

CONSERVATOIRES IN SOCIETY – A WORKSHOP HELD IN LONDON ON 24TH MAY 2013 AND ATTENDED BY INSTITUTIONAL DIRECTORS OR THEIR NOMINEES.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

This report was drafted by John Sloboda of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, based on notes made by participants at the meeting, and circulated to participants for amendment and approval. The thoughts here are the personal views of contributors, and any attribution to specific individuals or institutions has been removed. The contents of this document should not be taken as reflecting the official view of any of the participating institutions.

BACKGROUND

The workshop arose as a result of the initiative coming from the leadership of three European conservatoires, seeking to find a way to constructively discuss the issues first raised by John Sloboda in the closing session of the Reflective Conservatoire conference held in London in March 2013 (Appendix A)

The workshop was the first event in a 12-month process to which the leadership of those institutions expressing initial interest have committed. The three founding institutions each suggested other institutions where there was known to be interest in this agenda. As a result 10 institutions were represented in the workshop. A further three were not able to participate but were consulted on the agenda. The letter of invitation is given at Appendix B. A list of all institutions that responded positively to the invitation letter is given at Appendix C.

An agenda for the meeting was agreed by the three founding institutions and circulated to participants along with some preparatory reading (Appendix D).

The text that follows is a report based on the discussions held at that meeting which the participants have approved for wider circulation.

1. PRIORITY ISSUES FOR CONSERVATOIRES - DISCUSSION POINTS

1.1. The nature of the change we are intending to bring about in our students.

We need to refine our conception of the intended result of our work. To nurture performers with ever-increasing instrumental skills is not enough in itself. There is a need to enrich any prevailing ethos where success and progress is primarily assessed through measurable technical advancement. Our graduates must conceive of themselves in a different way than simply having moved further up a scale of virtuosity. In some way, our graduates need to be more fully formed human beings, and we need to articulate how a conservatoire can catalyse that

process. Issues of values, relationships, self-image and self-confidence (as an institution) are key.

Within conservatoires there exist those who have a deep concern for the future of humanity. We must not lose contact with the core of things – what it is to be a human – and music’s role in that.

1.2. The changing nature of the professional world of classical music.

It is easy for conservatoires to remain stuck with a 19th Century structure. With this approach, however, we are ill-equipping students for the realities of what they are heading for. We are not facing up to the fact that most our students are destined for professional ‘failure’ in traditional terms of developing solely as virtuoso performer. We need to redefine success in broader and more realistic ways. A major challenge is that our institutional pace of change is often too slow when the pace of change in the wider society is so fast. We need to find ways to catalyze a faster internal process of renewal.

We may not understand well enough the nature of the world into which we are launching our graduates, see for instance “The Juilliard Effect: 10 years later” (<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/12/12/arts/music/12waki.html?smid=fb-share&r=1&>). It is changing rapidly, and our students may understand it better than we do. We need to see the understandings and resources of our students as an asset.

We may be using words like “employability” and “transferable skills” without deeply understanding or analyzing them.

We need to take cues from different kinds of musical culture that exist in the wider world and feed them into our activity.

1.3. The perspectives that governments and other major funders take on our work, and our response to that.

Some governments are starting to define a “third mission” for higher education. In addition to teaching and research, there is a requirement to exercise social responsibility. Conservatoires need to have a collective conversation to understand what this is, and how it can be enacted. This has particular force when, as in many cases, conservatoires are predominantly funded by the taxpayer.

Many of us working in conservatoires are keenly aware that culture and art are the very essence of society, yet we are being forced into a reactive role where we are constantly having to prove our worth to governments and wider society in narrow economic terms. We somehow need to transcend this reactivity and cooperate in bringing about a major transformation in how government and society thinks about the role of art. Inter-institutional collaboration, at an

international level is needed to do this. We need to grasp a leadership role, which is easier to do when we know we are not alone.

We in the music world need to have the confidence to assert that we are connected to the biggest questions that society faces, and are capable of being agents of change. We must go beyond the comfort of an “elite” role or a historically justified sense of entitlement. Our existence is both a privilege and a responsibility. We should be providing resources to our students and to the wider society to understand what it is that makes a life well lived.

Some conservative staff in our institutions are very keen to raise a flag against money and power, but they do this in order *not* to change, rather than to develop more influence. There’s a paradox here. The anti-intellectual culture in many conservatoires means that we are not even very articulate in our conversations with other strands of Higher Education.

Peter Sellars has suggested that classical musicians have current tactical advantage in brokering a new relationship between power and music, based on the fact that classical music is both prized by key political elites, but also reaches to the marginalized in society. However, an increasing populist (and anti-high-culture attitude) trend among some political elites suggests that this advantage might be a closing window.

One clear way in which conservatoires can fulfill social responsibility is to play a role within the wider music education system, for instance by offering Continuing Professional Development to teachers at pre-HE level. We also share in the responsibility to ensure that children in our society have an awareness of the importance that music plays in human life and culture and are able to engage in music

1.4. The intimacy at the core of the teaching and learning process

Conservatoires protect and champion a productively intimate relationship between student and teacher, as exemplified in the centrality of the one-to-one lesson. The current crisis in some countries around inappropriate (or illegal) personal relationships (historical, but also probably current) between students and staff constitutes a threat, which will need facing through the establishment and internalisation of clear red lines, understood and implemented at every level in the institution, which set boundaries within which the productive elements of intimacy can flourish.

1.5. Conservatoires as meaningful communities.

The small size of the average conservatoire (800 or so students, less than 200 academic staff) compared to other Higher Education Institutions, means that a natural identity can more easily emerge and be owned by all members. Bigger institutions struggle to define and enact meaningful inclusive identities.

Nonetheless, the fact that many of our teachers are part-time, and identify more as professional musicians than teacher-researchers, poses specific challenges not faced in other areas of Higher Education to anything like the same extent. There is a need to find ways of giving teachers in an institution a real sense of belonging to that institution in a manner which is positive and valued by them. We need to find active roles for them in transforming our institutions, rather than them being unwilling “victims” of organisational change.

The discussion about transforming the culture of our institutions is more than about just taking random initiatives (e.g. sending a few students to a hospital to make music) but we need to use such discussions to leverage a change by making societal engagement deeply part of staff and curriculum culture.

There needs to be a consistency between what we tell the outside world and our students and how we actually live as an institution. Too often teachers are ‘left behind’ by initiatives developed at a management level.

1.6. Transforming competition between conservatoires into co-operation

The question arises of how distinct identities of individual institutions (particularly within the same country) can reinforce (or undermine) a common identity and outward projection as a coherent (and influential) sector. Individual institutions competing with one another for “the last bassoon player” by throwing ever-increasing scholarship incentives at a small pool of candidates is a zero sum game. No other HE sector competes for undergraduates in this way, and a different way needs to be found. It was noted that in some areas of activity (e.g. research) conservatoires in some countries are beginning to see the advantages of working together (e.g. through joint funding bids) rather than competing.

Internal competitiveness (between individual teachers) needs addressing. An ideal for a department would be “All the violin teachers are collectively responsible for all the students”

A tactical advantage comes from the fact that there are many fewer conservatoires than there are Universities. This, combined with their small size, means that institutional leaders should be able to convene within and across countries and take action much more quickly and flexibly than their more numerous and cumbersome counterparts in other HE disciplines.

1.7. The role of Community Music

Conservatoires enrich their wider communities in a range of ways, and many interactions have elements of bartering where value flows both ways without strict monetization (e.g. communities provide opportunities for artistic research and development and the musicians provide musical services and expertise).

Music provides an easier way to engage broadly with the community than many academic disciplines. Community engagement needs to be a two-way process. Communities are not just there to receive our product, but also to interact with us. We have been poor at relating our work to the broader aspects of popular culture that communities are familiar with.

Conservatoires can be a major focus in the development and animation of “Cultural Quarters” in cities, although there is a parallel risk of such Quarters developing into or reinforcing arts ‘ghettos’.

A question facing some institutions is whether a specific curriculum in community music could and should be developed, or whether this can be encompassed as part of a larger offering around the development of a “portfolio” career.

Community music is an attractive option for students and institutions. Many students would rather be community musicians than classroom or private instrumental teachers.

1.8. Intellectual resources and models from outside our discipline

To assist our development conservatoires may need to reach outside the habitual discourses of our sector, and draw on conceptualizations, models and experiences in other disciplines and traditions

One such source is the work of Jurgen Habermas (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Theory_of_Communicative_Action), who makes a distinction between two influences within society, a systems level governed by money and power, and a life-level governed by civil society. The systems level constantly tries to infiltrate and dominate the life-level. Conservatoires could see themselves as aligned with the life-level and penetrating back into the systems-level.

There is a sense that the financial and business worlds are working with new conceptualizations that we in the conservatoire world have not kept up with. We have failed to engage with those around us (e.g. economists) who are shaping the mind-sets of the next generation of public servant. Some believe that by failing to engage, we may have actually gone backwards.

2. CASE STUDIES FROM OUTSIDE THE CONSERVATOIRE WORLD

A deeper look at a few examples that could be instructive for conservatoires

An important part of preparing the ground for positive change is identifying key societal issues/shifts and determining how they may have resonances or implications for conservatoires. This is an outside-in process – an enhancement

to the more usual “inside-out” process (starting from what we do, and then seeking to find external pegs and justifications)

These examples may not be the only, or even the most important societal issues, but offer some examples for thinking strategically, and generating new ideas and perspectives.

2.1 The nature of human transactions and the “gift” nature of the arts

A major trend of the last century has been the ever-increasing commodification of human relationships, transforming transactions once based on mutual need and commitment into ones based on technology and financial return. Such commodification is often not fed by real human needs, but by the growth needs of the economic system we have put in place. It is a monster that needs to be continually and increasingly fed.

There is a growing awareness, perhaps not yet quite a consensus, that the current financial systems, founded on ever increasing debt and interest, are unsustainable and on their way to collapse. The director of the UK-based New Economics Foundation, Stuart Wallis, sees a role for the arts in helping society think afresh about these issues (through its inspirational, motivational, and visionary qualities) and has challenged some UK artistic and educational leaders to define and assume this role (see Appendix D), although it is not easy to point to successful and detailed implementation of this challenge.

Charles Eisenstein is a US-based writer who attempts to outline a radical and comprehensive vision of an economic system without the major defects of the current system. His most significant contribution is to highlight the potential of recovering and foregrounding a “gift” economy rather than a “commodity” economy (see Appendix D). The most important aspects of human existence depend on gifts, things that can neither be bought nor sold, but can be used, shared, celebrated, and nurtured. Gifting is not “anti-economics” but relies on, and sustains, an economics based on fundamentally different principles to those which now dominate most societies.

Art (including music) is a strong example of gifting. The parts that can be predictably paid for don’t contain its real value. Any lasting value is contained within that part which is the unquantifiable gift of the creative artist, of far wider value than any salary or door takings that may be in play. You can pay two musicians (or music teachers) exactly the same, but one can be routine and closed, and the other deeply nourishing and open. Where music institutions are powerfully transformational it is often because they are incubators and focusers of the gifting culture, and of gifting individuals within them.

However, this does not mean sweeping traditional financial models under the carpet and creating some kind of pretence that money doesn’t matter, or that it is for someone else to think about while our precious artists refine their skills unbothered by messy reality. Rather it is done by holding the two aspects in

some kind of creative tension, so that the choice between gifting and commodification is a choice that every student and every staff member has to confront, consciously and explicitly, in all that they do, and be assisted to work through its implications for their own practice.

2.2 Life and death issues raised by art and music

Arts are an essential way of grappling with life and death issues. They are a vehicle for exploration of key issues – is love conditional or unconditional? Is justice man-made or divine? What is the meaning of relationships?

The power of music and the arts is that these issues become undressed and explicit, and we become undressed to the issues. The Caravaggio painting, “The Musicians” (c 1595, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Musicians_%28Caravaggio%29) is a representation of musicians undressing meaning. We’re not being given an Arcadian view - but one which is undressed and disheveled. There is disorder and there are competing foci of attention. But our tendency remains to dress up the art. There is a danger that those life and death issues are lost behind a glamorous surface. It is critical that our staff and students are encouraged to reflect on how we are dealing with these issues now. How are they being played out with the canon of work we already have, and with new work?

New musical work is sometimes so rarefied that it is difficult to know what it is about. Alongside this is a growing trend for immersive site-specific participatory theatre, dealing with major issues. For instance, the company Dream-Think-Speak (<http://www.dreamthinkspeak.com/>) has done a site specific piece at Somerset House, based on Leonardo da Vinci and the Book of Revelations, exploring the world between collapse and rebirth. We need to understand better the kind of impact this work is having, and ask how artmusic may learn from it.

2.3 Cultural institutions that respond to major social changes.

(a) The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra (<http://www.west-eastern-divan.org/>).

In this Orchestra, founded by Daniel Barenboim and Edward Said, music is used as a vehicle to explore collaboration in ways that otherwise seem impossible. It is based on values of equality and co-operation. Its formation made a strong international statement, in relation to world affairs, although its realization has also drawn much criticism in relation to its engagement with the commercial world of music making and also in relation to actual change in human behaviours achieved by those involved in the project.

(b) Dartington College, UK (<http://www.dartington.org/>)

This is an institution that is focused on engaging in dialogue about major issues, most often through exchange across arts or between arts and other disciplines. It brings people from diverse backgrounds into contact with one another. As well as providing a muse for international artists, the postwar UK Labour Party Manifesto was written there, for example; the UK Arts Council was conceived there, and the Social Justice Unit of Cambridge University has been housed there. It operates a radical pedagogy, and is associated with Schumacher College, a world leading postgraduate institution for the environmental sciences. Here students live in community – live out its vision.

(c) Imperial War Museum (IWM) – UK (<http://www.iwm.org.uk/>)

This museum was founded in the early 20th Century focusing on UK's involvement in war, both historical and contemporary. An earlier orientation focusing on military prowess and the means to conduct war shifted after the second world war. In the founding charter of the UN, member states pledged to rid the world of the “scourge of war” (actual words), which meant that museums about war needed to portray its evils as the prominent fact about it. The 21st Century saw massive expansion in the museum, at the same time as Britain's increased, and highly problematic, direct involvement in new conflicts.

The current corporate mission of the museum is masterly in holding these new concerns in balance with its more traditional role. These are exemplified by extracts from its web site and Corporate Plan 2013
<http://www.iwm.org.uk/corporate/about-IWM>)

IWM (Imperial War Museums) is the world's leading authority on conflict and its impact, focusing on Britain, its former Empire and the Commonwealth, from the First World War to the present. A family of five museums, IWM illustrates and records all aspects of modern war and of the individual's experience of it, whether allied or enemy, service or civilian, military or political, social or cultural.

IWM is a global authority on conflict and its impact

We record and showcase people's experience of modern conflict

Our vision is to be a leader in developing and communicating a deeper understanding of the causes, course, and consequences of war.

Courageous: We're confident and have the authority to challenge the established wisdom, championing debate and innovative approaches

Empathetic: We're sensitive to people's emotions, respecting different points of view and the deep significance of our collections.

This demonstrates continuity with its traditional role, the collection of archival materials on the wars in which Britain participated. Military hardware takes

significant and prominent space. But it also demonstrates and frames a transformation where war is presented more and more from the perspective of the victims and the population. The testimony of survivors is central.

The construction of new buildings and the redesign of existing galleries allowed significant “iconic” moments. One of the most startling was the placement of Jeremy Deller’s installation “*Baghdad 5 March 2007*” as the first thing seen on entry to the museum’s main gallery. This is a reconstruction of a car wrecked by a suicide bomb in Al Mutanabbi street, killing 38 people, mainly civilians. Its chaotic and fragmented form is the strongest possible statement of the cruelty and unacceptability of the wars we are now embroiled in. It places the museum at the opposite ideological pole from the gleaming and polished weapons which speak of imperial pride and hubris. In that way IWM has become a site for human repentance and re-evaluation, and it is hard to see much evidence of the narrower nationalism that would have characterised the museum in earlier years.

The way the museum management trod that path has been very clever and extraordinary in managing to transform the institution into a profoundly anti-war museum.

4. APPLYING SOCIETAL ISSUES TO SPECIFIC ACTIVITY AREAS WITHIN CONSERVATOIRES.

Participants explored the implications of some big societal issues on different core activities of the conservatoire, which are the primary means that conservatoires possess of exerting societal influence.

The societal issues discussed were.

- The nature of human transactions and the “gift” nature of the arts
- The “life-and-death” issues that much classical music addresses
- The role that arts organisations can play as societal actors

Areas of the conservatoire where these issues could have impact:

- The core teaching function (1-2-1 lessons)
- Our teaching of broader musicianship and professional skills (including teaching skills)
- Relationships to external individuals (alumni and attenders of our events)
- Relationships to other organisations and institutions
- Our staffing and institutional strategy

The core teaching function

If anything conservatoires do is likely to have a strong external impact, it will depend on what we do internally, and particularly with our students in the core

teaching function (1-1 lessons), which takes most of their and our time and effort.

Learning outcomes in our programmes tend to be driven by product, whereas most education is about process. We need to make process more visible and central in both the curriculum and in the way we assess students. That would then free up our thoughts about what product might be. There has been a massive change in musical culture, including the impact on it of digital culture. Increasingly a vast proportion of what people do and make in music has no bearing on what happens in the conservatoire. We need to find ways to be more in touch with this.

We should think more about learning than teaching, to stimulate a shift in the balance between these two activities. Curiosity, and the gaining of knowledge, should underpin the education of all our students. We are seen by the outside world as being focused on a teaching model. Secondary education dampens down curiosity. Conservatoires should re-nurture that curiosity, and give our students the confidence to be curious, and do things where they can take risks and occasionally fail as part of the process, as this can be very productive.

A challenge is how to insert true reciprocity into the teaching relationship. In trying to apply the gift model to the one-to-one lesson, it is clear to see what the teacher is gifting to the student, but we need to articulate what the student might gift to the teacher. The best teachers seem to find a way to enable such reciprocity. One renowned teacher answered the question “how do you know when your work as a teacher with a student is finished?” by saying “when the student has nothing else to give to the teacher.” One model of reciprocity is where students work on repertoire with a teacher where they are both going to perform it, and where each person’s process (including the difficulties they experience) informs the other’s.

Life and death issues need to be drawn out of the repertoire people are learning and represented to them, discussed, so that these issues can inform the way they approach and play them, can encourage them to invest their music making with their own world experiences, and so in turn help them to connect with their audiences and travel outwards again into society as professional practitioners.

The teaching of broader musicianship and professional skills

We have a culture of fetishisation (of the “perfect performance”) in our curriculum. A more holistic understanding of Musicianship helps restore and foreground the human and creative elements of music making. Musicianship skills can allow us to become leaders and sharers. The Kodaly approach, for instance, embodies this in singing as a shared activity – in which there is a strong element of mutual gift. Musicianship also requires that our students develop their teaching skills, as a basic essential. We need to equip our students to give back what they have learned to others. It is a societal obligation that comes with music training. Effective teaching is a kind of evangelism – we do it because we

believe in it. We need to move the teaching function up the hierarchy of value – we should treat every student as a trainee teacher, and thus as a co-learner.

When discussing employability we have to articulate the way in which a music training makes a difference to what you can do and the way you are, whatever you go on to do, even if this is not in the arts. People can use their musical training in all sorts of ways. What do we say about this in our PR? And are there dangers in doing this if it is used to justify cutting such specialist training?

Changing Institutional Strategy

What would be the political process by which productive internal change happens? The best strategy is to identify key individuals, wherever they sit in the institution. Then one needs to empower and support them to bring other people with them. It is best to avoid top-down dictates. Such things won't take genuine root.

How do we find the right people to do this? How do we help existing staff to grow? How do we balance job security with the need to change? How do we balance individual interest with collective need? How do we avoid the atomization of conservatoire culture into "silos" at departmental level? How do we recover the founding inspirational idea behind conservatoires (which didn't exist before late 19th century) – and stop staff from falling into cynicism?

Good leadership is needed. But few of us who find ourselves in senior positions were selected (only) for our leadership skills.

The work of our staff cannot be reduced to the bureaucracy of learning outcomes and HE systems – leaders need to protect those who are doing the front line teaching from unproductive outside pressures – and must help staff resist the wrong kind of language to describe what they do. This involves the building of trust and the communication of vision.

Relationship to other institutions and organisations

Higher Education in general offers the means for individuals to become sophisticated in intellectual or practical skills, but tends not to address the development of emotional maturity in the way that the arts do. Arts have a special role in developing emotional sophistication in students. Dealing with emotions, and the generation of emotional intelligence and enhancing empathic behaviour, is a core business of teaching in music and acting. There is something particular we have here to share. The need for more empathy in the training of other professions (e.g. Medicine) is an acknowledged issue: some of our processes might be helpful in such contexts.

Language is important, as pointed out by Jean-Francois Lyotard (The Post Modern Condition – a Report on Knowledge

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Postmodern_Condition). What legitimizes particular types of knowledge is language – winners politically are those who craft the dominant language about such things as education. How do we contribute to this ‘language game’, challenge and change it?

In some countries taxpayers oppose music education because not enough people end up with jobs in music. In fact, very few music graduates end up unemployed those who do not work in music often go into other jobs and take something from their music education with them. In some universities music graduates have the highest employability of any subject. But often it is the ‘transferable skills’ discourse that is used to explain it. We need to ensure that the discourse is the one we intend, based on deeper values (‘transferable skills’ is a good example of an insidious use of language that is imposed on us and over which we do not have control).

Much conservatoire marketing and PR centres around the success stories of high-earning alumni. We celebrate the tiny number of past students who become international super-stars and earn astronomic fees. Few graduates achieve this level, perhaps one every few years. Students may then be disillusioned and disheartened by such discourse rather than encouraged. Yet such successes are trumpeted in institutional PR. What is the story we are telling by doing that? Should we not be saying that it is wrong that anyone should earn ‘footballer-style incomes’ rather than celebrating it? We are not putting out the stories of real successes. Our vignettes should be of students who go onto a variety of roles. We should be telling stories about good outcomes we believe in, and which tell about the values that this institution really upholds.

External individuals, including alumni

Our relationship to our alumni is hugely important, because of all the different dimensions on which this can be leveraged. In institutions, we can provide our alumni with things such as support for developing business, new skills, studio space. We can do this with no money passing hands, and making instead opportunities for alumni to give something back in different ways.

Some conservatoires work with alumni mentors to students. Many individual players had unconventional routes into success - our students need to know about this. Our alumni could be our strongest critics, telling us where we have gone wrong. Young players are so driven that they are oblivious to risk. Teachers may not be courageous enough to draw their attention to risk, and how best to manage it. Our alumni can insert needed reality.

The gifting approach to public performance is to offer it without an entrance fee and invite people to pay something at the end of an event, which reflects what they think it was worth. Sometimes this actually yields more income than the traditional model. With a gifting perspective, we can also look for ways in which audience members give something back other than through finance, through, for example their broader sponsorship or support of an enterprise in some ways.

Attending effectively to these issues may require transformations in the DNA of conservatoire culture. Through engagement with these internal processes, individuals are empowered to become more broadly and fully outward facing. And we need to conceptualise “outside” beyond the closed world of orchestras etc.

Do we have a responsibility to the rest of society to inform people about how we operate, who we are, how we work? Are there values and behaviours which are particular and special, worth celebrating – which can be offered as examples? The one to one teaching model is important. It goes wrong, but we can still protect and project what’s good about it.

Current discourse on major issues like environmental change is hindered by a political process which is too slow. There is a need for catalysts like Live Aid, to create awareness and activism around these issues. Conservatoire-trained musicians have a role in such initiatives. Musicians could be a catalyst to influence people to do things – by putting on events where musicians are taking a stand to create awareness. However, climate change is a new issue, and is not the motivation for much music that has been written, but other life and death issues are.

Examples of work in other areas of the cultural sector and in society more broadly which could inform the conservatoire world

Orchestras

The orchestras are major organisations which shape the opportunities for musicians to engage with the wider world, and set the frame for determining who in the world engages with it, and on what basis.

Some orchestras are actively rising to new challenges. For instance some now have a selection process that involves applicants saying why they want to be a member, what they bring beyond their playing.

Some orchestras pay musicians the same for outreach work as for concert work and recordings. In that way, outreach is not projected as an inferior aspect of the work.

It is sometimes forgotten that many symphony orchestras began their life as amateur orchestras. As they became professional, their early history was often obliterated. Many professional orchestras forget their community origins and behave as if they don’t need to connect to their communities.

Some youth orchestras are broadening their support base beyond parents and friends of young people, and seeking to recruit players from families other than those which have invested a lot of money and resource in them. In that way they are broadening their class base. The El Sistema system is having a particular impact world wide, and generating new manifestations of empathy and

solidarity in and for young people. This system is rediscovering the role of peer tutoring and challenging the exclusive prerogative of the professional music teacher.

Other music organisations and opinion formers

Some individuals and institutions connected to classical music have done or said things which provide inspiration or resources for addressing these issues include:

Benjamin Zander (author of *The Art of Possibility*. <http://benjaminzander.com/> .

Peter Sellars. (teacher of Art as Social Action. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Sellars)

Jordi Savall – Jerusalem project :
<http://www.jordisavall.es/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jordi_Savall

Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra

Youssou N'Dour
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Youssou_N'Dour

Paul Griffiths – remix orchestra (improvisation for teenagers.
<http://www.desingel.be/fr/programme/musique/8856/Re-mix-Orchestra-Paul-Griffiths-Remix-Concert>)

Paul Woodford (author of *Democracy and Music Education*
http://www.iupress.indiana.edu/product_info.php?products_id=22040)

The late Christopher Small (author of *Music, Society and Education*.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Small)

Joseph Polisi – Juilliard. (author of “*The Artist as Citizen*”
http://books.google.co.uk/books/about/The_Artist_As_Citizen.html?id=P4S9jFYzPD4C&redir_esc=y)

The list is pretty small!

There is a dearth of classical music leaders (including venue directors) who really animate this discourse. Many are too concerned to project what they do in terms of the discourse of the government of the day, looking good on the surface, but not deeply transforming what they do on the ground.

There is a need to engage with progressive musicians’ organisations, including national and international societies, music unions. Care needs to be taken here,

because many such organisations are not very progressive, or focus their activity around narrow political goals, or interests.

Other cultural organisations

In some countries exceptional cultural leadership is exercised by key institutions such as museums and galleries, which have significantly raised their effectiveness in inspiring audiences, including young people. Conservatoires could learn a lot from key leaders of education departments of major museums and galleries.

Some institutions go beyond audience education, traditionally conceived, towards influencing the broader society. A UK example is the Wellcome Foundation, developing a new area Medical Humanities, where arts and medicine interact, and which has very good public outreach.

There is interesting work done in the general education sector - on curriculum studies. The International Handbook of Curriculum research covers issues in, for instance, globalization and environment education.

Drama Schools, Art Schools, Dance Schools, and Performing Arts Schools are institutions, which could be particularly effective allies in moving forward, because of shared ethos, size, and issues faced.

Other potential interlocutors include the Cities of Culture movement, and the European League of the Institutes of Arts (ELIA).

The wider society

A specific example comes from the Norwegian Parliament, which commissioned a major report on lessons for Norwegian Society to be from the 2011 Utoya massacre – what went wrong. This stimulated a wide debate in society. One major strand of the report concerned the way in which education has been taken over by a business way of thinking and orientation on quantifiable outcomes. Unlikely interlocutors, including the military and police have complained that this is part of the problem, and not helpful to a healthy society. The Norwegian Parliament has adopted this report, and has said that Norway's public sector cannot continue to work from a business model. Conservatoires can contribute more directly to such debates.

Forum for the Future (<http://www.forumforthefuture.org/>) is an institution operating on of a broad front of the societal issues that may be relevant to these discussions, and which has some connection to individuals in some conservatoires.

5. NEXT STEPS IN THE PROCESS

Participants discussed how the issues raised in this workshop could be best taken forward in a way that was both focused and efficient, but also would involve interested others. A number of actions were agreed, including:

1. The production and distribution of an agreed report of the workshop. John Sloboda agreed to draft this for circulation. The circulation list should include those who wanted to come to the meeting but were unable.
2. The creation of a web site where resources could be stored and shared. Peter Tregear agreed to set something up (and it was believed that Christina Brand from RNCM could offer assistance). The current url is www.consanfron.com. It was felt that initially it might be best to keep the site (or some parts of it) with restricted access (e.g. password protected) until we were ready to make it (or parts of it) public. Everyone agreed to share important or interesting material that they came across, including vignettes of graduates whose post-conservatoire work embodies some of the values we wish to highlight.
3. The sharing of this report and our experiences within our own institutions, to build institutional “support groups” to move some of these ideas forwards at an internal institutional level. Key individuals could be Heads of Department, researchers, and institutional “movers and shakers”. This would be about “doing”, not just talking. Institutional change is a key aim of our work, not just the production of research and analysis (important as that is).
4. The end point of this one year project should be some form of public statement or declaration, which we would work on between November 2013 and May 2014. The idea of “Changing the Language of Conservatoires” was seen as an attractive framing concept.

In a final closing round of comments, participants confirmed the usefulness of the meeting, the importance of the agenda that had begun to be shaped, their sense of encouragement that a shared vision was apparent, a realization that solving these issues would be a challenge, but also a shared sense of responsibility and commitment to carry the work forward to some definite conclusion. The importance of keeping two elements of the work (internal within our institutions, and outward facing to the wider world) in balance was emphasised.

APPENDIX A

3rd Reflective Conservatoire conference, Guildhall School of Music & Drama (<http://www.gsmd.ac.uk/conference>) Final Plenary Panel, Tuesday 20th March 2012 Comments by John Sloboda

Some encouraging common themes or principles have been evident in many of the presentations. These themes were not only found in discourse and aspiration but in real and detailed evidence of their application in actual or emerging practice in conservatoires around the world.

We have heard in many ways how the purpose of artistic practice, as well as education and research connected to it, is to understand ourselves and the world better. And this understanding empowers us to act – to make changes – so that we leave the world a different place as a result of what we do.

We have been reminded of the qualities within a reflective conservatoire that promote this understanding.

One of these qualities is a focus on excellence, and the nurturing of expertise through knowledge of and competence in repertoire and the skills needed to perform that repertoire. This is a manifest function of most conservatoires.

But equally important are two other qualities which may sometimes be latent, and which many presentations here aimed to make manifest; authenticity and courage. Authenticity involves both truth seeking and truth telling. Truth seeking takes places through critical examination, and the questioning and challenging of our assumptions. Truth telling is the process of finding one's own voice – built on truth seeking – and this can be a costly process, not at all self-indulgent

Courage involves taking risks, including risking failure, to find something new – not simply for novelty's sake but because this is how we deepen our understanding and effectiveness.

Conservatoires have three main means of expressing these qualities.

As people working in conservatoires we demonstrate our authenticity and courage through teaching -- we take risks with and for our students to uncover and develop their authentic voice. We have heard many inspiring examples of such work, both at the micro-level with individual students, but also at a macro-level through such institutional risk taking as the Co-Lab initiative at Trinity Laban, London. We also demonstrate authenticity and courage through our scholarship, as we share our ideas with each other, within institutions, and between them through conferences and journals.

But there is a third area of influence, which goes by several names, including community outreach, public engagement, artist in society. It is the domain of activity where we interact positively with those who are not, and will never be, professional actors or musicians, including our concert audiences.

We've heard of inspiring work in schools, hospitals, prisons, and community centres. These are places where there is some kind of need, and where our art offers inspiration, hope, and healing.

But I sometimes wonder whether we quite reach up to the full stature of the potential for outreach. There was a debate hinted at in some of the conversations that took place in this conference, but was never quite arrived at.

Political and corporate elites are not serving humanity as well as they might. Many commentators talk of a dysfunctionality, even a sickness in our major institutions. Yet it is those very institutions that provide the funding and the legitimation that guarantees our existence and very often pays our salaries. We have heard here how, in many parts of the world conservatoires are considered as essential symbols of national identity or maturity. In this somewhat problematic relationship, how can we preserve authenticity and courage in our relationships to government and business? How can we work to ensure that our activities do not simply address the sickness and brokenness of the prison cell or the hospital ward, but also the shortcomings of the corporate boardroom or of the political system.

An inspiring example of the kind of thing that is possible for cultural institutions is given by the UK's Imperial War Museum. Until recently its focus has been on a celebration of the technology and organisation of war. In recent years there has been a radical shift of focus, to concentrate more on documenting the appalling human consequences of war. And this shift has taken place using government funding at a time when our government has seemed rather keen on committing itself to war.

So we might ask ourselves whether conservatoires have any contribution to make to addressing the increasing polarization of modern society, increasing environmental and economic threats, the breakdown of popular trust in the ability of politicians and corporations to work in our interests? I don't know the answer – but what slightly worries me is that we don't seem to have really started that conversation among ourselves.

Yet, with our orientation towards authenticity and courage we should be exceptionally well placed to take on that challenge in some meaningful way, and maybe the next Reflective Conservatoire Conference will provide us with some tangible evidence of that.

John Sloboda.
Guildhall School of Music & Drama

APPENDIX B

Conservatoires in society – maximizing our influence An invitation to participate in a strategic panel

March 6th 2013

We, members of the leadership and academic staff at the Norwegian Academy of Music, Guildhall School of Music & Drama and The Royal Conservatoire, Antwerp want to invite our colleagues at other conservatoires to participate in a process aiming at making explicit the potential of our institutions in relating to the society and hence taking part in the public conversation about society at large.

Our point of departure is John Sloboda's comments on the final plenary panel of the 3rd Reflective Conservatoire conference at Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Tuesday 20th March 2012. These are given in full at Appendix A.

In his comments, Sloboda asked whether we as conservatoires reach up to the full stature of our potential for outreach, particularly in the light of a widely held view that political and corporate elites are not serving humanity as well as they might. Consequently we encourage ourselves and invite our colleagues in other conservatoires to reflect and elaborate on the following questions that were raised by at the end of his comments:

- – How can we preserve authenticity and courage in our relationships to government and business?
- – How can we work to ensure that our activities do not simply address the sickness and brokenness of the prison cell or the hospital ward, but also the shortcomings of the corporate boardroom or of the political system?
- – Do conservatoires have any contribution to make to addressing the increasing polarization of modern society, increasing environmental and economic threats, the breakdown of popular trust in the ability of politicians and corporations to work in our interests?

These comments have resonated with some of the ideals that lie behind the best work that we do, but which perhaps have not been fully articulated. These ideals include serving humanity by empowering people as knowing and compassionate human beings, and – in particular -- helping them to realise the potential of art's critical function in society (from a political as well as philosophical perspective). We suggest that 2013 is a good year to start a conversation among ourselves, which more fully articulates these ideas and draws out some potential practical implications for the future.

We therefore wish to invite one representative of the leadership and the academic staff of your institution to a first, common discussion of these issues during a one--day workshop at a place and time to be agreed by mutual consultation.

We envisage that this workshop would be the inaugural event of a short--term project of total duration no longer than one year. This project would involve a broad review of these issues, leading to the authoring and dissemination of a statement or report which would ideally articulate a common vision, establish some key principles, and identify a range of practical steps that conservatoires could take (or indeed have already begun to take), either individually or collaboratively, to embody this vision in concrete action.

In terms of time commitment, we envisage that the process might require two face-to-face meetings of the group in the course of the year, with most of the remainder of the work being undertaken by correspondence or remote conferencing.

Although the medium-term aim of this initiative is to be fully open and inclusive to all conservatoires that wish to participate, we believe that the process is best started by involving a relatively small number of committed institutions who will take the lead in getting something started quickly and effectively. Therefore we are envisaging that the initial workshop will involve no more than 12 institutions with the current capacity and will to move this agenda forwards. Suggestions for institutions to invite (with names of key individuals) are welcome.

To allow this process to begin without delay, we propose that each institution agrees to cover the costs of participation of its nominee, and that a date and location for our discussions is collaboratively chosen which optimises the time and costs for those taking part.

We look forward to hearing from you. **Please send your initial responses to John Sloboda, (john.sloboda@gsm.d.ac.uk, by 31st March 2012, including – in particular – the name and contact details of your nominated representative.** The Guildhall School will co-ordinate the circulation of responses, proposals, and initiate planning and logistics for the workshop.

With best wishes,

Ingrid Maria Hanken – Pro Rector
Øivind Varkøy – Professor of Music Education
Geir Johansen – Professor of Music Education
(Norwegian Academy of Music)

Helena Gaunt – Assistant Principal (Research and Academic Development)
John Sloboda -- Research Professor
(Guildhall School of Music & Drama)

Pascale De Groote – Vice-Chancellor
(Royal Conservatoire, Antwerp)

APPENDIX C

Institutions represented at the meeting on 24th May 2013

Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London UK
Norwegian Academy of Music, Oslo
Royal Conservatoire, University of the Arts, The Hague, Netherlands
Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester UK
School of Music, Australian National University, Canberra
Sibelius Academy, Helsinki, Finland
Tallinn Academy, Estonia
Artesis University College Antwerp, Belgium
ESMUC Barcelona, Spain
Queensland Conservatorium, Brisbane, Australia

Institutions responding positively to the initiative but unable to attend

Schulith School, Montreal
Vienna Conservatoire, Austria
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow

APPENDIX D

WORKSHOP AGENDA AND PRELIMINARY PAPER

A. PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

Each participant is invited to read the attached preparatory materials detailed below, and prepare some introductory remarks for the first session (no longer than 5 minutes) addressing the questions:

- **What consideration has your institution already given to this issue?**
- **Why did you make it a priority to be here?**
- **What are you hoping to take home to your institution?**

Then, in a later session, each participant is invited to respond to the question

- **Have you noticed examples of work in other areas of the cultural sector (or in society more broadly) which could inform the conservatoire world**

Our aim is to progressively build a shared resource of relevant materials and documentation, which the Guildhall School offers to curate in the first instance. Colleagues should feel free at any time to point us to items which they believe could usefully be added to this resource for mutual benefit.

We invite colleagues to consider the possible relevance of the following items, which amplify some of the issues that John Sloboda raised in his pre-circulated address to the 2012 Reflective Conservatoire Conference. Copies are attached where relevant.

Item 1. Stewart Wallis (Director of the New Economics Foundation).

His paper "A Great Transition" outlines the urgent need to transform economic thinking and the shifts in societal behaviour needed to bring this about.

<http://www.neweconomics.org/blog/2011/09/27/a-great-transition>

(attached)

He has engaged on this topic with UK arts organisations including the Guildhall.

In a video-recorded talk entitled "The Arts and the Moral Economy"

(see <http://www.missionmodelsmoney.org.uk/event/arts-moral-economy>)

he raises the question "Faced with unprecedented challenges do we need to re-invent the notion of prosperity and the means by which we achieve it? And could the ingenuity and creativity of the arts be a driving force in how society re-organises itself?"

Item 2. Charles Eisenstein (Writer on Economics and Society)

His book "Sacred Economics" articulates the difference between a transactional economy (exemplified through money) and a gift economy (exemplified by the

exchanges at the heart of art and music) and proposes that a transition to a larger role for the gift economy would provide major solutions to key societal problems. The main points of the book are summarised at

<http://www.johnsloboda.co.uk/#post19>

An essay by Charles Eisenstein covering some of the main concepts in his book is at http://www.realitysandwich.com/money_and_turning_age.

Both are attached.

Item 3. Rajani Naidoo (Researcher into Higher Education)

Naidoo, R (2006) 'Universities in the Marketplace: The distortion of teaching and research', in Reshaping the University: New relationships between research, scholarship and teaching, London: Open University Press/Society for Research in Higher Education, pp 27- 36. This outlines negative pressures and changes in the wider Higher Education system, which arise from the economic and societal phenomena discussed in the other items, but which possibly Conservatoires have been able to resist more successfully than others. (attached)

Item 4. Peter Sellars (Opera director and music educator)

We have been unable to find any writings within the music world which address these issues in a provocative way (and would be grateful to pointers from participants). The nearest we know is a recent keynote lecture by Peter Sellars to the "Future Play" conference at the Barbican (March 2013). Although it raises relevant points, it is only available in audio, and lasts one hour. The full recording is here: <https://soundcloud.com/barbican-music/sets/peter-sellars-future-play>

An indicative 3-minute extract focusing more specifically on the role of the symphony orchestra is here: <https://soundcloud.com/barbican-music/were-so-not-finished-with-this>. Sellars argues that classical music initiatives, and organisations such as symphony orchestras, are capable of addressing some of the biggest issues facing society, although generally fall far short of what they are capable of.

B. WELCOME DINNER. THURSDAY 23RD MAY. 1900 - 2200

Venue: Barbican Lounge (Level 1 of Barbican)

Address: Silk Street, London, EC2Y 8AT

Link: <http://www.barbican.org.uk/visitor-information/venue-map>.

An optional informal opportunity to get to know one another and the institutions we represent. There will be no organised agenda.

C. WORKSHOP. FRIDAY 24TH MAY. 0900 - 1700

Venue: Parlour Room, Skinners Hall

Address: 8 1/2 Dowgate Hill, London, EC4R 2SP

Link: <http://www.skinnerhall.com/location.html>

Helena Gaunt and John Sloboda will take joint responsibility for chairing, timekeeping, and for making a record of the proceedings of the meeting. The following is offered as a flexible framework to adjust creatively as the meeting takes shape.

SESSION 1 0900 – 1030 INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions and first round in relation to the preparatory questions.

- Why did you make it a priority to be here?
- What are you hoping to take home to your institution?
- What consideration has your institution already given to this issue?

BREAK 1030 -1100

Coffee

SESSION 2 1100 – 1300 APPLYING SOCIETAL ISSUES TO SPECIFIC ACTIVITY AREAS WITHIN CONSERVATOIRES

An exercise to map three big societal issues (identified in the reading) onto 6 core activities of the conservatoire which are the primary means that conservatoires possess of exerting societal influence.

The societal issues are

A - The nature of human transactions and the “gift” nature of the arts

B - The “life and death” issues that the arts and music can address

C - The role that arts organisations can play as societal actors

Areas of the conservatoire where these issues could have impact:

1. The core teaching function (1-2-1 lessons)
2. Our teaching of ensembles (chamber music/opera/orchestra)
3. Our teaching of broader musicianship and professional skills (including teaching skills)
4. Relationships to external individuals (alumni and attenders of our events)
5. Our relationships with external institutional partners
6. Our staffing and institutional strategy

Helena and John will introduce this activity (20 minutes).

This will prepare for discussion in pairs – each pair taking one or two different areas from the 6 above (c. 40mins). The session will conclude with a plenary (c. 60 minutes) where each pair feeds back a summary of their key points, for group discussion.

BREAK 1300 - 1430

Lunch

SESSION 3 1430 -1530

A review of what is “out there” that can inform this process, including individual responses to the question:

- **Have you noticed examples of work in other areas of the cultural sector (or in society more broadly) which could inform the conservatoire world**

BREAK 15.30-16.00

Tea

SESSION 4 16.00-17.00 WHERE NEXT?

A discussion of possibilities for the end point of this project and setting a timeframe for future activities.

Some proposals already on the table are:

- A joint statement . This could include a declaration of intent or manifesto which committed institutions can sign onto. But to be really useful it should also identify a range of specific actions that conservatoires could take, individually or collectively, to realise this intent in practical ways.
- a growing (and possibly public) resource of information and documentation on this issue.
- A session on this topic at next Reflective Conservatoire Conference (March 2015);
- A larger activity than this workshop bringing in more Conservatoires.
- A process to move the agenda within each conservatoire (involving key people within each conservatoire who would need to contribute to the discussion).

We need to conclude with some agreement about immediate next steps, who does what, and when, and how resourced.

FAREWELL DRINKS 1700 – 1800

An optional and informal opportunity to unwind and relax.