

Committee	Dated:
Board of Governors, Guildhall School of Music & Drama	15 February 2021
Subject: General Report of the Principal	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	n/a
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	n/a
If so, how much?	n/a
What is the source of Funding?	n/a
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	n/a
Report of: Lynne Williams	For Information
Report author: Lynne Williams	

Summary

This report updates the Board on a number of current issues:

- Sector & School update
- Quality of learning and teaching environment by department (including Music, Drama, Production Arts, Advancement and GYA)
- Awards and Prizes
- Higher Education student number snapshot 2020/21 (annex)

Recommendation: that the Board receives the report and notes its contents.

Main Report

Introduction

A last minute change to guidance by the Government, the evening before New Year's Eve, removed performing arts courses from the exemptions for face to face teaching and learning previously agreed for the spring term, with a further last minute restrictions announced 4th January. Following an emergency meeting, the staff had two days to reschedule programmes for online learning only and to alert students, although many international students were already in transit. Once again, Guildhall School staff rose to the challenge, giving up the last days of their holidays to ensure an orderly commencement to the spring term. We have since had several meetings with the Universities' Minister to ensure performing arts courses will be included in the next tranche of university courses allowed to deliver a blended programme of teaching and learning. We have made the point to government that without in-person rehearsal and performance, our students will not be able to fulfil their learning outcomes and progression and graduation are in jeopardy.

We are currently awaiting notification of a possible return to in-person teaching from March 8. The postponed Graduation Ceremony from November 2020 will now take place online on 26 March 2021.

It is important to note that the School's Students' Union, led by President Harry Plant, has been working hard to sustain the student community and regular meetings with the Principal and the Dean of Students has meant communication and resolution of issues has been efficient and timely. However, there is national student unrest around higher education fee and accommodation refunds and our students are part of a CUK SU campaign to approach government ministers for government support in these matters.

The School Covid Gold Team continues to manage the huge amount of day-to-day decision-making required and to keep students and staff informed of health and safety procedures being implemented. The School has a partnership with the University of East London for asymptomatic testing and we are continuing to explore other HE partnerships ready for the return to campus. Students have also been alerted to the many community testing sites available to them in London boroughs which may be more suitable for them. There is a DfE expectation of twice weekly asymptomatic testing once the students and staff have returned in person.

We are in constant contact with Public Health England and also now report twice weekly to the OfS through a DfE portal. We continue to work closely with the City Corporation teams and will repeat our risk assessments where considered necessary to reassure all that the mitigations put in place are following latest guidance.

Work on our Anti-Racism programme is progressing well and recommendations from all of the School-wide conversations have now been shared with the Senior Management Team and the broader All Staff meeting. A newly constituted Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is being convened to hold the School to account for the delivery of these recommendations. We are grateful for the guidance of our external consultant Baljit Kaur and to the Director of Innovation and Engagement, Sean Gregory, for leading this crucial initiative. We are also grateful for the advice of Maureen Salmon who has been working with our Drama alumni community to ensure past experiences are addressed within our current anti-racist action plan.

As you will see from the following selected departmental highlights, there is a great deal of outstanding student and staff work continuing against all the odds and it is a measure of the resilient spirit of the Guildhall community that we are finding new ways for voices to be heard within a broad range of contexts. One of our key events this year will be DISRUPT, a digital festival taking place 8 and 9 July. The event will explore how the performing arts has supported communities during the pandemic, and what new and radical ways of working have emerged as a result.

Quality of Learning and Teaching

Music Highlights

- 11 January Bass professor Luis Cabrera performed Koussevitsky Concerto in a live stream broadcast with the Netherlands Philharmonic (now on youtube)

- Violin professor Simon Blendis led the London Mozart Players in a series of online performances, and is participating in the online launch of LMP's 100k Challenge for children and young people
- The Opera triple bill was viewed nearly 6000 times.
- In November and December 2020 four music therapy students, the Head of Department and one recent graduate participated in the Music Bank, with Age UK, a partnership between Guildhall and Age UK Camden, a project which aimed to bring music to people suffering from dementia and isolation during lockdown.
- Graduate Certificate and Early Keyboards Scholarship holder, Matthew Brown, has edited a critical edition of Matheson's *Die Wohlklingende Fingersprache*, published by Soundboard Press.
- MPerf theorbist Kristiina Watt has been appointed theorbo-player with the Armonico Consort.
- New Guildhall Chamber Fellows, the Consone quartet (already BBC New Generation Artists) and our Visiting String Quartet in residence, the Endellion Quartet, took part in a day of socially distanced masterclasses and seminars
- Our piano professor, Noriko Ogawa, led a special online performance presentation by her class which will be shown as part of a concert programme in the Muza Kawasaki Concert Hall in Japan in February.

Drama Highlights

- This year's Cross School Project will be delivered remotely via Zoom throughout February 2021. The Cross School Project will see every Guildhall undergraduate first year student come together in small cross-faculty project teams and create a short, collaborative, original performance work to be shared on Zoom.
- A reimagined offer for the Solo Performance curriculum option was curated for 3rd year students in the early weeks of the spring term. Enhanced tutorial support and wider input into this activity has reinforced the programme team's desire to support students' artistic independence and their ambition to realise their own projects. This work seems to speak strongly to the uncertainties that actors are likely to face upon graduation.
- Ongoing training/reflective spaces for staff: Training continues for the teaching staff, focused this term on Anti-Racist training led by Gail Babb. Alongside this, staff reflective spaces continue fortnightly for all teaching staff, led by Anthea Benjamin and Chris Scanlon.
- Closer engagement with graduates in China to promote and enhance the acting studies programme and explore opportunities for short courses.
- In December 2020, PACE students were invited to create a filmed "winter message" from the School. Two final-year students, Riwa Saab and Nikisha Reyes pulled together a small ensemble from across all three academic faculties and, working with the Marketing team, created a short film called Snowglobe. The film garnered very positive responses both internally and externally and currently has over a thousand views on YouTube.

- In January, the second of three R&D Labs took place online. The labs are a core part of the R&D module, allowing PACE students to develop their final performance works and to learn about R&D techniques and processes. The lab was led by Paula Varjack, with support from leading industry professionals Conrad Murray and Louise Orwin.
- Our programme of Real Talk conversations continues this term with a second series. Hosted by PACE tutor and multi-disciplinary artist, Paula Varjack, Real Talk invites speakers who are high-profile contemporary performance makers who have an element of activism or social engagement to their practice. Viewing figures climbed steadily throughout series 1 and Real Talk was the third most watched event in our autumn programme after the Gold Medal and the Jazz Festival. We have now confirmed a third series with Paula, to take place in the summer term.

Production Arts Highlights

The School's Marketing Department recently reported the viewing figures for Guildhall's public-facing events last term. These were typically presented behind closed doors (with no co-present spectators) and live-streamed to an online audience; and the recording of the event was made available typically for a further week.

Audience numbers suggest that almost four times as many people than across the same term last year were able to watch student work, due to the streaming and online access the School facilitated:

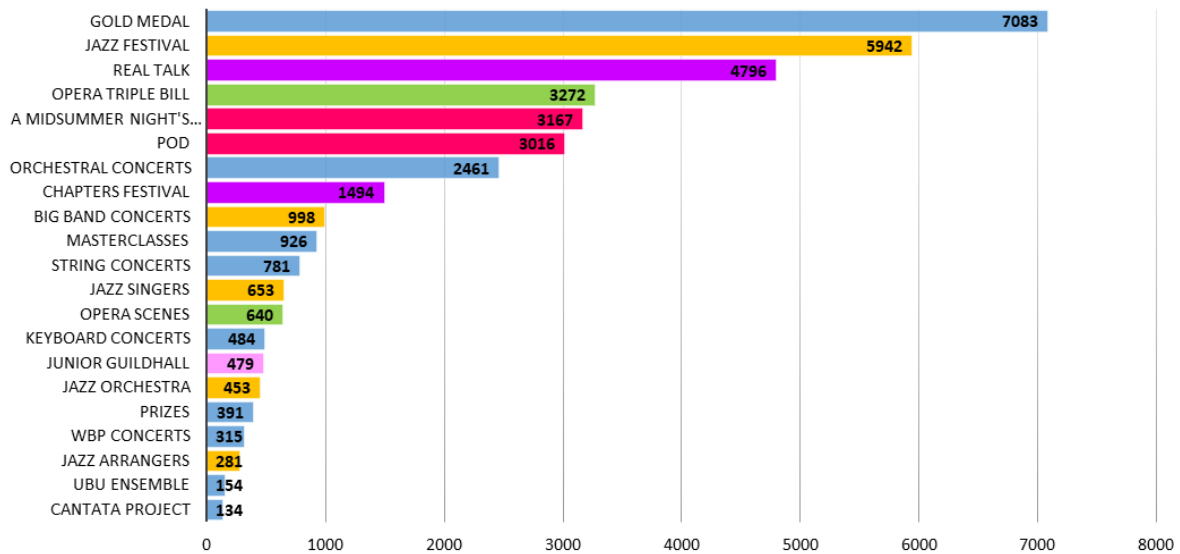
Total viewing figures across whole season = **37,920**
 (the same as 62 performances at full capacity in the Milton Court Concert Hall)
 Average of 665 views per event

Excluding *Real Talk* Instagram views (-4,796) = **33,124**
 (the equivalent of 55 performances at full capacity in the Milton Court Concert Hall)
 Average of 649 views per event. For comparison, 11,000 tickets were booked for events in Autumn 2019.

Top viewed individual events for Autumn 2020

1	The Gold Medal 2020	7083
2	Guildhall Autumn Jazz Festival (all events)	5304
3	Guildhall Symphony Orchestra	1248
4	Guildhall Chamber Orchestra	1213
5	A Midsummer Night's Dream (final performance)	1025
6	Real Talk: Paula Varjack x Travis Alabanza (part of <i>Chapters</i>)	945
7	Pod (opening performance)	800
8	Opera Triple Bill (opening performance)	792

Autumn 2020 broadcasts – viewing figures overview



We are confident that this achievement puts us significantly ahead of our competitors, in terms of sharing our work with the public during the pandemic. We anticipate that we'll be able to sustain many of the advances here as we plan for public presentation of our events in the future.

We are finalising commissions with two theatre companies and our own GLE (Guildhall Live Events) concerning three further online production projects for the second half of term – this will ensure that we have the most suitable opportunities available in the circumstances for students across all areas of production.

We have also arranged for students to undertake alternative specialist work. Students on the Costume Pathway, for example, have been working with designer Stewart Charlesworth on a Costume Project based on *My Fair Lady*. Stage Management students have been spreading their wings and working as Creative Producers on the Third Year BA Acting students' Solo Projects, mentored and supported by Gilly Roche (Guildhall's Head of Interdisciplinary Studies) and freelance director/producer Jude Christian. The Theatre Technology students (Lighting, Theatre Automation, Sound, Video) have further developed their digital design and 3D realisation skills. Lighting and Video students are preparing virtual realisations of productions in conjunction with the designers of the current and postponed productions, and Sound students have been creating radio play versions of the postponed dramas. The Design Realisation students are working on a three-week pantomime project, which introduces the students to established design and staging conventions of traditional pantomime, with skills sessions in props, scenic art and construction, facilitated by a visiting pantomime designer. The students will go on to design a scene from *Jack and the Beanstalk*, in pairs. Materials have been dispatched to the students' homes for them to make their model pieces; and the scenes will be 'stitched' together using photographs, video and/or stop-motion to produce an online presentation.

While everybody hopes to be back in the building as soon as we are able, students are meanwhile developing and honing some new skills that will be of benefit when we emerge into the new normal.

Four colleagues on the staff team in Production Arts are currently undertaking doctoral study at the School. The Department organised a research event before the Christmas break in which three presented on their research projects – Jon Armstrong (stage magic and experience design), Susannah Henry (autoscenography), and Pat Shammon (a reappraisal of Henslowe's inventory of props at the Rose Theatre, 1598). The event shared some fascinating insights and was warmly received.

Innovation and Engagement Highlights

- Our most recently published update on our EDI work is here: www.gsmd.ac.uk/antiracism Since this most recent web page posting our Anti-Racism task Force has distilled the findings from the staff/student Listen and Learn sessions initially held into the following key Equality Objectives:
 1. Demonstrate equality, diversity and inclusion commitment
 2. Create an inclusive culture where everyone can thrive
 3. Contextualise the library, curriculum/repertoire, and pedagogy
 4. To attract under-represented student groups
 5. To attract, select and retain a diverse workforce
- Our Open Programme Spring online evening courses launched on 27 January. We are welcoming 128 participants across 7 courses. We are planning to offer up to 24 evening courses across three terms in 2021. The spring and summer terms will take place online. The programme includes new courses in jazz, cinema music and composing, and writing for stage and screen. We are also working on a range of courses in partnership with the Barbican.
- Planning for summer 2021 has been more complicated due to COVID-19. Due to current restrictions we have decided to delay the publication of our face-to-face courses until the end of March. The marketing launch for online summer courses will go ahead this month.
- We have just launched our second series of Change-Makers Workshops, free sessions responding to the live challenges and changes facing everyone who works in the creative sector today. Each week, a different facilitator, all of whom were recruited via an open call within the sector, lead discussions on various topics. So far we have welcomed over 100 delegates onto the programme. Session topics have included; adaptability and resilience, using digital technologies for new performance platforms, and collaborating at a distance.
- February will see the launch of a new intensive programme we are running in partnership with the Change Collective. The Change Maker Academy will support the 24 performing arts professionals to evolve their practice, approach and skills with the ultimate aim to foster genuine change and career development.

- Guildhall Coaching Associates courses due to take place in February are already fully booked. We are now seeing professionals from a variety of sectors booking onto our training – including business, law, sport and the civil service.
- Our musical befriending project with Age UK Camden successfully completed its pilot, working with 16 Age UK participants living with dementia and 12 Guildhall School artists. The project engaged participants over 3 phone calls and artists played music requested by their befriender. We are hoping to expand the project in the next two months into Age UK East as part of a community commission funded by Culture Mile.
- We've been working with local communities for Culture Mile to create poetry inspired by a new community garden on Moor Lane. Around 80 people from local community organisations and groups took part in a series of workshops facilitated by Guildhall School students. The work they created will form a digital element connected to the garden.
- A new audio commission called Consequences created by 10 Guildhall artists is launching next month as part of an illustrated online exhibition. The work focuses on experiences of the pandemic and includes music and field recordings taken during the first lockdown last spring and composed and recorded in people's homes during that period.
- We are currently developing *DISRUPT*, a digital festival taking place 8 and 9 July. The event will explore how the performing arts has supported communities during the pandemic, and what new and radical ways of working have emerged as a result.
- The event is an alliance project between the School and Barbican, in partnership with Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance; Lived Experience Network; Culture Mile; Maya Productions; and Slung Low.
- The annual Research report has been postponed until the next meeting in May, which will also include an update on the completed REF2021 submission.
- We are awaiting the result of our recent Erasmus+ application for £30k, which will be the final application made under the scheme.
- Julian Anderson, jointly employed by Composition and Research and a prominent contributor to our REF2021 submission, was awarded a CBE in the New Year's Honours list.
- The Under 18 division moved to full online learning, with 1,400+ students back to individualised video platform based timetables. This is the fifth switch in 12 months.
- Despite the widely reported challenges of online learning for under 18's, retention levels remain high with only small numbers of existing students opting not to continue learning this term and new students joining every centre.
- Several new Spring term courses have recruited well. This includes the GYA Online centre's *Young Composers* course and CYM Taunton's *Music Starts Here!* early years course. Norfolk CYM will launch their first *Music Starts Here!* course in the Summer term.
- CYM London have developed a new virtual online Open Day on 13 February for potential applicants to 'see' the centre, meet current students and hear what ensembles do. Sign-ups have been strong.

- A variety of creative partnership projects have also switched online including CYMT's Composer in Residence programme; 6 Guildhall School students are working with CYMT students and tutors this term (funded by the Michael Tippett Musical Foundation), and Norfolk CYM with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Norfolk Music Hub.

Advancement

- An evaluation by the Marketing team of the School's first-ever digital performance season in the autumn term shows great success in reaching audiences during this period. Over 60 online events received 37,920 total views across the season - equivalent to having filled the Milton Court Concert Hall 62 times at full capacity – and the events were viewed by people across the world, receiving 76,814 unique page views from over 120 countries. A selection of highlights will be available to watch again on the School's YouTube Channel.
- In the third quarter of the financial year from 1 October to 31 December the Development Office recorded over 500 donations to the total value of £500k of which £439k was restricted to scholarships. The final figure for funds raised for scholarships for use in 20/21 was £893k against £800k target. Scholarships raised so far for use in 21/22 amounts to £600k towards the £910k target. There are also £400k worth of 'asks' in the pipeline.
- Trustees of the Guildhall School Trust approved the release of c£280k funds from the endowment portfolio at their December 2020 meeting following evidence presented by the Development team that the original donors did not require the funds to be invested.
- The following high profile alumni interviews have recently been conducted and are available to view on our website: producer Judy Craymer, soprano Kate Royal (who was also presented with her Fellowship of Guildhall School during the autumn term) and lighting designer Hugh Vanstone.
- The annual supporter and alumni magazine PLAY, which was published in October, may be viewed online at: https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/about_the_school/alumni/play_magazine/
- The School's Annual Report for academic year 19/20 has now been published digitally. All governors will receive a copy by email, and the report can also be accessed at [gsmd.ac.uk/annualreport](https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/annualreport)

Prizes and Awards

Mia Kosminsky (BA Video Design for Live Performance, 2019) has been chosen for the longlist of the Aesthetica Art Prize. This means that her work from *Hungariana* (a concert series featuring the Casals Quartet and Tamara Stefanovich, under the creative direction of Gerard McBurney, presented by the Barbican at Milton Court Concert Hall in 2019) will be published in the *Aesthetica Art Prize Anthology: Future Now*. Mia undertook her work on this project as a part of one of her modules at the School. Meanwhile, Aesthetica notes that its book 'showcases the work of 125 of the most exciting artists from around the world and is a dynamic guide to international contemporary art'.

Alumni

The Stage 100 2021 (Jan 7 2021)

Putting on shows category: Daniel Evans (Acting 1994)

Putting on shows category: Emma Rice (Acting 1988)

Fundraising category: Francesca Moody (Acting Short Course 2008)

The Stage Awards winners 2021 (Jan 6 2021)

Simon Baker (Technical Theatre 1992) won the achievement in technical theatre award

Tenor Viñas Contest (Jan 26 2021)

Carmen Artaza (Mezzo-Soprano 2019) won:

1. 1st Prize Tenor Vinas
2. Mozart Prize
3. Placido Domingo prize for the best Spanish singer.

New Year Honours (1 Jan 2021)

David Peter Stanley (Junior Exhibition Piano, Percussion, Conducting 1995)

Appointed an OBE for services to People with Special Needs

Association for Lighting Designers Excellence Awards (18 December 2020)

Liam Strong (Production Arts 2020) – won the The Blue-I Theatre Technology Award for Excellence in Video

Liam Sayer (Production Arts 2020) – won the Fred Foster Award for Production Electrics

Higher Education student number snapshot 2020/21

Attached in the annex is the annual snapshot of Higher Education students taken at the 1 December 2020 HESES census date. Also included is the profile of the new entrants to the School both overall and the subset of UK home domiciled.

Report author

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