

# University of Edinburgh Musical Instrument Collection 2017-18 Annual Review

## Introduction

We have now seen our first full year in the reopened St Cecilia's Hall. The building is a vibrant and busy space with a wide range of events, musical and otherwise, bringing in a diverse audience. The Collection continues to grow at a steady pace and its appreciation by researchers, musicians, students and the public at large remains at a high level, enhanced by the much improved accommodation.

St Cecilia's Hall was awarded the RICS Building Conservation Award, 2018. <https://ww2.rics.org/uk/training-events/rics-awards/rics-awards-scotland/> and the Edinburgh Architectural Association Regeneration and Conservation Award <http://www.eaa.org.uk/about/news/2018/may/eea-awards-2018-winners-announced/> and was shortlisted for a RIBA award.

Following a review process, the Musical Instrument Collection retained its status as a Recognised Collection of Significance to Scotland. The University Collections as a whole have been awarded continued financial support from the Scottish Funding Council's Museums, Galleries and Collections Fund for the period 2018/19 to 2020/2021.

## Visitor Figures and Venue Hire

Due to the redevelopment project, St Cecilia's Hall and the Musical Instrument Collection now have an enhanced profile within the University of Edinburgh and greater public engagement. In the first year of opening, May 2017 to April 2018, we exceeded our targets for visitor figures, income generation and experience rating:

Visitor Figures		Income		Experience Rating	
Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
18,000	21,187	£12,750	£13,425	85% 5*	100% 5*

51 group visits were accommodated and 8,126 individual visitors came to the Museum. St Cecilia's Hall has accommodated 160 events and venue hires. For these events, the breakdown is as follows: 39 Library and University Collections, of which 30 were Museums Services Public Programming events; 74 Internal University, of which 24 were ECA/Music Dept., 8 Principals Office and 3 Edinburgh First; 47 External, of which 17 were Festival events.

## University Teaching, Research Support and Academic Engagement

The Musical Instrument Collection has particularly strong academic links, through undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, supervision, research support and academic engagement. At undergraduate level, the Curator taught parts of the Research Methods courses (Undergraduate and Postgraduate); and Music 1B: Instruments Culture and Technology (1<sup>st</sup> year).

The Curator led and taught the MMus Musical Instrument Research course which had one student, although a second student took the Organology of Keyboard Instruments course. The Principal Curator left to take up a post with the National Museum Denmark, so external tutors were brought in to assist with teaching and these courses will no longer run after 2017/18. From 2018/19, a new UG Honours level course, 'Music and its Instruments', will run, which can also be taken by taught postgraduate students. The next year will also be used to develop new courses to form a Musical Instrument pathway at masters level to replace the MMus in Musical Instrument Research.

The Curator has been involved in developing a new Masters course in Collecting and Curating Practices based at the University of Edinburgh. This course runs collaboratively with partner institutions within Edinburgh including the National Museum of Scotland, the National Gallery of Scotland and the Fruitmarket Gallery. The course ran for the first time in the academic year 2017-18 and has doubled its cohort size for 2018-19. Students benefit from a hands-on learning experience based in all of the University's collections and those of the partner institutions, taught by specialist professional staff. This year we were also delighted to work with Memory Theatres elective students from ECA, who considered how visitors might have experienced the hall in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and how we could represent that today. The results were four provocative but beautiful installations in the galleries and Concert Room.

Two AHRC-funded PhD students continue to be based in the Collection, both supervised by the Curator and a lecturer from the Reid School of Music. The former Principal Curator remains as an external supervisor for one of these students and for a third PhD student who is not based in Music. Discussions are underway with two students who are interested in beginning PhD studies in 2019/20, funding permitting.

We were delighted to host an AHRC PhD student, Daniel Rose-Jones, for four months from March 2018. Daniel contributed to a wide range of our activities, including collections management and storage, researching the history of the collection and sourcing possible images for inclusion in our gallery interpretation.

Specialist academic and musical researchers have visited to examine objects from the Collection. Instruments have been made available in the Reading Room in the Library's Centre for Research Collections as well as at St Cecilia's Hall, depending on the usual location of the objects. Collection staff answered approximately 200 unique enquiries relating directly to our collections during the year from May 2017.

The Conservator, Dr Jonathan Santa Maria Bouquet presented at the 4th Annual Conference COST FP1302 WoodMusICK – Preservation of Wooden Musical Instruments Ethics, Practice and Assessment in Belgium, 5-7 October 2017. The Curator spoke on 'The 1890 International Exhibition in Edinburgh: a Musical Perspective' at the Scottish Network for 19<sup>th</sup>-Century European Cultures Conference: Producers, Performers, and Consumers of Culture on 8 June and on 'The Trafficking of Musical Instruments in Georgian and Victorian Edinburgh: A perspective from the Glen Account Book, 1838-44' to The Old Edinburgh Club in February.

St Cecilia's Hall and the Collection have benefitted greatly from volunteers who have supported all aspects of museum activity, arranged by Laura Beattie (Student Volunteer and Internship Programme Coordinator) and Dr Sarah Deters (Learning and Engagement Curator). Volunteers are important as gallery invigilators when the Binks and 1812 Galleries are open to the public. Individuals are also contributing to public tours, instrument

research, collections management, our web presence, the schools offer, and events management. The conservation volunteer and internship programmes continue to be important in supporting the work of the Conservator. Staff and volunteers have received training in audio describing and supporting visually-impaired visitors to the collection.

The new VoluME team (Volunteer Marketing and Events), managed by the Museums Services Manager, Ruthanne Baxter, provides support in marketing St Cecilia's Hall, the Exhibition Gallery at the Main Library and their events programme. In addition the VoluME team works at evening concerts and talks, enhancing the front of house welcome and visitor flow management and also the back stage hospitality for performers and speakers.

The Curator continues to be the UK Government advisor for export licences for musical instruments, making recommendations on whether objects of important cultural heritage are allowed to leave the country. She is also a member of the advisory committee for the National Trust's Benton Fletcher Collection of Keyboard Instruments at Fenton House in London and the Carolina Music Museum in the USA. She is on the Editorial Board for the journal *Eighteenth-Century Music* and acts as a reader for various journals and publishers. Dr Nex also acts as External Advisor and Assessor for Glasgow Clyde College and as External Examiner for the University of Hull who now oversee the musical instrument courses at Newark College.

## **Public and Community Engagement**

Since the Redevelopment Project, the public engagement programme has been significantly expanded, including a wider range of concerts and events as well as participation in programmes and events relating to dementia and student welfare. We fully support, and indeed are in many ways at the forefront of, the University's new Widening Participation and Community Engagement agendas. Since music and culture are universal human activities, we are well placed to use our collections and events to improve the life chances of everyone who engages with our diverse programmes in order to reach their full potential, regardless of their background. As a public museum with opportunities for both interns and volunteers, we are able to be a conduit for those not traditionally engaged with Higher Education to consider it as a possible career path.

We further support the University's internationalisation agenda through participation in the China Ready programme, hosting high profile visits and offering staff and volunteers introductory sessions in Mandarin and Chinese cultural awareness.

Highlights this year include the St Cecilia's Day Big Celebration which took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017 (St Cecilia's Day). The concept behind this event was simply to celebrate the joy of music making for all. Conceived as a day all about amateur performers who dedicate part of their leisure time to music, the programme grew to become a day of non-stop, free, live music that incorporated 17 acts from 11.30am–6.30pm and covered everything from traditional harp playing to a barbershop quartet and a dementia friendly choir to a jazz band. The Museum welcomed 220 visitors through the day and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. This event will be repeated in 2018.

Inspired by the combination of the Big Celebration Day format and the fact that 2018 is the Year of Young People, the Three on a Thursday Concert series was developed. The third Thursday of every month sees a trio of young soloists or ensembles performing for 30 minutes each, offering music from different genres including, for example, a traditional duo

of clarsach and banjo, a string quartet and a beatbox group. All the musicians are aged between 16 and 26. This has been a wonderful way to encourage young, local musicians in their music making, to offer performance experiences and also to develop some younger audiences.

We were pleased to welcome Luminate, Scotland's creative ageing organisation, who run a diverse programme of creative events and activities throughout the year. Their 'Hidden Voices' Festival was launched with an event at St Cecilia's' Hall on 1st October 2017. This, and their other projects, celebrate creativity as we age, bringing together people from across generations.

The Collection continues to work with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's Connect workshop programme, delivering events for families and adults. The Learning and Engagement Curator continues to nurture established relationships and to welcome school groups for tours and hands-on activities. The Curator has provided in-depth hands-on visits for students from other higher and further education establishments including UMIS partners the University of Glasgow, the University of Aberdeen and Glasgow Strathclyde University.

Concerts and other events have included: Ringo Starr and his Drumkit (talk); L'Avventura London with Old Blind Dogs; the Karaj Collective; Alehouse Sessions; Other Faces; Mad Hatter, Grey Matter (Mental Health Festival); The Spence School Choir; Alexandre Prévert – Piano & Poetry; and Songs in the Round.

The Friends of St Cecilia's Hall arranged a concert series as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in August 2018. The structure of these concerts was reconceptualised, with hour-long concerts in the afternoon instead of the previous pattern of full-length concerts with intervals. The new system worked extremely well, with audiences uniformly high and a 25% increase from the previous year, 2017 seeing a total of 459 with 2018 up to 574. The first concert of the series was the first Shackleton Memorial Concert, supported by the Shackleton Fund. This concert was presented by early clarinet specialist Dr Emily Worthington, who played one of the instruments from the Shackleton Collection. The subsequent concerts used keyboard instruments from the collection and were presented by a range of musicians including university organist Dr John Kitchen, PhD student David Gerrard and internationally recognised harpsichordist Catalina Vicens, the latter supported by the Keyboard Trust.

The University continues to lead on the MIMO (Musical Instrument Museums Online) project, chaired by Jacky MacBeath, Head of Museums, and project managed by Norman Rodger. <http://www.mimo-international.com/MIMO/>. The aim of this international partnership is to create a single online access point to the world's publicly held collections of musical instruments. Additional Collections continue to join, with those of the *Musé d'la musique* in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, and of the *Musé Panafricain d'la musique* in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo being added in 2017.

In addition, the Musical Instrument Collection has been involved with the MINIM-UK project led from the Royal College of Music in London. This project has enabled musical instruments in collections all over the UK to be added to a national database of instruments in public collections, thus enhancing our knowledge of national holdings and increasing potential to access them. <http://minim.ac.uk/>.



## Collection Management and Acquisitions

Instruments were loaned to the '*Rhythm and Reaction: the Age of Jazz in Britain*' exhibition at Two Temple Place in London from January to April 2018, facilitated by Jill Forrest, Loans Registrar and Museums Support Officer, with instruments conserved and prepared by the Conservator, Dr Jonathan Santa Maria Bouquet.

Planning for the new storage area at the University Collections Facility (UCF) is well under way and the building work is ongoing. The latter is due for completion in October 2018 with the implementation of the Collections Move Plan, January and February 2019. The UCF will be operational from Easter 2019. The new area will house our stored keyboard instruments along with the larger instruments which are currently in the Main Library Collections Store and will be jointly stored and managed with the University's Art Collection. This will improve conditions for the instruments which have been stored in the Reid Concert Hall and will free up space in the Main Library Store to house better the smaller items which are consulted in the Centre for Research Collections.

Discussions are well advanced concerning moving the Musical Instrument Collection's archives and books to the Archives and Rare Books sections of the Centre for Research Collections. All of our stores and spaces in the Reid Concert Hall will be vacated in or before January 2019. The building will then be managed centrally by the Reid School of Music.

The Collection has grown this year, adding gifts of a Clarsach-style Harp by Clark dating from 1911 and a Taisho-Koto, a small, domestic version of the Koto played by women in Japan in the first half of the twentieth century. A pink Ukulele was acquired for the handling collection, to form part of one of the Discovery Drawers in the Wolfson Gallery of St Cecilia's Hall Music Museum and Concert Room.

Dr Jenny Nex, Curator  
Jacky MacBeath, Head of Museums  
30 August 2018