

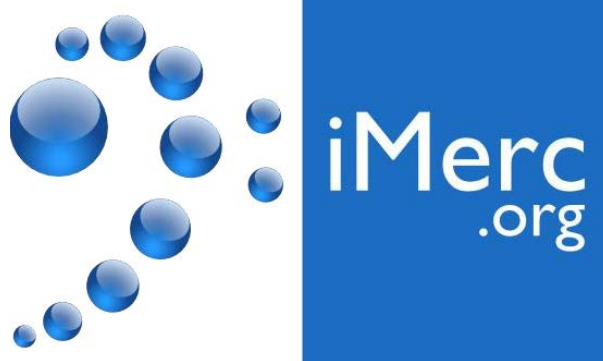
# UCL iMerc Newsletter — Vol. 14, February 2025

## About us

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 mainly based in the UK, mainland Europe (such as Portugal, Germany, Greece), Asia (China, including Hong Kong), Latin America and Australia. Opportunity is taken each month to update various 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.

Our upcoming research seminar will take place on Wednesday, 26th February 2025, 11am GMT via Zoom and in room 935 at the IOE. We are delighted to have Dr Elaine King (University of Hull), Professor Nicola Shaughnessy (University of Kent), Dr Ruth Herbert (City, University of London), Dr Jacqueline Walduck (RAM), and our very own doctoral colleague Sandra Oberoi (UCL) as our speakers. Please join us by clicking the Zoom link [HERE](#). Everyone is welcome!

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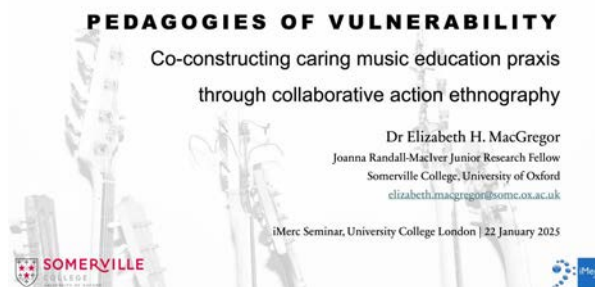
## Previous UCL iMerc Research Seminar, January 2025



1 - From left to right: Dr Regina Saltari, Professor Graham Welch, Dr Elizabeth MacGregor, Ronald Pak Hang Wan, Eunice Tang. Credits: Dr Regina Saltari, Professor Graham Welch, Dr Elizabeth MacGregor, Ronald Pak Hang Wan, Eunice Tang



2 - Professor Graham Welch and Dr Elizabeth MacGregor. Credits: Professor Graham Welch and Dr Elizabeth MacGregor.



3 - Presentation cover slide credit: Dr Elizabeth MacGregor.

### **Dr Elizabeth MacGregor: Pedagogies of vulnerability: Co-constructing caring music education praxis through collaborative action ethnography**

Dr Elizabeth MacGregor ([elizabeth.macgregor@some.ox.ac.uk](mailto:elizabeth.macgregor@some.ox.ac.uk)) presented her research on *musical vulnerability*— the idea that music-making can shape identity, reveal dependencies, and impact individuals both positively and negatively. While music education has often been celebrated for its academic, social, and health benefits, this study highlights the need to acknowledge its challenges as well. Through a collaborative action ethnography conducted in three schools in southern England, Elizabeth worked with music teachers to develop *pedagogies of vulnerability*—approaches that recognise the emotional complexities of music-making. By fostering compassionate care and participatory learning, this project

aimed to create more inclusive and responsive music education practices. This research opens new discussions on how music education can evolve to support all students.



4 - Presentation cover slide credit: Jenna Brown

### Jenna Brown: Exploring Philosophy of Imagination and Singing Pedagogy

Jenna Brown ([jenna.brown.23@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:jenna.brown.23@ucl.ac.uk)) presented her research on how singing teachers, choral conductors, and singers use imagination and mental imagery as pedagogical tools. Her work examines whether these techniques align with or contrast against the more contemporary field of voice science. In her presentation, she provided an overview of key issues from her recent publications, focusing on the 'Four Ws' of imagery in voice and choral pedagogy—why, where, when, and how imagery is used. Her research, analysed through the lens of Philosophy of Mind, applied the Lens Theory of Imagination to stock imagery, leading to deeper questions about relationality, truth, and meaning. By bridging philosophy, pedagogy, neuroscience, and psychology, Jenna's work is helping to address a gap in vocal education research, shedding light on the role and effectiveness of mental imagery in voice training.

## Call for Papers: 5th ISME South Asia Regional Conference



5 - Photo Credit: International Society of Music Education

Call for papers for the 5th ISME South Asia Regional Conference (SARC) is now open. The conference will be held in Kathmandu, Nepal, from November 19-21, 2025 and the theme is Music Education and Sustainability. We invite members involved in music education research, teaching, or practice, including researchers, academics, educators, students, and practitioners to submit their original work related to the conference theme.

For more information, please visit here:

[ISME SARC Homepage](#)

For submission guidelines and to submit your paper, please click here:

[ISME SARC Call for Papers](#)

**5th ISME South Asia Regional Conference at a glance:**

**Venue:** Kathmandu, Nepal

**Date:** 19-21 Nov, 2025

**Abstract Submission Deadline:** 1 May, 2025

**Conference Theme:** Music Education and Sustainability

[Call for Papers: British Voice Association Research Portal](#)

**WORKSHOP WITH THE SINGING DOCTORS**

Dr Rebecca Moseley-Morgan and Dr Susannah Self facilitate the gift of beautiful singing  
Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2025 10.00am to 5.00pm. Tackley Village Hall, Oxon OX5 3AH  
Workshop fee £50 Book [inspectorvoice@gmail.com](mailto:inspectorvoice@gmail.com)

<b>Dr Susannah Self</b> Choral Director/Composer of Voice Friendly Music	<b>Dr Rebecca Moseley-Morgan</b> Expert in Teaching Freeing Vocal Technique
	

*Through working on four beautiful set choral works Becky and Susie will empower your singing. There will be solo singing slots in the day as well.*

*6 - Poster Credit: British Voice Association*

The BVA is creating an exciting opportunity for researchers from any field of voice. We are offering the chance to showcase your research profile on our new online research portal. Through this you will be able to network with other researchers, share your expertise, be considered for a research presentation at St. Andrew's Pedagogy Course and participate in public engagement via BVA hosted events. To submit your profile to the research portal, please send us a research summary which should include:



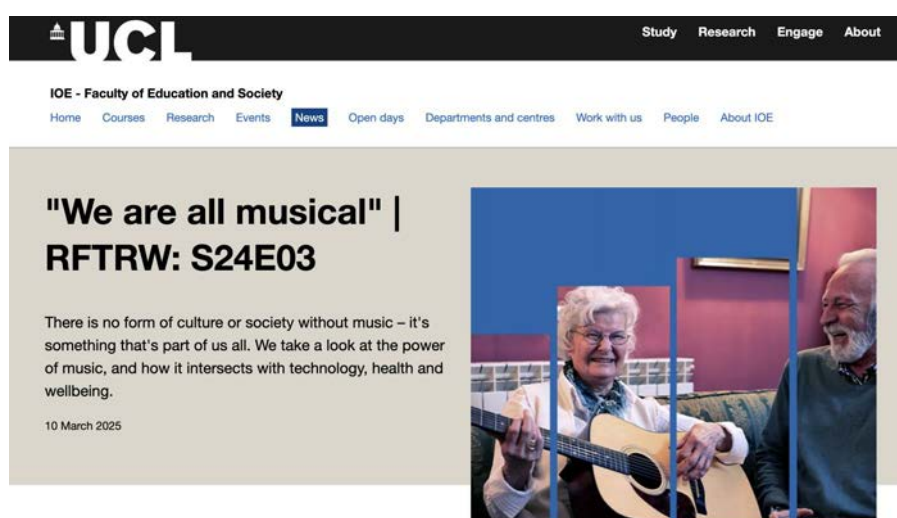
1. A short biography
2. Your research interests and work
3. Current or previous research projects and any publications.

Submissions should be approximately 1000 words (+/- 10%) and include a hi-resolution photo suitable for website use. You can submit via online form here: <https://bit.ly/3Qkyehj>

Enquiries and submissions can also be sent to: [research@britishvoiceassociation.org.uk](mailto:research@britishvoiceassociation.org.uk)

**Contact: Dr Rebecca Moseley-Morgan** ([inspectorvoice@gmail.com](mailto:inspectorvoice@gmail.com))

## IOE Insights Podcast: We Are All Musical, Research for the Real World



7 - Photo Credit: UCL IOE

*"We should not forget the power of the creative industries."*

In this episode, Dr Amy Harrison hears from Professor Evangelos Himonides as he discusses his research, which bridges the intersection of music and technology. We also explore his work with Shout at Cancer, a charity that uses innovative speech training through music, singing, and performance to help those recovering after a laryngectomy, the surgical removal of the voice box.

As we look at the current state of the arts and creative industries, Evangelos says there is no need for an "apologetic stance" when it comes to discussing the benefits of music and the arts. He emphasises that these are important because they are "fundamental parts of our humanity", in addition to their integral role contributing to the global economy.

Notes: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/news/2025/mar/we-are-all-musical-rftw-s24e03>

Podcast: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDyz8Aq-FCU>

*Guest Speaker: Dr Elaine King*

*Topic: Music for Living Better: How Stroke Survivors, Carers and Facilitators Experienced the STROKESTRA Community Programme*

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*8 - Dr Elaine King. Photo Credit: Dr Elaine King.*

**Elaine's Abstract:**

This research project explored the effectiveness of a pioneering stroke rehabilitation programme called the STROKESTRA Community Programme (SCP). The SCP was delivered by members of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with assistance from volunteers, including University music students and community workers. Existing research and intervention studies indicate that music can be an effective therapeutic tool for stroke, although there is limited insight into how community programmes are delivered and experienced. This study investigated the lived experiences of those who participated in and facilitated the SCP and considered what their experiences reveal about using music as an agent for living better. Semi-structured interviews and observations were conducted with SCP participants (n=39).

There were three main themes: (1) social and emotional experiences (becoming a new group; social bonding through music; experiencing endings); (2) musical and creative experiences (including connecting/re-connecting with music; creativity; performance; experiencing synchrony); (3) progress and transformation (life changes; motivation; experiencing new contexts). The findings reveal how community music programmes can help people to learn to live with life changes for the better.

**Dr Elaine King** ([E.C.King@hull.ac.uk](mailto:E.C.King@hull.ac.uk)) is Reader in Music at the University of Hull, UK. She has published widely in the fields of performance studies, music psychology and music education, including co-edited volumes on *Music and Gesture* (2006), *New Perspectives on Music and Gesture* (2011), *Music and Familiarity* (2013) and *Music and Empathy* (2017). Recent projects include STROKESTRA (in partnership with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra), Chinese Whispers (with the Confucius Institute, Hull), Transitions in Music Education (TiME; with Hull and East Riding Music Services), and Mapping Music Education, Social Care, Health & Wellbeing (MESH2). As a performer, Elaine is a cellist, pianist and conductor. She directs the University of Hull Camerata and is involved in other regional chamber ensembles and orchestras, including the Hull Philharmonic Orchestra (Assistant Musical Director and Rehearsal Conductor), the East Riding Concert Orchestra and the Annikyra String Quartet.

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*Guest Speakers: Professor Nicola Shaughnessy, Dr Ruth Herbert, Dr Jacqueline Walduck*

*Topic: Creative process as impact: The participatory play framework*

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#### **Nicola, Ruth and Jacqueline's Abstract:**

This paper introduces the Participatory Play framework (PPF) as a tool for working inclusively to evaluate creative engagement in participatory arts processes, working in diverse health contexts. Impact is frequently thought of as an end point and process is often discussed as a pathway to impact, so in this paper we foreground participatory arts processes, introducing a tool that offers a means of identifying and evaluating different modes of playing in participatory arts and creative health contexts. The PP-Framework is an evaluation tool for mapping engagement in participatory arts practices. It maps types of participation in terms of performative behaviours and qualities of experience, understood as modes of play. It is predicated on the processes of working in creative participatory contexts whilst also being sensitive to the aesthetic qualities of what is produced and capable of capturing beneficial changes in engagement. It offers a conceptual approach for researchers to undertake observation of participatory arts practices, taking account of embodied engagement and interaction processes. It is informed by understandings of autistic performativity and masking in conjunction with an ecological understanding of sense making as being shaped by environments, social relations and sensing subjectivity.



The framework has the potential to be a bi-directional tool, with application for both practitioners and participants



9 - Professor Nicola Shaughnessy. Photo Credit: Professor Nicola Shaughnessy

**Professor Nicola Shaughnessy** ([N.Shaughnessy@kent.ac.uk](mailto:N.Shaughnessy@kent.ac.uk)) is Professor of Performance at the University of Kent. Her work explores the intersections between arts and science through creative methods with particular interests in neurodiversity, gender and ethnography. She has been Principal Investigator for four interdisciplinary projects, funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council, investigating autistic identities through creative practices: Imagining Autism (drama, and interactive media as interventions for autism) Autism Re-Imagined (follow-on award), Playing A/Part: Autism and Gender and Playing A/Part Online (follow-on award). She is currently Co-investigator for two UK Research Council programme awards using arts-based methods to research adolescent mental health: ATTUNE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and CREATE (adolescent loneliness). For both these projects she is the lead for neurodiversity and creative practices. She is also Co-Investigator for the AHRC project: Understanding Online Misogyny', developing training and educational resources as interventions for online gender violence. Commendations include shortlisting for THES Research Supervisor of the Year (2018) and the Wellcome Trust/AHRC Medical Humanities Leadership awards (2020). She is Series editor and co-founder of Methuen's Performance and Science series and she is a consultant on neurodiversity, working with organisations such as The National Theatre and Audible.

She has published widely with several books. These include Applying Performance: Live Art, Socially Engaged Theatre and Affective Practice (Palgrave, 2012) and the edited collections Affective Performance and Cognitive Science: Body, Brain and Being (Methuen, 2013) and Performing Psychologies: Imagination, Creativity and Dramas of the Mind (co-edited with Philip Barnard, 2019). She is currently co-authoring and edited collection: Beyond Autistic Stereotypes for Oxford University Press.



10 - Dr Ruth Herbert. Photo Credit: Dr Ruth Herbert

**Dr Ruth Herbert** ([R.Herbert@kent.ac.uk](mailto:R.Herbert@kent.ac.uk)) is a music psychologist and professional pianist. She is Lecturer in Music at City St George's, University of London, and Senior Lecturer in Music at the University of Kent. Her research interests embrace health and wellbeing, music education, music and consciousness (including ASC and Trance), sonic studies, music evolutionary psychology, ethology and performance psychology. Ruth's work is informed by ecological approaches to perception and 4E cognition. She has a particular interest in the ontology of autism, and multisensory experience, has been a Co-I on the AHRC-funded project [\*Playing A/Part: Autistic Girls, Identities and Creativity\*](#) and is currently a Co-I on [\*CREATE\*](#), a UKRI-funded research project that applies transdisciplinary understanding to arts-based mental health research. Publications include a co-edited volume on music and consciousness (OUP, 2019), a monograph on the phenomenology of everyday music listening (Routledge 2016[2011]) and a co-edited volume (with Prof. Nicola Shaughnessy & Dr Emma Williams) titled *Beyond Autistic Stereotypes: Gender, Identity & Experience* [OUP, forthcoming 2025]. Journal articles and chapters have centred on a range of topics, including arts-based practices and mental health, musical daydreaming, trancing and cross-cultural musicking and identity. Ruth has contributed to UK BBC Radio 4 & 5 features on music and consciousness, music and spiritual wellbeing, and music, food and multisensory experience. She is a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Sonic Studies* and an associate editor for *Musicae Scientiae*.



11 - Dr Jacqueline Walduck. Photo credit: Kate Garcia

**Dr Jacqueline Walduck** ([jwalduck@ram.ac.uk](mailto:jwalduck@ram.ac.uk)) is a composer and percussionist whose practice explores improvisation, collaborative composition and multisensory experience. She is active as a performance-maker, researcher and community musician, creating multisensory performances (Miso Kitchen 2020, Diagnosis: Drifting Dreaming Waiting 2021) and site-specific works for Crossness Pumping Station (Cleanse, 2024), The Hot Tin, Faversham (Communion 2022) and Thornham Magna (Sensing Nature, 2017). In 2025, Jackie was awarded the prestigious Association of British Orchestra's Health and Wellbeing Award for her work with people experiencing homelessness and orchestral musicians, which spans 25 years and has reached over 1000 participants. She joined the Playing A/Part research team in 2021, and continues to develop her research in improvisation, autism, multisensory dancing and mental health. She is a Lecturer in Academic Studies at the Royal Academy of Music, and is an Honorary Associate there.

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*Speaker: Sandra Oberoi*

*Topic: The Music of Young People in India*

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12 - Photo Credit: Sandra Oberoi

### **Sandra's Abstract:**

India's diverse musical landscape has long been a site of cultural negotiation, and the music of young people reflects a dynamic interplay between tradition and individual identity. Music-making is a unique lens through which we might examine continuity and change assuming it is closely embedded in societies and formative to their construction and transformation. While historically Indian music was largely dictated by regional and religious traditions, the emergence of digital platforms, for example, has significantly altered the ways in which young people engage with music. Important musical traditions have been transformed to accommodate new learnings with the changing geographies, urbanisation, globalisation, homogenisation of cultures against a rapidly developing socio-political landscape. Using Bangalore as a case study, this presentation aims to explore what counts as the music of young people in India today and how they define themselves through music.

**Sandra Oberoi** ([sandra@harmonybangalore.com](mailto:sandra@harmonybangalore.com)) Singer, music educator and voice teacher, Sandra founded Harmony The Music School in Bangalore, India in 2008. Director of Harmony International, UK, and choral conductor of the award-winning youth choir, The Harmony Chorus, she actively facilitates purposeful music programs for young people across the globe besides championing professional development opportunities for music teachers. Engaged in research studies at UCL, Institute of Education, she is also an advisor for the International Society for Music Education's (ISME) South Asia Regional activities. From 2020-24, she served as ISME's board member and continues to co-chair the ISME Advocacy Standing Committee. President of the India chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), she begins her role as NATS International Region Governor in June 2025.

### **Upcoming UCL iMerc Research Seminar**

Please note that our next research seminar will be held on 26th March 2025 on Zoom and in room 935 at the IOE. If you would like to share your work with us, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you very much!

## Congratulations to Our Colleagues on Their Doctoral Theses!

We're thrilled to celebrate the incredible research contributions of Dr Christie Haddad, Dr Xuanyi Ma, and Dr Cindy Tse, Yee Ni! Their doctoral theses are now available for reading and download— offering valuable insights into music education, performance, assessments and technology.

**Dr Christie Haddad** – *Technology-Enhanced Professional Development in Music for Early Years Practitioners: A Design-Based Study* [Read here](#)

**Dr Cindy Tse Yee Ni** – *The Perceptions and Cultural Persistence of Graded Music Examinations, and Their Impacts on Instrumental Teaching and Learning in Hong Kong* [Read here](#)

**Dr Jeehye Hwang** – *How do older adults perceive and engage in active music-making in the digital age? Exploring lived experiences of instrumental learning and playing after retirement in South Korea* [Read here](#)

**Dr Rebecca Moseley-Morgan** – *A Longitudinal Study of Vocal Functionality and Longevity in the Mature Female Singer* [Read here](#)

**Dr Xuanyi Ma** – *Towards a Novel Approach for Real-Time Psycho-Physiological and Emotional Response Measurement: Findings from a Small-Scale Empirical Study on Sad Erhu Music* [Read here](#)

## Contact Us

Visit us on the website at <http://www.imerc.org>

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Ms Eunice Tang: [eunice.tang@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:eunice.tang@ucl.ac.uk)