

Music Research Forum

Thursdays from 2.15-4.00 p.m.
Martin Harris Centre, G16

8 October

Undergraduate Employability Forum (note later start time of 2:30pm)

Roddy Hawkins in conversation with Clare Webster and Jessica Harper (Halle Connect), Sam Perry (Olympias Music Foundation), Karen Gabay (freelance producer, broadcaster and journalist), and Henry Evans and Gareth Frier (UoM)

The Employability Forum provides a space for **2nd and 3rd year Music students** to reflect on their skills and aspirations, and to learn about support and opportunities available within SALC and beyond. The event will conclude with a panel discussion featuring professionals in Manchester's music education and creative industries, including Clare Webster (Halle Connect) and Karen Gabay (freelance producer, broadcaster and journalist). The forum provides a mix of practical signposts and a holistic discussion enabling students to understand the skills and values that are required to work effectively and collaboratively in music, the arts, and the wider creative economy.

1st years should attend the performance workshop in the Cosmo.

15 October

Meet the PhDs

PhD student Thomas Proudfoot

Come and meet the University of Manchester Music Department's PhD students. Hear from researchers in musicology, composition, and ethnomusicology about what their projects are, and how they work.



22 October

Who Shapes the Opera? Immersive Storytelling and the Intelligent Stage in *The Covenant*, part of the *Ghost of the AI Empire* opera trilogy

Alexandra Huang (UoM) and Ryan Morgan (Composer)

What happens when an opera responds to its audience while it is being performed, and even the singers do not know how it will end? This seminar

explores this question through *The Covenant*, part of the *Ghost of the AI Empire* immersive opera trilogy I created, produced and directed. Ryan Morgan created music score for *The Covenant*. Reimagining the Japanese ghost legend Yotsuya Kaidan in a near future ruled by an AI empire, this new work brings European opera into dynamic encounter with Japanese Noh theatre, free improvisation and gamification. It explores how immersive technologies, including projection mapping, a 360-degree environment, spatial sound and a gamified audience orchestra, can expand digital and physical creativity, without relinquishing control to algorithmic systems or relying on simulated participation. This seminar offers a look behind the scenes before the opera's Manchester premiere on 6 November 2026.

29 October

Walking on the Ocean Floor

Anne Bourne (Sound Artist and Ecoacoustic Composer)

Tkaronto/Toronto and Tiohtià:ke/ Montreal based sound artist/ecoacoustic composer/improvising cellist **Anne Bourne** will share the story of the listening practice of her mentor, renowned composer Pauline Oliveros, 1932-2016. Known as deep listening, the practice is one of discernment and paradox, the pedagogy experiential. Discovery may arise from collective creative expression, in equanimity; from walking extremely slowly. After experiencing a manmade flood on the island where she lived in Lake Ontarí:io, 2017, Anne received a fellowship to walk on shorelines, to deepen her attention to water, shaping a restorative practice of reciprocal presence. How does deep listening heighten perception so we may engage with histories and invisible infrastructures, ancestral resonance, the multispecies sound fields, neutrino waves? The Text Scores of Pauline Oliveros define simple parameters, to experience an embodied listening that travels with time, with memory and imagination. Oliveros organizes sense perception in the infinite sound field, with attention and awareness, expanding both range and discernment, and a magnetic field of receptivity. As footsteps press on land and littoral, sites of more than human thriving, of industrial extraction, walking becomes our knowing of a place. Detect the surfacing of subtle infrasonic pulses of all forms of life, and what remains, traces of resonance, underground tributaries, wild fire, deep ocean. In a quantum sonic gesture, may we affect what we come to sense, the invisible of what came before, a future with refined and sudden instinct, presence?



In the morning before the forum, Anne Bourne will lead a workshop on Deep Listening for UoM staff+students in G16 from 11am until 1pm.



Thursday 12th November

Video as Articulation in Embodied Practice Research: How can musicians articulate the insights of embodied practice?

Mira Benjamin (City St George's, University of London)

'Embodiment' is an umbrella term that acknowledges the various ways of knowing that are lived, experienced, enacted, and practiced in human bodies. Spatz (2017: 1) defines **embodied research** as a methodology that 'takes seriously the idea that areas and disciplines of embodied practice might constitute substantive epistemic fields in their own right'. Embodied research in music takes place on stage and in the studio, in rehearsal rooms and pedagogic spaces, and across all stages of experimentation and public presentation. In all these spaces, significant (sometimes ecstatic) new knowledge may potentially arise for embodied researchers—but how can these insights be made legible to a wider research audience? Unlike more established methodologies, in which

documents produced may eventually be circulated among research communities, embodied research spaces rather tend to produce human experiences that, without documentation, risk getting lost in personal or institutional narratives. In this talk I will propose **audiovisual methods** for articulating research insights in embodied research—especially in contexts where a performance or other time-based activity is documented. I will share examples from my own audiovisual scholarship, drawing from practice research in performance and critical pedagogy.

26th November

Science into Pop: Dub, Tinkering, and the Triangulation of Legitimacy across Three Experimental Music Traditions

Mimi Haddon (University of Sussex)

This article revisits Simon Firth and Howard Horne's important 1987 book *Art into Pop* with a view to revising its central premise; rather than focus on the influence of fine art theory on mid-century rock, I strategically reorient the discourse towards "science"—not science in the conventional sense of the word but, rather, the vernacular tradition of tinkering and experimentation with audio technology rooted in Jamaican dub reggae. Using historical analysis of music press discourse alongside close listening, this article restores a musical tradition largely missing from Frith and Horne's original analysis, a musical tradition crucially marked by a different set of infrastructural conditions and evaluative logics when compared to those that characterise both what Frith and Horne call art rock and Euro-American high art. I do so not to overwrite the claims of *Art into Pop* but to instead triangulate the until-now unidirectional flow of ideas in mid-century experimental music in a way that has far-reaching ramifications beyond the focus of this article. By conceptualising music press discourse as a mediating technology across the three categories of dub science, art rock, and high art, I uncover an inchoate genealogy of musical experimentation where the exciting dissolution of the boundary between music and sound emerges not only from mid-century musical modernism but also from dub reggae.



Thursday 3rd December

Introduction to Creative Manchester, working in partnership, and examples of work on music and audiences, and music and Parkinson's

Michelle Phillips (Creative Manchester, UoM) and Max Thomas (Manchester Camerata, Creative Manchester)

In this talk, Max and Michelle will discuss various aspects of their work and research working across disciplines and in partnership with others. Both Max and Michelle are part of the Creative Manchester platform, and in this talk they will cover the broad work of the platform, and then move on to examples of their own practice, including research on music and audiences, and music and Parkinson's.

