty have dedicated inductions to discuss all aspects of the school's research activities and strategy, to identify personal research aims and objectives and how these might best be supported, as well as identifying areas in which the individual may contribute to the unit's broader research strategy. Early career researchers are given a senior mentor, exemption from administrative roles, and are encouraged to participate in conferences through preferential funding to raise external profile.

Faculty benefit from a term's research leave after every three academic cycles of service, contingent upon submission of a detailed and achievable research plan. During terms this is supported by the allocation of one day per week for research in addition to university vacations, recognising that research commitments do not necessarily fall into holiday periods. In the relevant period 13 faculty across the unit have been awarded leave, a total of 15 terms of research leave. Provision for maternity and paternity leave includes time off for antenatal care, Health and Safety checks, and specific arrangements made to mitigate pregnancy-related problems. Arrangements are agreed for covering workloads and maintaining contact during leave. Information is shared regarding the Flexible Working Policy and Shared Parental Leave Policy. Discussion includes how the staff member wishes to use allocated Keeping in Touch (KIT) days.

Exchange Secondments and fellowships provide a direct way of raising the profile of Sussex research and research expertise, of seeding Sussex research internationally, and of nurturing relations with academics and professionals in other institutions. Secondments less than £25,000 are encouraged and agreed at School level. Till's Professorship by Special Appointment at The University of Amsterdam and Bailes' Macgeorge Fellowship (University of Melbourne) provide examples of such fruitful exchange.

Research activity is a key factor in the successful outcome of promotion. Since 2014 the unit has seen one promotion to Professor (Magnusson) and three to SL (Ficarra, McEvoy, and Price).

### **Research Students**

Throughout the current REF period Sussex has co-ordinated the Consortium for the Humanities and the Arts South-East England (CHASE), which offers PhD scholarships and training opportunities across 9 partner institutions. This AHRC DTP partnership has secured further funding for 2019-2023. Across the unit, 5 PhD students have been funded by CHASE and 3 through attachment to Leverhulme funded projects; one further doctoral student is funded through the China Scholarship Council Scheme.

Since 2014, the unit has maintained a steady cohort of PhD students, with 30 new students registered over the past five years, and 11 successful completions in that time. Recruitment in Drama will be enhanced by the forthcoming Masters in Contemporary Performance, and the new MAH school structures will amplify the diversity of opportunities for all PGRs. There was already a diverse community of doctoral researchers in the previous schools, able to engage with peers

in related subjects including film, sound studies, gender and sexuality and digital arts. In the expanded MAH context they can participate in a wider range of research activities such as regular reading groups, weekly School-wide research-in-progress seminars, and an annual university-funded MAH doctoral conference. Student projects have also secured funding from the university's Researcher-Led Initiative Fund, which complements training and development opportunities provided elsewhere in the university by encouraging students to organise their own training and public engagement activities. Both schools had a dedicated student experience officer who worked on student welfare and assisted students in establishing the schools' dedicated student-led peer mentoring schemes. Regardless of their discipline, research students from the unit also benefit significantly from access to and attendance at ACCA events as well as mentorship and collaboration with its Creative Director, Laura McDermott,

A commitment to co-supervision across the unit and in MAH ensures continuity, pairs new with experienced supervisors, and provides added quality assurance. All new supervisors receive training. Supervision meetings are recorded on the University VLE, providing progress records and clear research plans. Annual progress review is by panel, with oversight from the Director of Doctoral Studies, and highlights progress, training, and resource needs. Students are encouraged to give conference papers and publish. Both Schools provided earmarked funding for PG conference attendance (a practice continued in MAH) and there is an additional university-wide fund to support attendance at international conferences. Students have access to a range of research and professional training opportunities offered by the central university Doctoral School throughout the year based on the Vitae Researcher Development framework, The Library hosts the Sussex Research Hive programme of research-related events. Accredited pedagogic training is also provided centrally. A dedicated careers consultant offers advice and seminars on careers after a PhD. Most importantly, the rich array of opportunities offered by our research centres, publishing activities, performances, student-led research events and activities and professional training constitutes a vital preparation for future academic employment, non-academic research positions and performing arts careers. Following completion of their PhD, students have the opportunity to apply for Research Associate status, which allows them to maintain an academic affiliation with the university and library access, essential in the early stages of publishing their work or seeking employment. Bright (Music) progressed from being a PhD student at Sussex to employment as faculty; Peck (Drama) progressed from being a PhD student to full-time employment as a TF. Post-doctoral researchers (3 in Music since 2014) are attached to funded projects and, as with Visiting Fellows (also 3 since 2014: Katie Tearle, Head of Education, Glyndebourne Opera; Laurel Zeiss, scholar, Baylor University, Texas; Liisamajia Hautsalo, Finnish Academy Fellow), are fully integrated into unit-specific and school research culture.

### **Equality and Diversity**

Both prior hosting schools had large and representative Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Groups during the main REF period, whose remit included preparing for Athena Swan. A member of that group sat on the School Research Committees and the schools' REF Strategy Groups where EDI matters were a standing agenda item. All faculty with responsibilities for research receive EDI training. The terms of reference governing the disbursement of individual research funding and research leave by the RC privileged ECRs in both cases, and the DRaKE retained records relating to the provision of such awards and undertook an EDI audit in parallel with Sussex's broader EDI audit, in accordance with the institution's responsibilities as outlined in Sussex REF Code of Practice.

EDI groups have also led work on decolonizing the curriculum; developed policy on the teaching of material containing offensive language; and explored best practice for extending our recruitment of BAME students and faculty. The new, expanded MAH EDI group is intersectional in its approach and transparent in its operations, and comprises an open EDI forum and a team of EDI leads who direct and support the commitment of the School to equalities, diversity, and inclusion. MAH continues to strive to embed an ethos of mutual respect and does not tolerate bullying, racism, homophobia, sexism, transphobia, ageism, or negative behaviour arising from

perceived hierarchy and status. We aim to eliminate the gender pay gap and pay the visa expenses for overseas staff. We have translated existing equality and diversity standards into minimum standards and benchmark guidelines: for underpinning inclusivity; to address in our hiring and promotional structures. We actively collaborate with the university to improve the way we work with colleagues and students with disability, mental and physical health issues and continue to lobby for improved accessibility to our physical environment across campus (something that the new School will develop). We are also committed to addressing the BAME and overseas awarding gap and place diversity and inclusivity at the heart of our teaching, learning and mentoring activities. Equal opportunities issues, diversity concerns, and inclusivity practices form part of all recruitment interviews and are significant in mentoring arrangements. It is a university requirement that all members of staff undertake 'unconscious bias training'.

Bailes and Stanger lead Drama's Anti-Racist working group from within the unit. This includes consultation and pedagogical policy development with students; public events, dialogue and workshops with non-white artists and colleagues beyond Sussex; collaborating with library staff and external peer departments to develop strategies for redressing the curriculum. They also work with LGBTQ+ artists locally and internationally. Faculty are actively working with Sydney based artist-scholar, Rajni Shah, and Royona Mitra (Brunel) on diversity in the curriculum and decolonising pedagogies (2020); Ahmarnya Price (Back to Back Theatre) is working with the unit on disability and ableism in practice and pedagogy. Bailes is in ongoing consultation with Kosoko (independent artist, Visiting Fellow Princeton/UCLA) on race and diversity pedagogies across both programmes. Stanger's work on institutional racism (detailed above) draws together international scholars (Canada, US, and Europe) to explore ways of reorienting 'canonical' thinking around dance practices in pedagogy and research. Fowler participated in the Athena Swan working group (School of English). Particular attention in the unit has also been given to gender inclusivity in Music Technology, traditionally a male dominated field, and to providing access routes to such research: it has accordingly established an annual scholarship for a female undergraduate in Music Technology. Music is a member of the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Music Studies Network, and will be contributing to an EDIMS event in February 2021. Till was on the working group for the MFM Athena Swan Bronze submission for gender equality (awarded 2020), a process that facilitated a clear-sighted appraisal of the current circumstances and strategic, equality-focused future planning.

Our REF submission has been EDI audited and adheres to the university's *REF2021: Code of Practice*. Of the 15 FTE equivalent submitted from the Drama and Music research unit for REF2021, 31.2% (5 faculty members) identify as female and 68.8% as male (11 faculty members), representing an improvement from REF2014 when Music submitted 1 female faculty member in a group of 5 while Drama submitted 1 female member in a group of 3. For REF 2021 a slightly larger percentage of male outputs are being submitted relative to overall representation (73.7% to 68.8%). There is clearly more work to do in this area: for example, the unit currently comprises 4 male with no female professors. Diversity of ethnicity also remains an issue, with only 6.8% of faculty identifying as BAME (a statistic that does not reflect the diversity of our student body at undergraduate or postgraduate levels). The unit's strategic priorities for research moving forward, with on-going emphases on the recruitment of expertise in world music and performance in the Global South, will enable us to address some of these disparities in our recruitment policies and processes.

### **3. Income, infrastructure, and facilities**

During this REF period, faculty in Music and Drama have secured over £1,013, 787 in external grant income, a substantial increase from REF2014. This includes Research Council income, Arts Council England (ACE) and commissions from independent funding bodies and arts organisations as well as participation in significant collaborative group bids (e.g. Magnusson's AHRC award for MIMIC project, lead investigator Goldsmiths). Inevitably, technology and informatics research projects attract the most substantial funding which has justified the decision to significantly expand music technology appointments and research.

Notable successes include:

#### *ACE*

Bailes, dramaturg/creative advisor with Anglo-Belgian company, Reckless Sleepers (Ghent), international touring/workshops for mid-scale theatre show 'Negative Space' £79,000 (2014-17); Hughes' 'Orchestra of Sound and Light', ACE, £14,975 (2015-16) and 'Cuckmere: Portraits in music, sound and image', £15,029 (2016-17); Corrieri, devising/performing 'This is Not a Magic Show', £7,589 (2016) and R&D/national tour of 'The Chore of Enchantment,' £12,017 with additional funds from ACCA £8,124 (2018-20); Eldridge, grant for Instrument Workshops at ICLI, £4,530 (2016).

#### *AHRC*

Magnusson, 'Networking Technology', £58,000 (2014-15), 'Sonic Writing', £190,267 (2015-16) and 'Musically Intelligent Machines Interacting Creatively' (MIMIC), £250,000 (2017-18) (Impact Case Study); Eldridge, 'Humanising Algorithmic Listening', £22,334 (2016-17); Hughes, Eldridge, Kiefer, Networking Technology and Ensemble Music-making (NETEM), £22,162 (2016-17) (Impact Case Study).

#### *BRITISH ACADEMY*

Kiefer 'Design of Contemporary Creative Tools', British Academy Rising Star Engagement Award, £14,896 (2015-16); Stanger, Co-I with Royona Mitra (Brunel) and Simon Ellis (Coventry) 'Contemporary Dance and Whiteness' project, including interviews, workshops (x2), symposium and co-authored article, BA/Leverhulme small research grant, £7,905 (2019-20).

#### *Other*

Hughes, London Sinfonietta development grant, £1,500 (2016); Ficarra, Writer's Residency Grant, Jan Michalski Foundation, Switzerland, £2,500 (2017); Bailes, 'Black Joy' project for QTIPoC artists in collaboration with Marlborough Theatre and ACCA - Live Art UK Diverse Actions grant, £15,500 + ACE £15,000 (2017-19); Corrieri, Goat Island Commission, Chicago Cultural Centre, £2000, (2019); Bailes, artist development/mentoring and UK residency Ahmarnya Price, ACCA/Australian Arts Council, £7,500 (2019).

#### *Infrastructure and internal income*

The University's Research Opportunity Fund (ROF) and Research Development Fund (RDF) allow faculty to request up to £1,500 and £30,000 respectively to develop activities that will lead to substantive external research proposals. Magnusson (x 2) and Ficarra have both received ROF funds to initiate projects; Hopkins was awarded an RDF award for R&D on his 'Empathy Machine' project; McEvoy received £7,290 from the RDF to lead a project on Aurora Nova at Edinburgh Festival, building on his substantial work as theatre critic for *The Stage* (since 1997).

As with the previous schools, the MAH Research Committee (RC) works closely with Sussex's Research and Enterprise Office. A dedicated Research Development Officer (RDO) supports the Associate Dean for Research and colleagues with strategic alignment to funder opportunities, helping translate research aspirations of colleagues into well-targeted bids. The RDO also attends the RC and reviews new funding opportunities and bids in preparation with the dedicated research grant officer. Whereas Sussex schools and their RCs promote programmes of research seminars and one-off events – such as School-wide 'Research Impact Days' and events focused on practice-based research – the RDO organises research-related events throughout the year, from coffee mornings and sandpit sessions to respond to external funding initiatives, to detailed IT and tech support, and advice on how to manage and cost large bids. The RDO also works on a one-to-one basis with faculty members to develop and submit external funding bids, with the RC and senior members of faculty providing a peer-review body for bids when required. Schools hold annual research awaydays in order to explore collaborative opportunities, to encourage participation in the school's research culture, and to formulate and discuss research strategy. Teaching Fellows with research interest are also invited, enabling them to present and gain experience of research cultures.

Impact is supported institutionally by the university-wide Impact team as well as at school level by, for example, the creation in 2018 in the former MFM of two new School management posts of Deputy Head of School with responsibility for Engagement, a Deputy Director of Research with responsibility for Impact support, and the employment of an Impact Consultant in both schools who worked directly with research faculty exploring impact opportunities for their research, gathering appropriate evidence, etc. Impact plans receive support, and a dedicated university team brokers relationships with commercial partners where appropriate, offering training and mentoring on building relationships with external organisations, particularly for ECRs. Impact continues to be supported financially through the strategic allocation of HEIF funds.

#### *Facilities*

At the heart of performance-based research at Sussex is the redesign and refurbishment of the Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts through which the university signalled the centrality of our work to its estate and reputation (an investment of £9.7 million). The ACCA now provides substantial resource, support and infrastructure for practice-led research and public-facing activities. It reopened in 2016, following a ten-year period of dereliction, after extensive consultation with staff, students, local arts professionals, and audiences. ACCA provides a world-class arts centre for academic, local, national and international communities, its Creative Director (McDermott) working closely with academics and external partners to design programmes that extend and support research-informed activities, R&D scoping periods and work-in-progress or invited showings. It functions as a prime venue for Brighton's annual International Festival and programmes and produces performances, artist residencies, conferences, summer schools and symposia year-round. As a flexible venue with multiple spaces and configurations, its 350-seat main auditorium and three performance studios provide a social and creative hub for students and faculty to engage with professional artists and organisations, and for seeding and developing research initiatives. It also provides the Jonathan Harvey Electronic Music studio fitted with a 32 channel Trident 78 console (in addition to a new Neve 66 mixing console in the existing Music Studio A) and has enabled the acquisition and maintenance of a Steinway grand piano. Of crucial importance, ACCA brings technical expertise and production support staff in addition to a dedicated technical staff appointment for Music in 2015.

The ACCA sits alongside five additional campus locations facilitating performance research: a large, flexible 'white cube' studio laboratory, the Creativity Zone (formerly the CETL-funded InQbate) which underwent a £70,000 upgrade in 2020; the Debating Chamber (for workshops, performances and recitals); the black box Silverstone Studio (theatre); the Music Recital Room; and the Sussex Humanities Lab. Research is generously supported by the highly responsive library acquisition policy and specific holdings at The Keep. These include the recent acquisition of the Richard Attenborough papers, a comprehensive collection spanning the acting, producing, directing, radio broadcasting and personal papers of the celebrated director/actor. In 2011, the library received £7.4 million in investment and since then its Music, Theatre and Performance holdings and electronic resources have contributed extensively to research (eg. subscription to Digital Theatre+ and other online platforms).

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

Both disciplinary fields represented in the unit have evolved rapidly and substantially in recent years. Notable developments that engage ethical and political as well as aesthetic concerns to which, as a group, we have a shared commitment include:

- the consolidation of methodologies and epistemologies for creative practice as research, evident in work across the unit, from Bailes to Till.
- questioning and challenging structural and intersectional class, gender, race, and sexuality exclusions from established cultural and educational institutions, for example in Stanger's recent project on dance and whiteness and her forthcoming monograph on Black Mountain College.

- the intersections of popular and critical cultural practices demonstrated by Haddon and Price in their critically interrogative approach to historicisation.
- debates around the human/posthuman/non-human at the heart of Ficcaro's robot opera project and in the work of EMute, and the political and social implications of new technologies.
- foregrounding environmental concerns that acknowledge a global climate and environmental emergency, and the development of appropriate intellectual, creative and practical responses to this challenge drawing on new intellectual paradigms such as object-oriented ontology, new materialism and eco-Marxism – most obvious in Eldridge's practice-led research on ecoacoustics and Corrieri's scholarship on the ecological 'turn' in performance.

Faculty across the unit are engaged for their expertise in a variety of contexts within the field: as consultants for national school curriculum design and awarding bodies, as reviewers, pedagogic theorists, ACE advisors, AHRC Peer Review College members, mentors for emerging artists, consultants for public curating and programming, and, as outlined, in more specific research investigations. During the current REF period we have established visibility and leadership through wider networking, conference attendance, invited plenaries, membership of journal editorial teams, or as guest editors of journals. Examples include: Magnusson on the editorial board (and guest-editor of) the *Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media* (2016), and currently guest-editor of an issue of *New Music Research*; Till on the editorial board of *Studies in Musical Theatre* 2007-20 and currently on the board of *Theatre and Performance Design* (2016-); Bailes on the Advisory and Editorial Boards of *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory* (2009-) and as member of the Research and Publishing Committee for the Live Art Development Agency (LADA). She undertakes editorial work for *Digital Theatre+* and Fowler has commissioned films and a curated collection, *The Theatre of Katie Mitchell* (Digital Theatre+/Routledge, 2019), launching a new 4x45 series for the platform. He also co-convenes the Directing and Dramaturgy Working Group for TaPRA.

### Local, Regional and National Collaborations

A key research strategy has been the expansion and deepening of external partnerships in order to reach diverse communities and foster impactful research. The University of Sussex was one of the first wave of UK universities to pledge commitment to local communities through the Civic University Agreement, and the unit has devoted substantial resource to nurturing such partnerships, recognising these as catalysts for the development of projects in the field while targeting specific communities to achieve lasting and meaningful impact. As is evident throughout this document, partnership and collaboration underpin almost all research undertaken by faculty. Academic collaboration allows cross-disciplinary projects to evolve with colleagues beyond discrete disciplinary fields. Partnerships with external bodies create pathways to impact, for example in the work Bailes, Price, and Stanger have all undertaken in partnership with Brighton's Marlborough Theatre. Our local collaborations are tied to our belief in our social mission. This has meant developing our work within the environs of Brighton, East Sussex and beyond, expanding audiences while focusing on the social applicability of such research. In addition to collaborations already detailed, faculty members serve as consultants/board members of arts organisations such as SICK! Festival (Price and Bailes, Advisory Board) and Rose Hill Arts (Eldridge, Advisory Board) and collaborate with First Base Homeless Day Care Centre (Peck/Bailes).

We maintain vibrant relations with local and national arts and cultural organisations such as Glyndebourne (*Opera and the Media of the Future* conference, 2014), Brighton Festival, Brighton Early Music Festival (Festival of Music and Ideas, ACCA 2018/2019), London Sinfonietta (Hopkins's consultant curatorship of the Kagel Weekend, King's Place London, 2020), the Freud Museum (Bailes, co-curator, *Freud Out Loud*, 2015), and the Live Art Development Agency (LADA: work experience/placements; talks and consultancy). Relevant partnerships are constantly sought out and cultivated. Till consolidated a relationship with the V&A Museum as consultant for the 'Opera: Passion, Power and Politics' exhibition (2017) and

Fowler played a pivotal role in securing the director Katie Mitchell's invaluable performance archive for the V&A (2019) as well as providing research expertise on *Brexit Stage Left* (the Yard Theatre, London, 2019), a festival of ten new European plays in translation. Stanger worked with the Barbican as research consultant and informal advisor on the first major exhibition of choreographer/dancer, Michael Clark's, work (*Michael Clark: Cosmic Dancer*, October 2020-January 2021) and contributed a catalogue essay. Partnerships are attentive to the social engagement and role of art practice and research for particular communities, contributing to their sustainability. These have included Hughes's collaboration with the Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft 'Maunder Maps Music' (2019), and Bailes' 'Black Joy' collaboration with Marlborough Theatre (2017-2019).

### International Recognition

International collaboration is the lifeblood of our disciplines, enabling us to broaden research perspectives and cultural and cross-disciplinary exchange. Its planned expansion is central to our future prosperity as a unit. During this REF cycle Price took the lead, alongside Strömburg (University of Gothenberg), Arrighi (University of Newcastle, Australia), Baston (Le Trobe University, Melbourne) and Slade (V&A Senior Curator) in the cross-continental Popular Entertainments Working Group with IFTR. The resulting collaborative book, *Researching Popular Entertainment*, is due next year. Bailes was thinker-in-residence at Glasshouse Art.Life.Lab (NY, 2014), held an international Macgeorge Fellowship at the University of Melbourne (October-December 2017) and collaborated with Columbia University (NY) departments of Biological Science and the Music Performance Program through The Center for Science and Society (2017) on a 3-day symposium, *The Future of Failure*. In 2016 she was invited speaker at IN>TIME Performance and Live Art Festival (Chicago), and in 2018 at Harvard Law School's Institute for Global Law and Policy (colloquium: *Learning from Failure*). She gave keynotes at the Global South Center, Pratt Institute (New York, 2018) and the Universities of Mannheim and Rostock (2019). The success of Stanger and Haddon's 'DISCO!' conference (2018) has initiated discussions for a second conference at the University of San Francisco with colleagues in Sociology and Music. Till's international recognition includes Visiting Professorships at the Universities of Malta and Amsterdam (2014); panel member, Music Theatre NOW international competition, Operadagen, Rotterdam (2016); panel member/facilitator, inaugural Artistic Research in Opera symposium and workshops, University of the Arts, Stockholm (2017); opening keynote, Finnish Musicological Society annual conference (2019), and co-PI on a current Centre of Excellence application to The Academy of Finland for research into sustainability in the music industry.

Performance-based research at Sussex is current, influential, challenging, outreaching, and embedded in academic and non-academic networks at all levels. The synergy and exchange between academic and professional activity is our greatest strength and demonstrates the continued social relevance of artistic practices as critical to the formation of cultural and political discourse and activity, providing the strongest base for the future vitality and sustainability of research in our field.