

## Impact case study (REF3)

<b>Institution:</b> University of Glasgow (UofG)		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 33 Music		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Historically informed performance leading unique classical music ensemble Dunedin Consort to continued critical and commercial success		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2001–2019		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
John Butt	Gardiner Professor of Music	2001–present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2013–31 <sup>st</sup> December 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? Y</b>		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>John Butt's research has brought historically informed music performance to audiences across the world through his collaboration with Dunedin Consort, a leading Scotland-based international Baroque ensemble. Since 2014, Butt led and produced seven new primary output recordings, and ~150 performances across the world. Dunedin's collaboration with Butt has led to increasing critical acclaim, a growing international reputation, and commercial success, with their income increasing steadily from c.GBP120,000 in 2012 to c.GBP725,000 in 2019. Performances have also reached audiences new to Dunedin, presenting unique interpretations of musical works and their historical contexts within new venues, whilst their recordings have sold successfully. Dunedin have also expanded their community and education programme.</p>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The research underpinning Butt's work with Dunedin comprises monographs and articles as well as practice-based research, including performances and recordings. The desk-based element of the research has focused on three main interlocking areas: the original contexts for the works (whether liturgical, public or courtly and the corresponding venues), the specifics of historical performance, and the listening practices of audiences at the time. The starting point for this was Butt's investigation of the role of historically informed performance in contemporary culture [3.1], notably identifying the need to use historical knowledge and experience to encourage new creative possibilities in contemporary performance. This challenged the notion that adopting historical parameters would lead to a restriction of performative possibilities. His subsequent research has focused on specific works and composers within this theoretical framework and opened new ways to read and hear Bach's <i>Passions</i> [3.2] and Monteverdi's 1610 <i>Vespers</i> [3.3].</p> <p>Butt's related practice-based research takes the form of an extensive catalogue of recordings for Linn Records, which includes Dunedin Consort recordings of landmark performances of Handel, Bach, Mozart and Monteverdi [e.g. 3.4–3.8]. In addition, Dunedin's appearances at prestigious international events have contributed to the research by exploring the relationship between music and context. These have included performances at The Proms (2017 and 2019), the Misteria Paschalia festival in Krakow (2018), and the Edinburgh International Festival (2016–2019). The group has also performed regularly at Wigmore Hall in London and Queen's Hall in Edinburgh as well as venues across Europe, USA and Latin America. Each recording and performance context has required different degrees and types of scholarly engagement and research. For both recorded and public performance of these works, elements of historical knowledge required considerable research and experimentation. The interaction between scholarly ideas and performance ideas/insights is not straightforward and, through setting new</p>		

parameters (chorus structure and placing, temporal pacing, listening processes) of performance engagement, new creative possibilities have emerged.

The vocal recordings reflect Butt's work on the constitution of choruses and their relation to the individual soloists; these recordings have been seminal in developing the concept of 'soloist led' performance. The key output in this regard is Handel's *Samson* [3.7], which is the first recording in modern times to use a boys' choir singing together with the soprano soloists. This recording also presents an alternative version of the choruses with soloists alone (as may have been the case in the first, 1743, performance). The 18<sup>th</sup>-century approach to chorus structure is also explored in the Bach Magnificat recording [3.4], one of Bach's Christmas Oratorio (2016), and Mozart's Requiem (2014), which was recorded with forces as close as possible to the size of those for its first performance in 1793.

Butt's musicological research has also informed the pacing of these performances — most notably the dramatic flow and division of scenes or individual numbers, and possible tempo relationships between these. Tempo relationships are a significant element of the putative historical listening experience (e.g. in relation to Monteverdi's *Vespers*, [3.3]). Moreover, some of the recordings and performances centre on aspects of the listening process that have largely been ignored in modern concert traditions. For example, the Bach *Magnificat* recording [3.4] presents the work within the context of the Christmas Vespers service of 1723, while several other Dunedin performances have taken place in café environments, to help understand the implications of the discursive culture of coffee houses in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Europe.

### 3. References to the research

#### Books:

- 3.1 Butt, J. 2002. [Playing with history: the historical approach to musical performance](#). Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. ISBN 0521813522. [available on request from HEI]
- 3.2 Butt, J. 2010. [Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions](#). Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. ISBN 9780521883566. [available on request from HEI]

#### Articles:

- 3.3 Butt, J. 2018. [Monteverdi, the 1610 Vespers and the beginnings of the modern musical work](#). *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 143(1), pp. 21–50. [doi:10.1080/02690403.2018.1434328](https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2018.1434328)

#### Recordings:

- 3.4 Dunedin Consort: [St John's Passion](#) (Linn, CKD419, 2013) – first recording with original liturgy
- 3.5 Dunedin Consort: [Bach's Magnificat](#) (Linn, CKD469, 2015) – first recording with original liturgy
- 3.6 Dunedin Consort: [Bach's Christmas Oratorio](#) (Linn, CKD499, 2016) – recording with experiments in vocal scoring
- 3.7 Dunedin Consort: [Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers](#) (Linn, CKD569, 2017) – recording with experiments in scoring, tempo relations, pitch etc.
- 3.8 Dunedin Consort: [Handel's Samson](#) (Linn, 2019) – first recording of original version, together with original choral format

**Quality:** All these outputs involve original research or original application of a broad range of findings; their quality and significance are underscored by scholarly review, newspaper reviews,

industry awards and a broad range of spin-off concerts and tours and the body of work is expected to meet or exceed the 2\* threshold.

#### 4. Details of the impact

Dunedin's work with Butt uniquely combines reconstructed historical contexts (e.g. liturgies, coffee houses) with regeneration of familiar works, opening up a range of potential experiences usually unexplored in performance. Dunedin's Chief Executive commented that in this Dunedin are unique: *'where other ensembles draw upon accepted practices in historical performances ... Butt's research has allowed Dunedin Consort to take these ambitions further and to incorporate the latest pioneering research into our performances and recordings'* [5.1].

##### 4.1 Supporting Dunedin to critical acclaim, reputation and commercial success

Dunedin are covered extensively in the UK press and classical music magazines, featuring prominently in classical music coverage on British radio and television [5.2]. For example, performances of Bach's Magnificat were well-received by the [Guardian](#) and the [Independent](#) (2 Jan 2019) which stated: *'Dunedin Consort, under John Butt's historically-informed direction, gave a typically dazzling performance of Bach....'* The [Scotsman](#) (Sept 2019) said of another performance: *'Joy, passion and precision... Butt and his players were rediscovering this well-known music afresh all over again, and taking their listeners with them...'* In November 2019 Dunedin's unique approach was covered by Gramophone magazine [5.2], who commented that *'under his [Butt's] sagacious direction, the Dunedin Consort has firmly established a world-class period-instrument ensemble'*.

Dunedin's international reputation has grown through the collaboration, illustrated by the many objections raised when Dunedin's Creative Scotland funding was threatened, a decision that was subsequently reversed [5.3]. For example, The Times stated, *'no Scottish ensemble has a bigger international reputation,'* and a journalist for the Guardian, BBC and Herald, described them as *'world-class'*. The Director of Lammermuir Festival and Creative Director of Classical Music for Perth Concert Hall commented that *'Dunedin Consort is a genuinely world-class ensemble who provide fabulous music making in Scotland as well as acting as cultural ambassadors for Scotland abroad at the highest artistic level'*.

Dunedin recordings have enhanced Linn Records' catalogue with a [growing discography](#) and strong sales [5.4]. Linn Records' Chief Producer [5.5] commented: *'Dunedin Consort, directly influenced by John Butt's research and practice in historically informed performance, has made a supremely distinctive and influential contribution to classical music in the UK, Europe and across the world. Dunedin's recordings ... have added enormous lustre to the Linn label ... Dunedin has become a gold standard for the historical performance of much music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and this has shown in its strong sales for Linn, within exceptionally difficult market conditions'*.

*Monteverdi's Vespers 1610* (2017) was nominated for Best Baroque Vocal at the International Classical Music Awards in 2018. Dunedin, under John Butt's direction, won a Gramophone Classical Music Award in 2014 and a Grammy nomination in 2015. This, added to other awards and prestigious nominations including the International Classical Music Awards (2014), Scottish Album of the Year (2014, 2016) and Royal Philharmonic Society awards (2018) [5.6], confers to Dunedin a status unmatched in Scotland. In 2020 they were nominated for another Gramophone

award for their recording of Handel's *Samson* (which was also disc of the month in the January 2020 BBC Music Magazine).

Dunedin's gross income from performance fees and from recording royalties exceeded GBP300,000 in 2016, an upwards trajectory since 2013 [5.7a]. As Dunedin's Chief Executive observed [5.1]: *'that the company has expanded as much as it has done in recent years, from a turnover of around £120,000 in 2013 to £725,000 in 2019, is thanks to the reputation that Dunedin Consort and John Butt have built together'*.

#### 4.2 Increasing and diversifying reach of historically informed performance

Dunedin has had considerable geographical reach, performing at festivals in Germany, Holland, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Poland, USA, Mexico and Columbia, including the BBC Proms, Edinburgh International Festival, Boston Early Music Festival and Misteria Paschalia, Krakow, and Butt has also toured independently as a conductor in the USA, Netherlands and Hong Kong. Dunedin's Head of Artistic Planning [5.4] noted that Dunedin's *'performances continue to be well attended across the world'*. A version of Bach's *St. John's Passion* at the Royal Albert Hall at the 2017 Proms was presented with its original liturgy [3.4] for a large live audience and subsequently via [YouTube](#), expanding access and attracting 77,000 views. Dunedin's catalogue has also sold well within the classical music market, some recordings reaching the top 5 of the UK's Classical charts [5.8].

Dunedin's performances challenge audiences' understanding of key 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century musical works including by removing them from modern venues. For example, the *Coffee and Enlightenment* series located Bach in a more discursive, less formal environment than the modern concert hall in which they are now traditionally encountered. Inspired by Butt's research which suggests a contemporary connection of Bach's secular music with coffee-house culture, this included 2015 performances at the Glad Café, Glasgow, City of Edinburgh Methodist Church, and Musselburgh's flexible Brunton Theatre. The [Herald](#) (8 Feb 2015) commented, *'in terms of getting music out of the concert hall and into a space that appeals to a different crowd, John Butt and the Dunedin Consort couldn't have chosen a more convivial setting. Roughly half the audience had never been to a Dunedin concert before'*. [5.2f]

Butt has also appeared regularly in the media, most prominently as host of Radio 4's [Bach: A Man of Passion](#) and BBC2's *Proms Extra*, both 2017. In Scotland, Dunedin performed regularly in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Perth, Aberdeen and East Lothian. In 2019, Dunedin performed to 12,422 people across 17 local authority areas in Scotland [5.4], and total audiences of ~12,000 in 2016 and 2017, compared with 6,291 in 2013 [5.7b]. Compared with 16 performances in 2013, Dunedin gave 156 performances between August 2013–December 2020, averaging ~25 each year, with the exception of 2020 due to impacts of Covid-19 [5.7b]. Between 2015–2017 alone there were 26 performances outside of Scotland including prestigious, sold-out shows in London at the Royal Albert Hall, Wigmore Hall and King's Place. In addition, Dunedin's tracks were streamed almost 850,000 times up to November 2019 [5.4].

Dunedin run several initiatives aimed at diversifying audiences and performers in Scotland, including annual schools workshops series and workshops for amateur singers of all ages. These culminate each year with a *Children's Messiah*, conducted by Butt, in Edinburgh and Glasgow, with special performances for some participants in Dunedin's schools' programme. Numbers of participants increased from 200 in 2017 to 850 in 2018, with all schools drawn from those high on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation [5.9].

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

- 5.1 Testimonial letter, Chief Executive, Dunedin Consort, 30/10/2019, corroborating the impact of John Butt's practice research on Dunedin and their collaborative success [PDF]
- 5.2 Selected examples of media coverage [collated as PDF]:
- a. The Guardian: *Dunedin Consort/Butt Review – Bravura Bach to ring in 2019*. Dated 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019
  - b. The Independent: Dunedin Consort review, Wigmore Hall, London: *A dazzling performance of Bach at his most ravishing*. Dated 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2019
  - c. The Scotsman: Music Review: *Lammermuir Festival opening weekend, various venues, East Lothian*. Dated 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019
  - d. Gramophone Magazine: *Rediscovering Samson: John Butt's ongoing quest for authenticity has resulted in not one but two historically informed recorded re-creations of Handel's original intentions for his longest oratorio*. Dated November 2019.
  - e. The Herald: Review: Dunedin Consort's Coffee and Enlightenment. Dated 8<sup>th</sup> February 2015
- See also: <https://www.dunedin-consort.org.uk/press/>
- 5.3 [Testimonials for Dunedin Consort](#) objecting to the withdrawal of Creative Scotland funding was announced (later reinstated), corroborating the strength of Dunedin's reputation by 2018 [PDF, page saved from Dunedin website]
- 5.4 Testimonial letter, Head of Artistic Planning, Dunedin, 20/11/2019, corroborating details of the artistic activities and successes of Dunedin and the influence and impact of John Butt and his research [PDF]
- 5.5 Testimonial letter, Chief Producer at Linn Records Ltd [PDF], corroborating the impact and influence of Dunedin Consort, especially on Linn as a record label.
- 5.6 Dunedin's [Awards](#) webpage, corroborating critical success [PDF]
- 5.7 Information from Dunedin [collated PDF]:
- a. Annual Dunedin Consort report [2013](#), [2016](#), and [2017](#) corroborating increase in income and detailing audience numbers and performances.
  - b. List of Dunedin past performances downloaded from [Past Events](#) page
- 5.8 Examples of Dunedin's recordings the UK's Classical music charts [collated PDF]
- a. In 2015, entry in the [Official Specialist Classical Chart Top 30](#)
  - b. In 2018, entry in the [Official Specialist Classical Chart Top 30](#)
  - c. In 2019 with Handel's Samson, noted on [Dunedin Website](#)
- 5.9 Report on Dunedin's 2018 Education programme, corroborating and detailing reach through Dunedin's schools outreach work led by John Butt as conductor [PDF]