

Institution: 10007140 Birmingham City University		
Unit of Assessment: 33 (Music)		
Title of case study: Building Creative Communities through New Music		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2014 - Present		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Professor Joe Cutler	Head of Composition	2000 – present
Dr Seán Clancy	Senior Lecturer in Music	2013 – present
Dr Andrew Hamilton	Lecturer in Composition	2015 – present
Dr Bobbie-Jane Gardner	Postdoctoral Research Fellow	06/2016 – 09/2018; 04/2020 – present
Dr Andy Ingamells	Postdoctoral Research Fellow	2015 – present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2015–2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words) <p>Collaborative composition research at BCU builds creative communities, diversifying and broadening participation in contemporary music through innovative methodologies of co-creation. The <i>for-Wards</i> project reached an audience of over 40,000 through the participation of diverse community groups in a city-wide compositional collaboration that now informs other community engagement activities in the region. Our research has changed working practices and developed careers of music creators in jazz, classical and popular music styles, leading to national and international performances, critical acclaim and industry awards. Influence beyond the field of music can be found in public art, language preservation and science communication for children and young people.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words) <p>The research underpinning this case study is a subset of the wider activities of the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Composition Cluster (CCC), comprising 11 core academic staff and 13 PGRs), focusing on co-creation with diverse communities, interdisciplinary collaboration and strategies for working across genres.</p> <p>Community Co-Creation: In the <i>for-Wards</i> project [R01], a large-scale, city-wide ‘musical ode to Birmingham’, Cutler and Gardner adapted the idea of ‘hyperlocality’ from citizen journalism into a compositional framework (‘hyperlocal’ describing highly localised media or cultural activity). The project worked with diverse community groups to co-create compositions reflecting the cultural identities of individual localities in Birmingham, leading to 10 live performance events. It was co-curated with arts organisations Kalaboration, Capsule, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, MAC Arts, the Hare and Hounds music venue, and others; and received funding from Arts Council England, PRS for Music Foundation, the Feeney Trust, Birmingham City Council and partnering arts organisations.</p> <p>Ingamells’s research lies at the intersection of visual art, music and theatre, blurring the line between composer and performer, often directly involving audiences in music-making. It has been presented in galleries such as IKON, Eastside Projects, La Plaque Tournante (Germany) and Quartair (Netherlands) and by public art producers Situations. <i>Make each face a living note</i>, commissioned by Birmingham International Dance Festival’s Midlands Made scheme (2018) [R02], challenges the traditions of what a musical and choreographic performance can be by presenting children on a bouncy castle as musical notation to be read by musicians in real time.</p> <p>Interdisciplinary collaboration: CCC’s work involves artistic partnerships across a variety of creative disciplines, including visual arts, poetry and languages. For example, Hamilton worked on the <i>Irish Art Song Project</i> (funded by Arts Council Ireland) with an interdisciplinary team including renowned Irish language expert Dr Alan Titley (University College Cork), Bríd Ní Ghrúagáin (IPA transcriber, word-for-word translations and Irish language advisor), and Garrett Sholdice (score editor and website liaison). He used modernist compositional approaches and fused them with German <i>lieder</i> techniques to recontextualise the tonal</p>		

music usually associated with Irish folk song, leading to new approaches to singing in the Irish language to create *Ceol don Bhéal Bocht* (2019) [R03].

Cross-genre collaboration: Cutler's post-genre approach to composition in *Karembau's Guide to the Complete Defensive Midfielder* (2015) [R04] grew out of collaboration with jazz musician Trish Clowes and leaves significant space for virtuosic improvisation, demonstrating a hybrid compositional aesthetic that pushes the boundaries of jazz, contemporary classical and post-minimalism. *Karembau's Guide* won the BASCA British Composer Award in the Contemporary Jazz Category (2016), making Cutler the first composer to win a British Composer Award in both the classical and jazz categories. *Karembau* led to the BBC Radio 3 commission of *Hawaii Hawaii Hawaii* [R05] saxophone concerto for Clowes and the BBC Concert Orchestra, which was nominated for an Ivor Novello Award in the Large Orchestral Category (2020).

Clancy has devised novel collaborative strategies that bring together pop musicians with contemporary classical instrumental ensembles. In *Salt Interventions* [R06] (collaboration with folk-rock artist Katie Kim and leading Irish new music group Crash Ensemble), Clancy acted as composer, orchestrator and workshop facilitator, moving between oral and notated traditions, his orchestrations 'exposing both the emotional pull of [Kim's] songs and the technical assuredness of her voice and songwriting' (*The Journal of Music*, 18/04/17).

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

R01: J. Cutler and B-J. Gardner, *for-Wards* (2016–2018). Large-scale, 2-year practice-based research project. Received a total of £161,000 in funding including from ACE £89k, PRSF £2350, Birmingham City Council £11k, Midlands Art Centre £7k, the Feeney Trust 3k, and other partners. Output includes 10 live performance events; limited-edition vinyl record; Research Catalogue exposition: www.researchcatalogue.net/view/892460/892712 (included in REF2).

R02: A. Ingamells, *Make each face a living note* (2018). 20-minute participatory performance event commissioned by Birmingham International Dance Festival (funding: £3500). Output includes: graphic score, video performance and TENOR conference paper (Monash University, Melbourne) published as a Research Catalogue exposition: www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1058718/1058719 (included in REF2).

R03: A. Hamilton, *Ceol don Bhéal Bocht* (2019). 13-minute composition in 3 movements for voice (mezzo soprano) and piano composed in 2019, commissioned by Irish Art Song Project with funds from Arts Council Ireland. Output includes: score, published Contemporary Music Centre (CMC); live recordings, available on the CMC website: <https://www.cmc.ie/AmhráinEala%C3%ADneGhaeilge/Amhráin/andrew-hamilton> (included in REF2).

R04: J. Cutler, *Karembau's Guide to the Complete Defensive Midfielder* (2015), 12-minute composition for 11-piece ensemble Emulsion Sinfonietta commissioned by Cheltenham Music Festival with PRS funds. Orchestral score published by Chester Music; studio recording released on *Elsewhereness* (portrait disc), NMC Recordings. Winner of British Composer Award, 2016. (included in REF2).

R05: J. Cutler, *Hawaii Hawaii Hawaii* (2019). 20-minute saxophone concerto commissioned by BBC Radio 3 for soloist Trish Clowes and the BBC Concert Orchestra. Live recording released by NMC (2020). Nominated for Ivor Novello Award, 2020. (included in REF2)

R06: S. Clancy, *Salt Interventions* (2016). 42-minute album and live show for Katie Kim and Crash Ensemble: bass clarinet, vibraphone, violin, viola, cello, double bass: <https://katiekim.bandcamp.com/album/salt-interventions-live-album-featuring-crash-ensemble>

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Building creative communities through participation in contemporary music is at the heart of our impact strategy and underpins every aspect of this case study. This impact is achieved through our participatory compositional methodologies, public engagement in the co-production of experimental music, strategies for bringing together classical and

improvising musicians as communities of (professional) practice, and using interdisciplinary approaches to help create new ways of understanding the world.

Our 'flagship' example of such community building is the ambitious **for-Wards** project, developed by Cutler and Gardner in collaboration with 9 leading music organisations, directly involving **837 Birmingham residents** in the compositional process itself. This included **10 professional composers** and **40 diverse community groups** made up of young mums, school children, amateur poets, community garden volunteers, golf enthusiasts and residential home tenants, resulting in the co-creation of 10 hyperlocal musical works. The performative outcomes of the project, taking place in non-concert hall spaces such as community gardens, working men's clubs, school halls, country parks and churches, engaging communities across the city, **reached an audience of 42,297** (live and online) [S01]. Birmingham Live (online newspaper) summarised the project and its impact: *"Now more than 500 Birmingham residents are to have their own recorded sounds broadcast at six world premieres ... when music created across the city and then intertwined with the sounds that make it tick will be heard in public for the first time. Named after Birmingham's 19th century motto Forward, the for-Wards project links community groups from across 40 different city wards."* [S02] At the individual level, BBC Midlands Today (2/7/2018) focused on the experience of a year 6 pupil in Perry Barr, one of the most deprived areas of Birmingham, noting how he had 'opened up and become more confident' and developed his talents. [S02] Simon Duggall, Grammy-nominated record producer and musical leader of the Perry Barr group, reflected, *"For me, the for-Wards project is a celebration of the diversity that exists in my home town. It's given me an opportunity to learn from and about different communities that I would possibly not otherwise get to know" and "it was wonderful to see this sense of community still live and kicking in these areas. The music we made broke down barriers and brought us all together. The project empowered individuals to evolve, learn and grow"*. [S03]

The *for-Wards* methodology now underpins Eastside Projects' **Twelve Tones**, the community participation strand of **Station Clock**, a large-scale aural clock and £2 million public artwork by **Turner Prize-winning artist, Susan Philipsz**, to be located at the new HS2 Curzon Street Station. *Twelve Tones* began in 2018, engaging with communities across Birmingham and Solihull to explore ideas of place through sound, time and people's voices in a series of workshops and sharing events, and was featured on BBC Midlands Today (13/2/2020): *"the voices of Brummies aged 4 to 94 have been captured in a capsule of time."* [S02] Gardner's *"hyperlocal methodological research supported ... a thriving live project across the city, seeking out communities and making sounds and music together and building a new community across the city which we are all working on now to bring together for Susan Philipsz's future artwork."* (Director, Eastside Projects). [S03] To date, *Twelve Tones* has created 668 voice recordings, working with 46 community groups. Further work on this project is currently paused due to Covid-19.

Changing working practices and developing careers.

Xhosa Cole was the youngest professional composer to work with *for-Wards*. He reflected, *"I came into the project thinking I knew a fair bit about Birmingham's history, culture and community but I've learnt so much from all the individuals in the community groups, who really shaped the project for me and further shaped my perspective of my home city!"* [S03] Cole went on to win the **BBC Young Jazz Musician of the Year 2018**, performing his co-created *for-Wards* commission *Moving Ladywood* in the final. Community-produced compositions are often marginalised in professional practice, but Cole invited a national audience to share sonically in the experience of the local Ladywood district community: *"I felt as though when I was on stage, I had the full strength and voice of my community behind me, probably because they played such a vital role in bringing this tune to life. Bringing this level of musical integrity and authenticity to the stage may have been one of the things that helped me to win."* Winning BBCYJM has in turn accelerated his professional profile: *"having that platform to perform, to showcase myself and my music opened many doors for me."*

Since then I have done a 23-date tour of the UK, performed at two proms and recorded saxophone for a UK top 30 album.” [S03]

for-Wards influenced the working practices of other composers in different ways. Edgbaston District composer, Matt Eaton (leader of alt-pop group Pram) explains: “Over the course of the project I developed new skills and interests previously unexplored within my practice, particularly in the area of community music and curation... As a result of the for-Wards project I was commissioned by Eastside Projects to deliver 20 workshops in sound art and composition as part of their “Twelve Tones” programme. for-Wards was my introduction to these workshop methods and they have since become a part of my practice.” [S03]

Composer and jazz musician Sebastiano Dessanay was part of the pilot phase of *for-Wards* and went on to translate aspects of its methodology into his own ‘377 Project’, which involved cycling and creating music in the 377 municipalities of his native Sardinia in 377 days (2018-19). Dessanay explains: *“The 377 Project was born from a question I’ve had in my head for a long time ‘what of Sardinia is within me when I compose?’ During the for-Wards project I engaged with communities with different backgrounds which forced me to ‘enter’ those worlds, which I felt were very different from mine. It was then that I thought I needed to answer my question by engaging with communities and places I was connected with.” [S03]*

Other research beyond *for-Wards* has also impacted careers and professional practices. Cutler’s *Karembou’s Guide* [R04] written for saxophonist Trish Clowes (former BBC R3 New Generation Artist), impacted her work as performer and artistic director of Emulsion Sinfonietta. The novelty of this co-created piece is the way it bridges the jazz-classical genre divide through ‘directed improvisation’, which Clowes explains *“required that I use my skills as an improviser in a different way to playing jazz standards or contemporary jazz contexts,”* describing the process as *“extremely fulfilling,”* the approach informing *“how I will consider bringing together musicians trained in different traditions for future projects.” [S04]*

This work won a British Composer Award which brought new audiences and an increased profile to the Emulsion Sinfonietta, as did its subsequent release on NMC Recordings (reaching no.10 in Classical Specialist Chart, 26/10/18) and critical reception, e.g. 4* Times review (19/10/18), 5* Classical Music Magazine review (Jan 2019) and four separate broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 (10/12/16, 1/2/17, 11/3/17, 5/1/19). [S05] The ‘proven success’ [S05] of *Karembou’s Guide* as a composer/performer collaboration led directly to Radio 3 commissioning Cutler’s *Hawaii* saxophone concerto [R05] for Clowes as soloist with the BBC Concert Orchestra. *Hawaii’s* subsequent Radio 3 broadcast, CD release, and nomination for a 2020 Ivor Novello Award is evidence of continuing reach and significance, and has added to Clowes’s growing profile as a performer.

Clancy’s *Salt Interventions* [R06] changed Irish folk-rock singer-songwriter Katie Kim’s attitude to cross-genre collaboration. She explains: *“I am normally a very solitary writer and reluctant to collaborate ... but Sean’s reimagining ... encouraged me look at the way I approach composing and arranging differently.” [S06]* It has led to new collaborative relationships, including her decision *“to continue working with Crash Ensemble’s cellist and artistic director, exploring areas in my new works that I previously may have been too intimidated to investigate,”* and it has enabled Kim to reach new audiences, identifying *“a new listenership ... that otherwise would not have been exposed to my genre of music before.” [S06]*

Influencing fields beyond music

Our methods have been translated into diverse fields such as public art (see *Twelve Tones*, above), science communication, and language preservation. For example, Hamilton’s three musical works for the Irish Language Art Song Project [R03] contributed to tackling the lack of art song in Irish/Gaeilge, raising awareness in the professional singing community and wider society. Dáirine Ní Mheadhra, co-founder of ILASP, said: *“With the Irish language in constant decline, and with the number of contemporary art songs representing the language at a surprisingly low number... we are now proud to have created an online resource that*

provides spoken recordings, word-for-word translations, and phonetic guides for singing in Irish completely free of charge.” [S07] Irish language expert Alan Titley said: “I learned a lot during the course of this project ... [Andrew] married the text with the music in a compelling way ... [that] would inspire others to follow in his path... to show that it can be done in itself is a success.” [S07]

Ingamells’s methods for reading the actions of active participants as musical notation in *Make each face a living note* [R02] were adopted by ‘Hand Of’ arts education charity (enriching the education of disadvantaged children) for their *Northumberland Space Programme* (2018–ongoing) in which children read each other as notation and could themselves be ‘played’ by a giant spotlight acting as a telescope. To date 60 children have participated in the project. North East Ambition (EU-funded careers guidance platform) reported, “*Teachers observed that working alongside composer Andy Ingamells has had a notable impact on levels on confidence and soft skills like resilience and teamwork. Before the start of the programme, only two pupils said that they wanted to go to university and at the end, every child that took part said that they would like to*”. [S08] The project was featured on ITV News (Tyne Tees, 14/11/18), in which the children’s headteacher commented, “*To be able to see that they’re all able to perform, to move, to dance, to play an instrument has just been amazing*”. [S08] Impacts from this work are ongoing. For example, musical resources created during the *Northumberland Space Programme* were subsequently adapted for a Young Palaeontologist Workshop at Dublin Zoo in order to “*demonstrate the concept of deep time through a danceable rhythm... [a] very difficult [concept] for young people to fully grasp and [Ingamells’s] video made it much easier for us to communicate our scientific research*.” [S09] Hand Of’s CEO writes: “*Andy Ingamells’s expertise and performance interests continue to inspire many workshops and projects which we develop for vulnerable children... providing examples of theatrical musical activities for workshop leaders across all of our projects nationwide*.” [S09]

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

S01 for-Wards Arts Council England final report

S02 for-Wards media coverage:

Birmingham Live article (4/6/18)

Midlands Today transcripts (2/7/2018, 13/2/2020)

S03 for-Wards blog posts, composer and curator testimonials:

for-Wards blog posts Simon Duggall [named corroborator 1] and Xhosa Cole [named corroborator 2]

Director Eastside Projects testimonial

Xhosa Cole testimonial; Matt Eaton testimonial

Sebastiano Dessanay testimonial

S04 Trish Clowes testimonial [named corroborator 3]

S05 Cutler press reviews, BBC commission and broadcast:

Press reviews, details of BBC broadcasts

Email communication from composer manager, former senior manager OUP Music

S06 Katie Kim testimonial [named corroborator 4]

S07 Irish Art Song testimonials:

Dáirine Ní Mheadhra testimonial

Alan Titley testimonial

S08 Northumberland Space Project media coverage:

North East Ambition website (screenshot)

ITV Tyne Tees transcript (14/11/18)

S09 Northumberland Space Project testimonials:

Dublin Zoo researcher testimonial

Letter from Hand Of CEO [named corroborator 5]