

Principal's Public Report

Main report

1. Quality of learning and teaching environment

I am pleased to report a successful commencement of the academic year 2017/18. I welcomed new students and staff at a number of events including an international student induction event, a cross course meeting of new students and more recently, an induction and training day for new academic and administrative staff.

The programme of productions and concerts has already commenced and highlights included a concert by the Guildhall School Orchestra which incorporated new students who had been at the School for only two weeks. In addition, we launched the Guildhall Studio Orchestra which performed a dynamic programme of work written especially for the orchestra by Dave Arch who performed with the students and a line-up of the UK's most experienced session players. This is a more commercial addition to our music offering, led by the Jazz department and is the beginning of a broadening of the jazz course to include a greater variety of genre electives. Music students also took part in the BBC's Julian Anderson Immersion Day, performing to an astounding standard and receiving high praise from both audience members and BBC professionals. The acting students excelled in their presentations of Martin Crimp plays and *The Cherry Orchard* while technical theatre students had a major success with *Blood Rite*, a video mapping presentation in the Guildhall Yard. We are currently preparing for the first opera of the term, Menotti's *The Consul* followed by opera scenes and *Post Mortem* directed and designed by visiting artists Lucy Bailey and Bill Dudley.

We continue to look for opportunities to improve access to our theatre performances. Last year we trialled captioning and recently, technical theatre student Ben Cook trialled audio description as part of his graduation research project. Audio description is increasingly prevalent across all art forms, including theatre, film, TV, art galleries and museums making these accessible to a blind or partially sighted audience. It involves writing, delivery and facilitation of audio description through headphones. 'Touch tours' are also undertaken before the performance to allow the visually impaired audience members an opportunity to tour the stage, feel the props and costumes and meet the actors.

Our recruitment has been extremely successful this year and we have the largest cohort ever with over 1000 students enrolled. Final figures are still being ascertained as some students are still unable to find the funds necessary to accept their offer. Cash scholarships amounted to just over £2m.

We have been preparing for the Graduation Ceremonies 2017 which was held in the Guildhall in the first week of November. We graduated students from across all our undergraduate, taught postgraduate and doctoral programmes. We also honoured four Fellows, Alison Mears, Noriko Ogawa, Meyrick Alexander, and Dario Marianelli. Honorary Fellowships were awarded to Henk

van der Meulen, Peter Tornquist, and Sir Brian McMaster. Earlier in the term a short ceremony was conducted on the stage of the Barbican by the Chair, Principal and Vice-Principal & Director of Music to award an honorary fellowship to Maestro Sakari Oramo who was not able to attend the graduation ceremony. Fellow Eric Fellner and Honorary Fellow Barbara Hannigan, were also not able to attend the Graduation ceremony and will be presented with their certificates at another suitable event.

2. Partnerships with Barbican and with the City of London

A more formalised artistic and educational alliance with the Barbican is a key objective within the new five year plan. Vice-Principal & Director of Guildhall Innovation, Helena Gaunt, is leading the School in a number of joint initiatives with Barbican staff, including strengthening our UK and global positioning, building the destination value within Culture Mile, demonstrating the value of the arts and changing artistic practice, learning and consumption.

Following the launch of Culture Mile, we have been working closely with the City of London, Museum of London, Barbican and LSO to map out a management and delivery structure and a programme of future activities. In the distributed model, the Guildhall School will be leading on partnerships. Working with consultant Sian Bird, we have already identified 40 potential partners who want to contribute to Culture Mile in some capacity. We have put forward a work plan with a budget for a proposed program of work which also includes funding to backfill some of our staff contribution. It is clear that Culture Mile and Culture Mile Learning will become important additions to our teaching and learning environment offering a range of opportunities for student and staff, especially in terms of cross discipline work and artistic citizenry.

The Centre for Music project has now entered an intensive phase of development following the announcement of the winning design team on 9th October. The School was involved in each of the selection panels for architects, acousticians and theatre consultants.

I was part of the selection panel for the architect and was thrilled that the design studio of Diller, Scofidio + Renfro were selected. The winning team presented a wonderful concept design which promises to deliver a Centre which is a place of welcome, participation, discovery and learning fit for the digital age. The Vice-Principal & Director of Music, Jonathan Vaughan is now leading on the next stages of C4M, which will involve ensuring a highly visible positioning of the School within the Centre especially in terms of our socially engaged practice, digital innovation and research/knowledge exchange. The first week of intensive design discussions have already taken place with architects, acousticians and theatre consultants and presentations and consultations with other stakeholders will follow. There has been a great deal of discussion around the kind of digital environment we will need to provide including enhanced reality and web-based access to all activity. It will be important for all Guildhall School board members to understand the role we are playing within this C4M partnership and the opportunities which the Centre will offer for our next generation artists and practitioners.

I have continued to contribute to the City's Corporate Policy and to the new City Cultural Policy. Other meetings at the Guildhall have included an update on implementation of the PA report to the Efficiency and Performance Committee, Safeguarding monitoring meetings with CoL Children and Community Services and Peer Review sessions.

3. Under 18's Programme

We have appointed an external consultant to conduct the review of our under 18 offer. This will include London CYM, regional CYMs, Junior Guildhall, Creative Learning and our work with schools in East London. Discussions are also taking place with City of London Education Committee regarding extended activity within City Academies. The review will help us consolidate current work under a Guildhall Young Artist banner and provide guidance in the extension of activities especially within acting and production arts.

We have recently appointed an Acting and Widening Participating Tutor, Brodie Ross; to deliver on a widening participation brief for drama. It is crucial that we engage with a wider range of schools and communities if we are to attract a rich and diverse cohort of young people to our courses and summer schools and hopefully provide a pathway into higher education for them. The recent Conservatoires UK conference devoted a day to the topics of Diversity and Widening Participation. Five members of staff attended including the Principal plus the Students' Union President. As a result, we are already considering a number of new 'positive action' initiatives to address our poor outcomes in terms of recruitment of a diverse cohort of students at both junior and senior levels. This will include a reassessment of audition panels, a review of curricula especially repertoire and a search for BAME academic staff.

4. Future Sustainability

Some research has been carried out into possible rental spaces close to the School which might allow us to either accommodate staff who are using performance/rehearsal spaces for offices or provide more teaching space especially in relation to development of new higher education programmes and the short courses offer. Liverpool University in London which is situated on Finsbury Square has expressed interest in a partnership which may deliver affordable space for us and joint working opportunities for specific e-learning initiatives. We are continuing to explore this possibility with an initial joint 'blue sky' workshop scheduled for the beginning of November. Much of the new strategic plan requires investment in space if we are to broaden our programmes and diversify our income streams.

At present, we are awaiting the outcome of a Barbican proposal for shared usage of Exhibition Halls 1 and 2. We have proposed a recording studio, digital teaching rooms and space for creative entrepreneurship alongside needs for our shared creative learning programme and socially engaged practice degrees.

An interim Director of Advancement is now in post. Significant progress has been made in settling the development team and we are now recruiting for the Vice-Principal/Director of Advancement with a plan to appoint in December 2017. We have been encouraged by the extremely strong field we have attracted to this post. It is likely that the commencement date for the new post holder will be April 2018, given most candidates need to give three months' notice. An enhanced case for support for a fundraising campaign is taking shape based on the new narrative and initiatives within the strategic plan.

We continue to be involved on many fronts with organisations such as UUK, CUK, London Higher and CIFA, providing information to the government in their Brexit deliberations. I have invited the CEO of UUK, Alistair Jarvis and Chair of CUK, Linda Merritt to meet with the City Remembrancer, Paul Double to discuss areas of mutual concern around Immigration and the Arts. Free flow of the creative sector including students, is crucial to the continuing cultural excellence and innovation of the Guildhall School, the City of London and the UK higher education sector.

The Senior Management team recently received Prevent training and there are plans for an updated Safeguarding course to be undertaken by all members of the Guildhall School staff. We continue to remain vigilant and have revisited processes and procedures regarding both these issues within our Business Continuity Plan.

5. International

The first cohort of Chinese drama students from the Central Academy of Drama (CAD), Beijing has commenced their studies with us. Our technical theatre training programme delivered in China in association with our high level industry partners continues into its second iteration. Further formal courses will be delivered in Beijing and Shanghai in November/December 2017 and May 2018. Our acting students have just returned from CAD where they performed King Lear to great acclaim.

A planned concert in Carnegie Hall during NY audition week will be enhanced by a development event sponsored by our Founding Corporate Patron, Eversheds Sutherland. Sixty high net worth individuals will be invited by Eversheds Sutherland to a cocktail party followed by the concert. This event follows the launch of our partnership earlier in the year. Eversheds have selected three creative institutions, the Guildhall School, The Saatchi Gallery and the Design Museum to “create a mutually reinforcing partnership which celebrates the very best in innovation, talent development, community outreach and thought leadership”. The top floor of their office building at One Wood Street features a photographic exhibition of Guildhall students in action.

The VP & Director of Guildhall Innovation, Helena Gaunt will be leading on the development of our new international strategy as part of the joint working planned with the Barbican. There are many areas of international programming in both organisations which need to be captured early in the planning cycle if we are to capitalise on visiting artists, companies and ensembles and

provide students with the international experiences and opportunities for networking which give such a distinctive flavour to our courses.

6. Awards and Prizes

Internal

Ming Xie, Piano

- Winner of the Guildhall Wigmore Hall Prize 2017, who will give a solo recital at the Wigmore Hall on 27 June 2018.

External

Juniors

Leia Zhu, Violin

- Made History and became the youngest ever to perform in the Prominent Salzburg Festival
- Winner of the Kocianovo Ústí competition in Czech Republic

Electra Makris

- Finalist in the American Protégé held at Carnegie Hall

Caitlin Chan

- Winner of the Havering Young Musician on the Year 2017

Contact:

Lynne Williams

Principal, Guildhall School of Music & Drama

Tel: 020 7382 7141

Email: principal@gsmd.ac.uk