

STRENGTHENING MUSIC IN SOCIETY

The way forward for UK Conservatoires

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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

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JESS GILLAM MBE



Hailing from Ulverston in Cumbria, Jess Gillam is animating the music world with her outstanding talent and infectious personality. After performing at the prestigious Last Night of the Proms in 2018 and having her performance described as “the indisputable highlight” by BBC News, Jess continues to grow her international career as well as presenting on TV and Radio.

Jess is passionate about inspiring and bringing joy to people through music and has continued to do so throughout the Coronavirus pandemic. While in lock-down Jess launched her Virtual Scratch Orchestra, inviting musicians of any standard to come together to play music virtually with her. Over 2,000 people from around 30 different countries took part across the two projects, aged 2-94, playing a huge range of instruments.

This season she continues to perform throughout the UK and Europe in recital as well as with BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, the Hallé, Manchester Camerata and the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. Jess is the first ever saxophonist to be signed to Decca Classics and recently released her second album, ‘TIME’, which shot to No.1 in the Official UK Classical Charts, as did her debut album ‘RISE’. Keen to expand the saxophone repertoire, she also had two pieces written for the album – one by Luke Howard and one by Goldfrapp’s Will Gregory. She has also commissioned and premiered music by Anna Clyne and John Harle and is constantly working on new commissioning projects. Jess’ debut album was released in 2019 and features a selection of her favourite pieces ranging from Marcello and Shostakovich to David Bowie and Kate Bush. Both albums have been highly celebrated and received rave reviews.

Gillam is also a presenter on TV and Radio. She became the youngest ever presenter for BBC Radio 3 and hosts her own weekly show and podcast called “This Classical Life” where she chats to musical guests to swap tracks and share the music they love, She has also been a guest presenter for BBC Radio 2 on “Sunday Night is Music Night” and co-hosted a mini series with James Naughtie for BBC Radio 4 on the Today Programme. In 2019 Jess also presented five BBC Proms live on television alongside Katie Derham and Tom Service.

Jess studied and was mentored by the legendary saxophonist John Harle and graduated from Guildhall School of Music with a Masters with distinction in 2020. A free spirit in style and character, Gillam is a passionate advocate for the power of music in society, often combining her concert engagements with educational and social projects. She is a patron for Awards for Young Musicians and a trustee for the HarrisonParrott Foundation, working towards full inclusivity of all ethnicities, genders, disabilities and social backgrounds with equal access to the arts.

PROFESSOR HELENA GAUNT



Professor Helena Gaunt PhD MBA (Distinction) LGMS(PCS) BA Hons (Cantab) FGS
Helena Gaunt is a musician, author and thought-leader on professional education and practice in the performing arts. She is Principal of the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama (RWCMD) and a Professor, having previously been Vice Principal and Director of Innovation at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London. She sits on the Council of the Royal Philharmonic Society, the advisory board for Kerry Nicholls Dance (KND), and has a leading role for the European Association of Conservatoire's major project *Strengthening Music in Society*.

Helena was a professional oboist for many years, and founding member of the Britten Sinfonia. Alongside this she developed research expertise, with major publications co-edited with Professor Heidi Westerlund including *Expanding Professionalism in Music and Higher Music Education: A Changing Game* (2021) and *Collaborative Learning in Higher Music Education* (2013), and *Musicians in the Making: Pathways to Creative Performance* (2017) co-edited with Professor John Rink and Professor Aaron Williamon. While at the Guildhall School, she led the international Innovative Conservatoire partnership focusing on developing curriculum and pedagogical practices, and development of the Reflective Conservatoire series of conferences. She is a National Teaching Fellow (2009) and Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. She is also a member of the Livery of the Worshipful Company of Skinners, and a Governor of Tonbridge School. She lives in Cardiff and has five children, including two sets of twins.

ANKNA AROCKIAM



Originally from India, Ankna Arockiam moved to Glasgow in 2011. Since then, she has graduated from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and continues to study singing with Margaret Izatt. Ankna is currently completing her PhD, studying the musical, cultural and social identities of young Western classical musicians in Indian cities.

Her singing career continues and as a soloist, she has performed in various festivals and venues across India and the UK. She regularly collaborates with other musicians and artists, she is part of Naad-Hara, an Indo-Scottish band based in Glasgow; Saanjh, a classical trio with piano and tabla (Winners of Chamber Music Scotland's 2022 Underrepresented Composers Tour); and Raag n Tonic, a Bollywood band.

She provides workshops for and with various organisations, orchestras and schools in Scotland and in India; including the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, the Sri Lankan, and the south-Asian communities in Glasgow. She has served as Students Union President for RCS and, as the chair of the AEC Student Working Group.

Ankna is the founder/director of Glasgow Sitare, a singing group for South Asian women in Glasgow; co-founder of Shared Narratives, platform for researchers of colour; and is on the Board for Children's Classic Concerts, Nevis Ensemble and MusiQuE.

DR DIANA SALAZAR



Diana Salazar is Director of Programmes at the Royal College of Music where she leads on learning and teaching strategy and curriculum development at junior, undergraduate and postgraduate taught levels. Building on her background as composer and researcher in composition with music technology, she is a passionate advocate for embedding digital innovation in the conservatoire curriculum. She is equally committed to improving access, equity and belonging in conservatoire education.

A Conservatoire graduate herself, Diana originally trained as a flautist at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama before specialising in composition for Masters studies, followed by doctoral studies in composition at the University of Manchester. Following a number of years working as an instrumental instructor and workshop leader, Diana began her career in higher education at the University of Manchester before holding Lectureships in Music at Kingston University, then City University London. In 2015 she moved to the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland where, as Head of BMus, she was responsible for undergraduate curriculum development.

Diana has extensive experience as an external examiner in music and music technology and as an external adviser and consultant for exam boards and higher education providers including ABRSM, Edexcel, WJEC, Bath Spa University, the University of Derby, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, The Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts, Royal Holloway University of London, and The Royal Conservatoire in The Hague. She is a MusiQuE peer-reviewer and a founder of the [Global Conservatoire](#) Partnership.

With Professor Colin Lawson and Professor Rosie Perkins, she is currently working on an edited book commissioned by Routledge: *Inside the Contemporary Conservatoire: Critical Perspectives from the Royal College of Music, London*.

PROFESSOR GRAHAM WELCH



Graham F Welch studied education 3–13y, as well as music, at the Froebel Educational Institute and University of London prior to completing his MA and PhD at the same institutions. He was a full-time generalist Primary teacher in London for 14 years, and spent over two decades as a part-time professional singer. He has held the UCL Institute of Education (formerly University of London) Established Chair of Music Education since 2001, is Chair of the Society for Education, Music and Psychology Research (SEMPRE), and is a Past President of the International Society for Music Education (ISME). Publications number over 400.

GILLIAN MOORE CBE



Photo credit Sarah Hickson

Gillian Moore is Director of Music and Performing Arts at Southbank Centre in London, overseeing a large programme of classical, jazz and contemporary music in one of the world's largest cultural institutions. At Southbank Centre, Gillian has been committed to changing the landscape for music, developing initiatives in finding new audiences and in supporting new music. She has also been at the forefront of encouraging wider debate and positive action to address issues of diversity and equality in music, through initiatives such as Southbank Centre's Women in Music Breakfasts. During her distinguished career, she has collaborated with and commissioned works from many of the great musical and artistic figures of our age. Gillian has been awarded the Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE) by Prince Charles in 2019.

Gillian was born in Glasgow, and has worked to bring music and the arts to the widest possible community for over 35 years. In 1983, Gillian became the first Education Officer at a UK orchestra, taking the London Sinfonietta into schools and prisons before becoming Head of Education at the Southbank Centre. Returning to the London Sinfonietta as Artistic Director between 1998 and 2006, Gillian commissioned many new works and developed an approach which connected new music to a wider culture, including visual art, dance and electronica.

Gillian is also a sought after writer on music. In 2019 her book 'The Rite of Spring - Music and Modernity' [Head of Zeus] was published to critical acclaim, and she has written for The Guardian, The Sunday Times and many other media outlets. As a broadcaster she has been a regular contributor to BBC Television's coverage of the Proms, and often appears on BBC Radio 3, most recently writing and presenting a series of short programmes on composers and key moments in 20th century music as part of BBC Music's Our Classical Century. Gillian was a jury member for the Leeds International Piano Competition in 2018 and for the International Besançon Competition for Young Conductors in 2021. In 2019, she was named one of the ten most powerful women in music in BBC Radio 4's Woman's Hour Power List.

JAMIE NJOKU-GOODWIN



Jamie Njoku-Goodwin is the CEO of UK Music, a British umbrella organisation which represents the collective interests of the production side of UK's commercial music industry. Jamie is an experienced campaigner, a communications specialist and a former political adviser who has held senior roles at the highest levels of Government. He previously worked as a special adviser at DCMS and at the Department of Health and Social Care.

Jamie holds a Bachelor's degree in Music from the University of Nottingham and a Masters in International Relations. He is a trustee of Britten Pears Arts and a member of Council of the Royal College of Music, and sits on the board of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the advisory board of English National Opera, and the Creative Industries Council.

LINDA BEGBIE *(written response)*



Linda Begbie is Director of Development for Manchester Collective, an artist-led organisation which aims to create fresh and inclusive experiences of great music. She was educated at state school in Coventry and then at New College Oxford, where she read Politics, Philosophy and Economics.

Linda spent the first part of her career working for the BBC. She was a broadcast journalist for Radio 4's flagship news programme *The World at One*, and then a documentary producer for Radio 4 and Radio 3. In her very late 20s, with two young children, she felt the pull of unfinished musical training and began to study the bassoon with Sarah Burnett (Royal College).

At 30 she took up membership of Southbank Sinfonia, the orchestral training academy for exceptional music college graduates, and a year later was offered a full scholarship to study with the international soloist Stefano Canuti at the Royal Northern College of Music. After completing this postgraduate study with distinction, she became the College's Junior Fellow in Bassoon, and over the next three years worked with Stefano to build the William Waterhouse Professorship and a class of strong students. At this time Linda was principal bassoon with the Bristol Ensemble and performed/recorded as a freelance bassoonist with the Hallé, the BBC Philharmonic, Mahler Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Ulster Symphony Orchestra and others.

Disillusioned, stifled and run-ragged by the orchestral world, she turned 40, returned to writing and – after building an artistic relationship with the sculptor David Nash – developed a textiles-based creative practice. One day she went to an old MOT garage on the edge of a Salford industrial estate and after a DJ finished their set, a quartet started to play Shostakovich and Benjamin Britten so finely. They were called Manchester Collective, and she never looked back.