



# NEWSLETTER

UCL iMerc Music Education Research Seminar

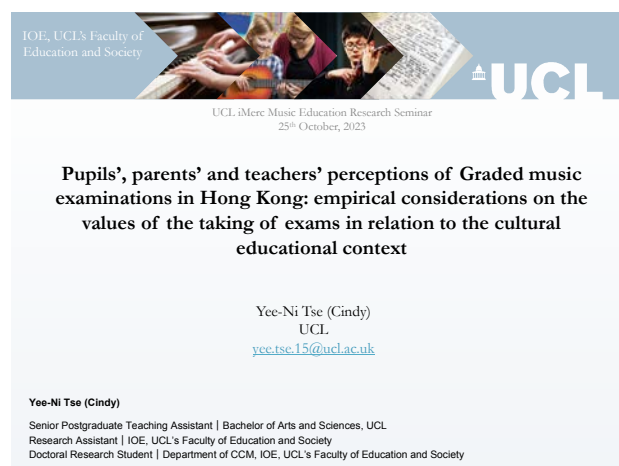
## RESEARCH SEMINAR IN OCTOBER 2023

### SPEAKER: YEE-NI TSE (CINDY)

Cindy talked about her doctoral thesis, *Pupils', parents' and teachers' perceptions of graded music examinations in Hong Kong: Empirical considerations on the values of the taking of exams in relation to the cultural educational context*. Findings suggests that there is a need to reconsider the actual role of taking those examinations and a call for deeper investigations on how such exams could develop and benefit pupils instrumental learning.

### SPEAKER: CAN LU

Can shared her doctoral findings about a *new approach to measuring vocal pitch-matching accuracy of song singing, based on semitone differences*. This study focuses on melodic pitch-to-pitch matching, named the Melodic Pitch of Pitch-Matching (MPAM) system, created by her and her supervisor, Professor Graham Welch.



### SPEAKER: REBECCA MOSELEY-MORGAN

Rebecca talked about her doctoral thesis, *A longitudinal study of vocal functionality and longevity in the mature female voice*. Findings suggest that there is no linear pathway. Performance will be variable from day to day, but this is normal. Musicianship, expressiveness, communication and passion do not age.



**A Longitudinal Study of Vocal functionality and Longevity in the Mature Female Voice**

Rebecca Moseley-Morgan  
PhD candidate UCL  
Chair of Education British Voice Association  
Specialist Teacher for Mature Voices  
Researcher & Musicologist



**A new approach to measuring vocal pitch-matching accuracy of song singing, based on semitone differences**

Can Lu & Graham Welch  
UCL Institute of Education, London

iMerc  
25th October 2023

# ABOUT US

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Since the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, we have been meeting regularly to share new research and insights related to diverse topics in music education, broadly conceived. We are a group of researchers at doctoral and post-doctoral levels, as well as senior researchers, with a shared curiosity and interest in advancing basic and applied research. Our monthly seminars are also designed to foster a sense of community amongst colleagues who are based in the UK, mainland Europe (Portugal, Germany, Greece), Asia (China, including Hong Kong) and Australia. Opportunity is taken each month to update current research projects and also to listen to the latest research from our invited speakers. If you would like to know more or to join us, please contact us using one of the email addresses below.

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## UPCOMING RESEARCH SEMINAR

Our upcoming research seminar is on 22nd November 2023, 11.00- 13.00 UK Time. This will be held on Zoom and in Room 938 at the IOE. We are very happy to have Professor Ian Cross and Dr. Elizabeth Haddon speak to us. Please join by clicking the Zoom link below, which is the same as the Zoom invitation. Everyone is welcome!

[Zoom Link](#)



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## PROFESSOR IAN CROSS

### TOPIC: SCORE DESIGN FOR MUSIC READING

**Ian Cross, Arild Stenberg, David Duncan,  
Katya Ness, Cambridge November 2023**

Ian Cross is Emeritus Professor of Music and Science at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Wolfson College. He has taught in the Faculty of Music since 1986, supervising numerous doctoral students and founding (and building) the Centre for Music & Science in 2002. His publications have had broad impact, his early work having helped set the agenda for the study of music cognition. He has since published widely in music and science, his research ranging across psychoacoustics, experimental archaeology, neuroscience, evolutionary theory and therapeutic applications of music. Recent research has involved testing a musical approach to enhancing perinatal mental health in an LMIC, The Gambia; evaluating ways in which conventional musical notation can be minimally adapted so as to make it easier to read at sight; and exploration of the ways in which common processes underpin music and speech as interactive media. He is Editor-in-Chief of the SAGE/SEMPRE Open Access journal *Music & Science*, a governor of the Music Therapy Charity, and a classical guitarist.



For more details see <https://www.mus.cam.ac.uk/directory/ian-cross>

## Ian's Abstract

Musical literacy is often regarded with some suspicion, sometimes stigmatised for being "elitist" and exclusionary. On the other hand, musical literacy is a central feature of many different historical (and perhaps prehistorical) societies, fulfilling many different functions and taking forms that may relate to types of textual-linguistic literacy. I shall discuss these issues in the course of introducing the *Score Design* project at Cambridge, which is exploring ways in which conventional western musical notation can be minimally adapted so as to suit it better for the functions that it presently fulfils. Music notation is used to record and disseminate musical ideas – very much like linguistic text is used to record and disseminate ideas – but its primary uses for most people involve interaction with it as a prompt or aid in the performance of music. Our project explores ways in which conventional notation can be tweaked to make it work better when we use it to help us perform; we are at the start of the project, and are embarking on a range of experiments that should clarify which types and degrees of modification are likely to be most effective for different musical purposes and contexts.

## References

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# RESEARCH SEMINAR

## GUEST SPEAKER

**DR. ELIZABETH HADDON**

**TOPIC: IRAN PIANO SCHOOL: COMMUNITY, PEDAGOGY AND REMOTE RESEARCHING**



**Dr Elizabeth Haddon** SFHEA, LRSM is Senior Lecturer in Music at the University of York, UK. Her pedagogical research has focused on areas including creativity, learning to teach, the music masterclass, hidden learning, empathy and partnership in piano duet playing. Forthcoming publications include an edited volume on instrumental pedagogy (Bloomsbury 2025), chapters for the Oxford Handbook of Piano Pedagogy (2024) and articles on violin duet pedagogy. She created the MA Music Education: Instrumental and Vocal Teaching at the University of York in 2015, leads the undergraduate Instrumental Music Education module, holds senior leadership roles and leads new developments in Music Education in the School of Arts and Creative Technologies at the University of York.



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## Elizabeth's Abstract

This presentation discusses research currently in progress on a piano school in a city in Iran; the approaches operating internally and its relationship to the local and wider community. Conceptualisations of community are so varied, so context and culture dependent, that Schippers concludes that 'it is difficult to pinpoint a single factor related to community - beyond generic ones like 'engagement' or 'status' - that makes a music practice sustainable' (2018, p. 37). More specifically, in a context such as Iran, where infrastructure and therefore human interactions and relationships are challenged on a daily basis by issues relating to politics, religious beliefs, resource mobility, conflict and communication, the sustainability of musical practices becomes even more precarious. Yet, evidenced through the engagement of around 400 students of varied ages, working with around 25 teachers, this piano school appears to be flourishing. How, then, might we understand and learn from this case? Drawing on qualitative data from interviews and questionnaire data from the school's leaders, its piano, theory and solfeggio teachers, and from questionnaire responses from pupils and their parents, the research explores the pedagogical practices and understandings of community arising within this specific case.

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