



KING'S  
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LONDON

# EQUALITY **AND** DIVERSITY in the Classical Music Profession

A research report by Dr Christina Scharff  
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# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

## in the Classical Music Profession

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## **AUTHOR AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## INTRODUCTION: WHY FOCUS ON ISSUES OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY?

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This report brings together new and existing research on equality and diversity in the classical music profession. It draws on academic, policy and advocacy reports but also provides new data that has been specifically collected for this report. The aim of the report is to provide a systematic overview of issues of equality and diversity in the classical music profession by:

- 1) mapping existing inequalities
- 2) providing explanations for why these inequalities persist
- 3) offering recommendations for how they can be addressed

Inequalities in the arts and cultural sector relate to a range of issues, such as access to the arts, which has been discussed widely. However, inequalities in the cultural sector also relate to the composition of the cultural workforce. This issue has been explored less widely, even though it matters. Who gets to make culture, in its widest sense from books to films and music, shapes how we understand ourselves as a society. If certain groups are under-represented in the cultural workforce, their views and perspectives may not be seen, heard or shared. This also means that the arts and culture may only appeal to a particular segment of society, impeding further growth, particularly in terms of recruiting future audiences and retaining a skilled workforce.

Although inequalities in the cultural workforce matter, there has been relatively little systematic research, particularly on the classical music profession. Existing reports, such as the *Music Blueprint* by Creative Blueprint (2011) focus on the music

industry as a whole and do not explicitly discuss classical music. In addition, there are reported difficulties in obtaining relevant information on the cultural workforce (Arts Council England, 2014). As this report will demonstrate, the lack of evidence is particularly pronounced in relation to musicians' class and ethnic backgrounds. While it was possible to identify some existing studies and to conduct a limited amount of further research, there is an urgent need to collect and collate more data. Such data would document the composition of the classical music workforce in terms of gender, race and class, but would also include other important variables, such as age, disability and sexual orientation, that remain unaddressed here.

Lastly, an informed discussion about issues of equality and diversity is timely because we live in a society that puts a lot of emphasis on individual achievement and confidence. While a self-confident attitude might be needed to succeed in the highly competitive arts and cultural sector, the emphasis on the *individual* leaves out social forces, such as wider inequalities. Gender, ethnic and class background do affect musicians' ability to access the sector and to succeed. To be sure, there are individual success stories and musicians' backgrounds do not determine their careers. But the evidence shows that there are wider patterns, which for example relate to the under-representation of musicians from working-class, black and minority ethnic backgrounds, and the relative lack of women in positions of authority and prestige. However, these patterns tend to remain unacknowledged. Instead, challenges are often regarded as *individual* problems, adding to the emotional difficulties that many musicians experience. It's therefore time to put these inequalities on the agenda, to make them visible, and to understand what we can do to move beyond them.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report documents issues of equality and diversity in music education and training, orchestras, teaching staff at conservatoires, conducting, and composition. Based on a systematic analysis, the report identifies inequalities that relate to under-representation, vertical and horizontal segregation, and the sexualisation of female musicians.

### Under-representation

Despite making up a high percentage of students on relevant degree programmes, women remain under-represented in the classical music profession. Research equally suggests that musicians from working-class or minority ethnic backgrounds encounter barriers to access the sector. Classical music education, for example, has similarities with middle-class culture, meaning that musicians from a middle-class background fit more comfortably in this world.

### Vertical and horizontal segregation

The classical music profession is marked by vertical segregation; women are under-represented in positions of authority and prestige, and wider research on the arts and cultural sector suggests that similar trends apply to ethnic minorities. Horizontal segregation is also present; women are over-represented amongst teachers, but under-represented amongst composers. Vertical and horizontal segregation may exacerbate the gender pay gap in the music industry.

### Sexualisation of female players

Women musicians may have to negotiate a range of contradictory expectations in relation to femininity, sexuality and appearance. While physical attractiveness may be capitalised upon in certain contexts (such as marketing), it may also put at

risk female musicians' reputations and credibility as artists. In a context where sexual harassment is present, and where 'good looks' are defined narrowly, female musicians have to deal with a set of gender-specific challenges.

In order to make sense of the persistence of these inequalities, the report takes a close look at the working conditions in the classical music profession and the wider cultural sector. It shows that cultural myths about talent and creativity contribute to inequalities, as do other, indeed frequently lauded features of the sector, such as its informality, flexibility and reliance on networking. By focusing on working conditions, the report introduces a new and important angle to our understanding and discussion of inequalities in the classical music sector.

The report's recommendations suggest ways in which these inequalities could be addressed through, for example, more sustained research. This would facilitate a more informed discussion about inequalities in the classical music profession and would go some way towards helping to address the concerns raised within this report.

## CONTEXT: THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

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The classical music sector is part of the wider cultural economy. There are many similarities between the working lives of musicians, and those of other artists and creative workers. It therefore makes sense to explore inequalities in the classical music profession in the context of the cultural and creative industries.

We can see the following patterns:

- ♦ A higher proportion of women working in the creative media industries are graduates than men (Skillset, 2010). Yet, there has been a decrease in the proportion of women working in the arts and cultural sector between 2008/2009 and 2011/2012, with women currently representing 43% of the cultural workforce in England (Arts Council England, 2014<sup>1</sup>).
- ♦ As a report on the creative media industries has shown, women earn less than men (£29,015 compared to £34,669, excluding photo imaging and publishing). Even when other factors are adjusted for, such as the lower age profile of women in the workforce, the difference remains significant (Skillset, 2010).
- ♦ In 2011/12, 7% of the creative and cultural workforce was from a black and minority ethnic background (Arts Council England, 2014).
- ♦ The high level of graduate recruitment in the cul-

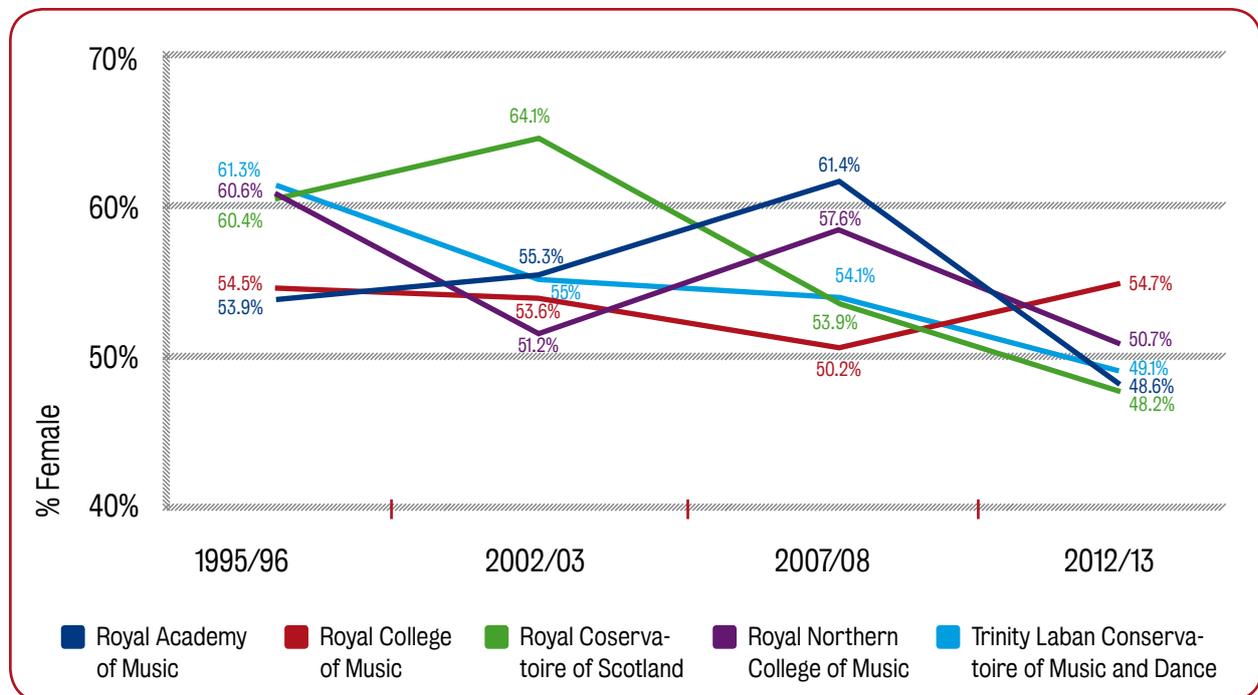
tural sector, as well as the prevalence of unpaid internships and volunteering, contribute to a lack of workforce diversity in terms of socio-economic background (Arts Council England, 2014).

## INEQUALITIES IN THE CLASSICAL MUSIC PROFESSION

### 1. Classical music education

- ♦ Reflecting trends in the wider cultural sector, women are over-represented in music education. According to a recent study by the Association of British Orchestras (ABO, 2014), 62% of players in youth orchestras are female.
- ♦ Women are also highly represented on relevant degree programmes. As Lucy Green (1997) has shown, most conservatoire students in the UK were women by the end of the nineteenth century.

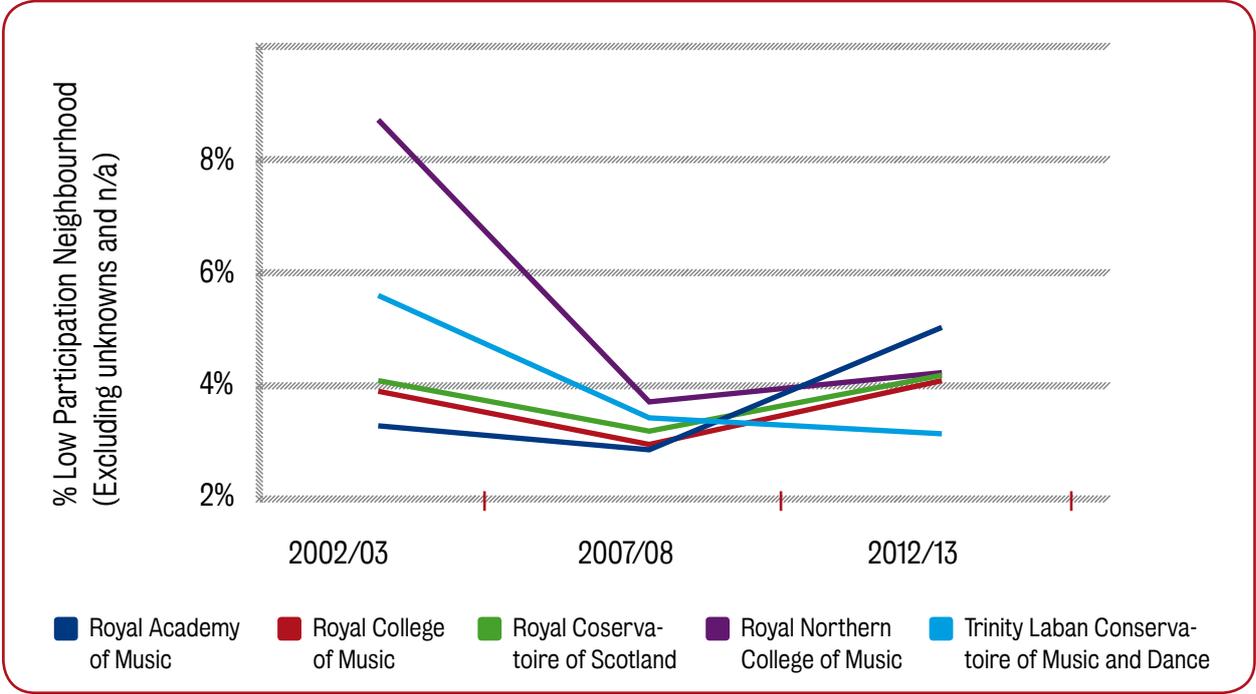
**Table 1 - Percentage of female students at five conservatoires**



<sup>1</sup> Data cited from the Arts Council England 2014 report refers to England only.

- ♦ While women currently make up around half of the student population at five UK conservatoires, they were over-represented in the mid-nineties (Blamey, Kokot and Scharff, 2014).
- ♦ A recent report on music education shows that children from lower socio-economic groups are under-represented. “90% of children from AB backgrounds will have played an instrument, compared with 80% of children from other social grades. In addition, 74% of children from AB backgrounds have had instrumental lessons compared with only 55% of children from social grades C1 and DE” (ABRSM, 2014: 18). The cost of learning to play an instrument is a barrier to participation in music training and education. However, it is not the most significant barrier.
- ♦ Research on class and youth music education in England has shown instead that the social scene, the continuity between home and school culture, as well as the type of long-term investment required to learn classical music, mean that middle-class people fit in more comfortably to the world of classical music (Bull, 2014; 2015). The lower participation of children from less privileged socio-economic backgrounds is not, therefore, simply a matter of access and cost; it is to do with the fact that the culture of music education has similarities with middle-class culture. For example, lower middle-class students in Anna Bull’s study were more likely to experience bullying by instrumental teachers than their middle-class peers and generally felt less comfortable and confident in the classical music world.

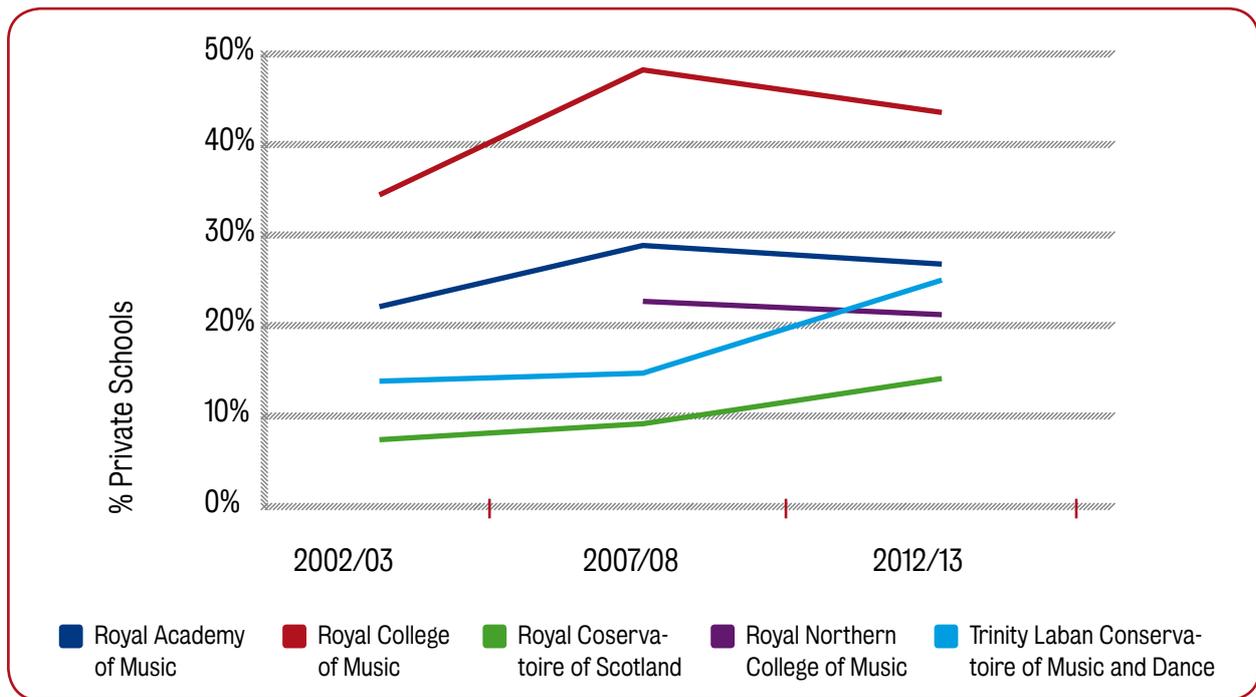
**Table 2 - Percentage of students from low participation neighbourhoods at five conservatoires**



♦ The middle-class culture of music education is also visible if we look at the class background of conservatoire students. Excluding unknowns and not applicable entries, 5.2% of students across five conservatoires came from a ‘low participation neighbourhood’ in 2002/03, which fell

to only 3.2% in 2007/08 and slightly recovered to 3.9% in 2012/13 (Blamey, Kokot and Scharff, 2014). In 2011-2012, the overall proportion of students from low participation neighbourhoods in higher education was above 10% (Universities UK, 2013).

**Table 3 - Percentage of privately schooled students at five conservatoires**

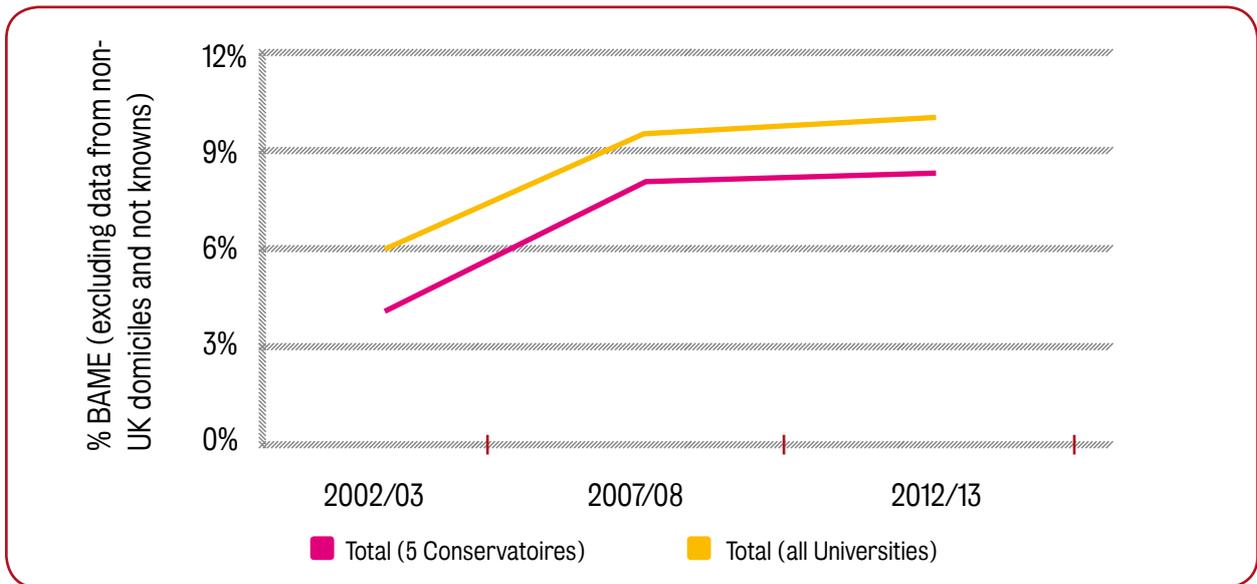


[Note: no data for Royal Northern College in 2002/03]

♦ A high proportion of conservatoire students attended a private school (Blamey, Kokot and Scharff, 2014). Excluding unknowns and not applicable entries, 24.4% of students across five conservatoires in 2012/2013 had attended a private school.

♦ The middle-class culture of music education may explain why classical music continues to appeal to middle-class audiences. A survey on cultural tastes in the UK has shown that classical music remains a disproportionately middle-class taste: graduates are six times more likely to appreciate it than those who have no qualifications (Bennett et al, 2009).

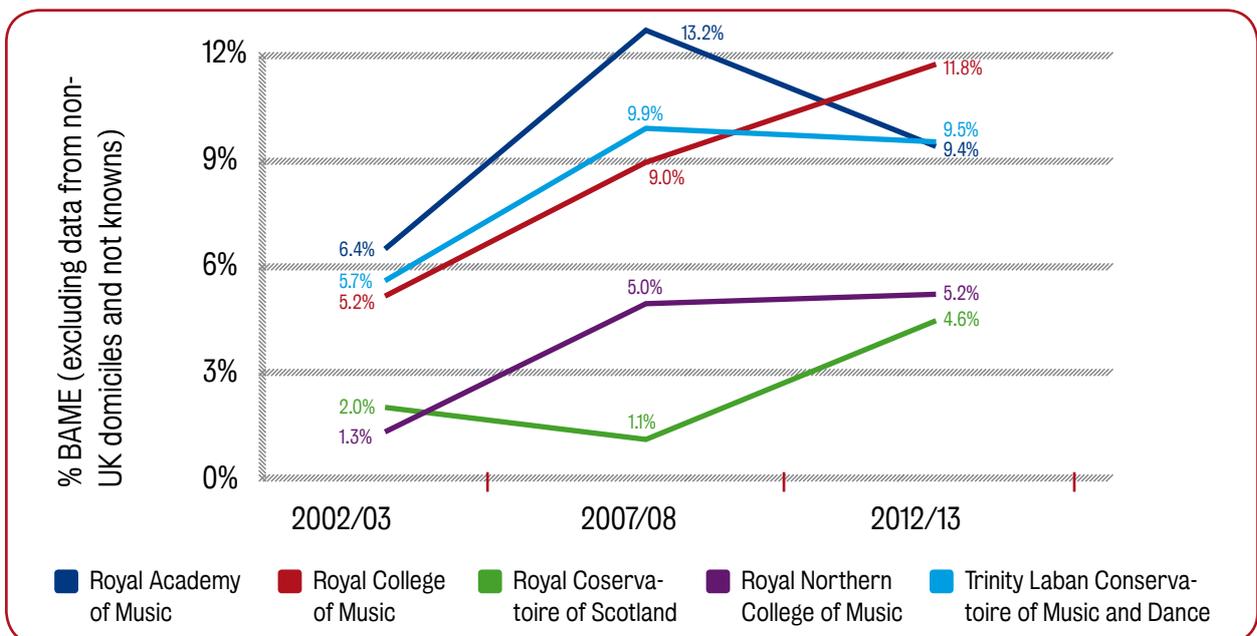
**Table 4** – Percentage of black and minority ethnic students i) at five conservatoires and ii) doing a music degree across all universities



♦ Students from black and minority ethnic backgrounds are also under-represented in classical music education. Amongst UK music students who disclosed their ethnicity, 10% were from a black and minority ethnic background in 2012/2013.

By contrast, the representation of black and minority ethnic students at five conservatoires, where data was available, was 8% in 2012/2013 (Blamey, Kokot and Scharff, 2014).

**Table 5** – Percentage of black and minority ethnic students at five conservatoires



## 2. Under-representation

- ♦ While women currently make up around half of the student population at the five UK conservatoires (Blamey, Kokot and Scharff, 2014), they remain under-represented in the profession.
- ♦ The gender profile of the artistic staff across the Arts Council England's 2012-2015 National Portfolio Organisations is 38.5 % female and 61.5 % male in music (Arts Council England, 2014). In comparison to other sectors, music has the lowest representation of women, with the grand total of all sectors being 53.1% men and 46.9 % women.
- ♦ A 2010 survey of the rosters of twenty British orchestras found that women represented 38.89% of the orchestral workforce (Osborne and Conant, 2010). Historical data shows that the numbers of women in orchestras is increasing, albeit slowly. In 1990, the representation of women in British orchestras was 30% (Allmendinger and Hackman, 1995). Our 2014 study<sup>2</sup> of the membership of British orchestras suggests that women now make up 43.2% per cent of players (McClure, Kokot and Scharff, 2014).
- ♦ As shown by the Arts Council England report on equality and diversity within the arts and cultural sector (Arts Council England, 2014), there was an absence of data on the ethnic background of almost a quarter of staff surveyed, equating to nearly 19,000 people. Data on the ethnic background of the cultural workforce, including music, is extremely limited.
- ♦ In our study of the membership of British orchestras (McClure, Kokot and Scharff, 2014), it was possible to collect data on the ethnic backgrounds of the members of 17 orchestras. Of 629 orchestra players, only 11 (1.7%) could be identified to be from a black and minority ethnic background, which suggests that the number of non-white musicians across this industry is low.
- ♦ According to the Music Blueprint (Creative Blueprint, 2011), which includes data on the entire music sector in the UK, 93% of the industry is white.
- ♦ Crucially, black and minority ethnic groups are culturally and socially diverse. According to Mari Yoshihara's (2007) research on Asian and Asian-American musicians in the US, East Asians constitute a considerable presence in the world of classical music in which other non-European groups remain largely invisible. Further research is needed to determine whether similar trends apply to the UK.
- ♦ There seems to be an absence of statistical data on the socio-economic background of musicians. A report by the Musicians' Union (Musicians' Union, 2012) has shown that 56% of surveyed musicians earn less than £20,000 a year (see also Creative Blueprint, 2011). This information does not, however, tell us something about the class background of musicians. The available information on music education (ABRSM, 2014), which highlighted the lower representation of children from less privileged socio-economic backgrounds, suggests that musicians from working-class/lower middle-class backgrounds are under-represented in the profession.

## 3. Horizontal segregation

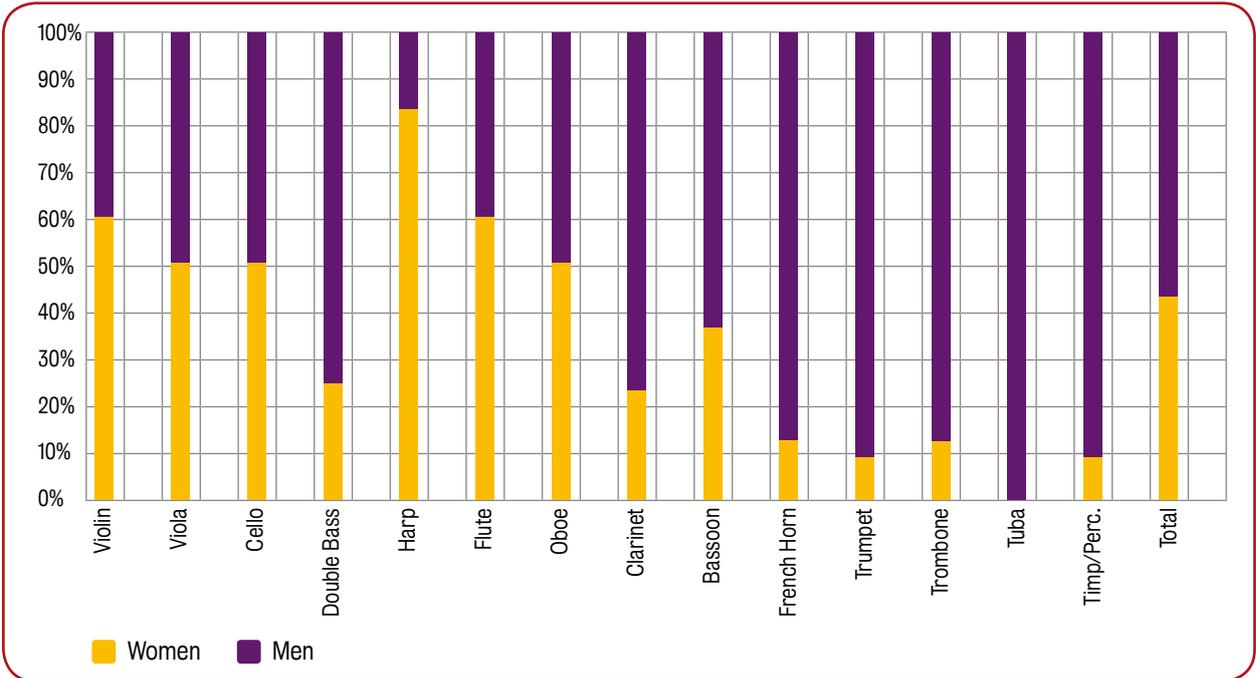
*Horizontal segregation refers to the concentration of particular groups in specific sectors of economic activity (for example, women tend to be over-represented in caring professions and men in financial services).*

- ♦ Female and male musicians tend to be concentrated in particular fields of the profession, such as instrument groups.

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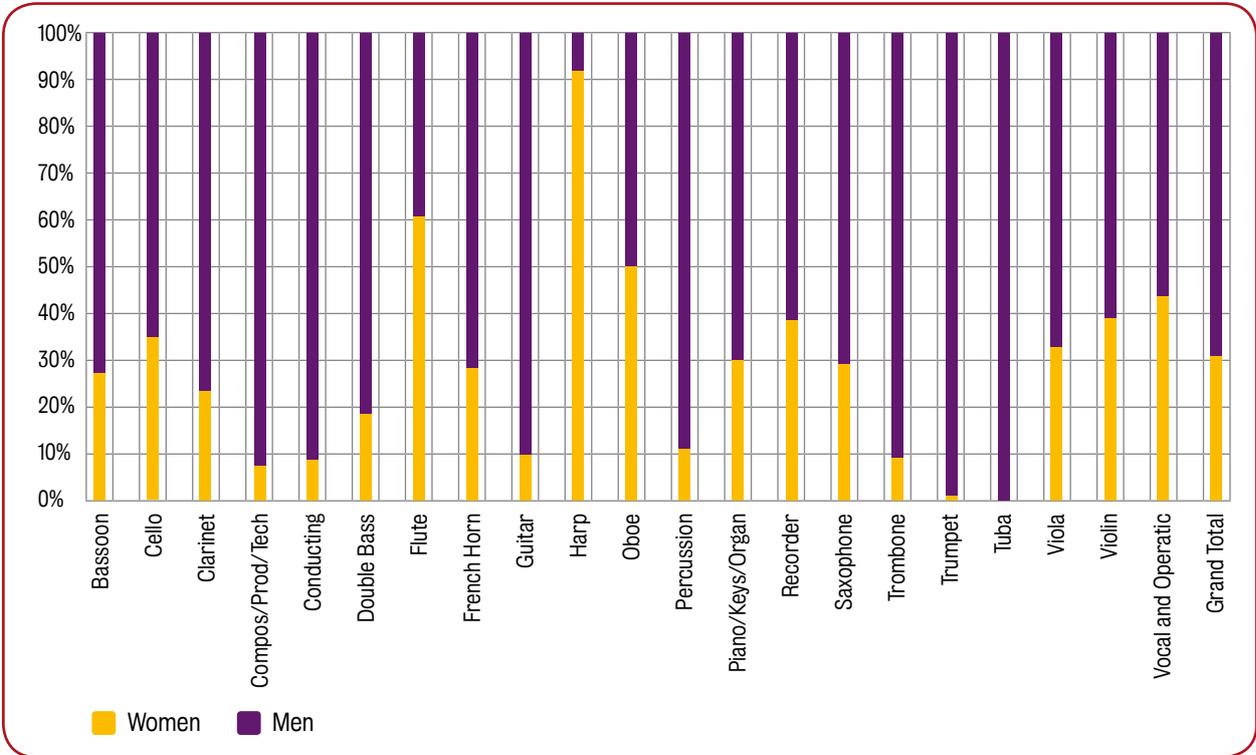
<sup>2</sup>Please see the Annex for a detailed discussion of the study's methodology.

**Table 6 – Gender breakdown by instrument amongst members of British orchestras**



♦ Some instruments and instrumental groups are gendered, particularly harp (female), brass (male) and percussion (male) (McClure, Kokot and Scharff, 2014).

**Table 7 - Gender breakdown by instrument taught by conservatoire staff**



- ♦ Horizontal segregation also exists amongst teaching staff at conservatoires. Women are particularly over-represented amongst staff who teach flute and harp, and significantly under-represented in conducting, percussion and brass (McClure, Kokot and Scharff, 2014).
- ♦ Gendered trends in instrument choice do not seem to have changed significantly. According to the ABRSM (2014), boys continue to learn percussion, whereas girls tend to play the recorder, violin or flute.
- ♦ In the profession, men are overwhelmingly represented in composition. The female membership of the Performing Rights Society For Music is currently 14% (PRS for Music Foundation, 2014). Women in Music (2014) has surveyed women’s participation in the BBC Proms, arguably the world’s most significant classical music festival. According to this survey, 1 out of 103 (0.97%) composers were female in 1992; in 2014, the

percentage of female composers had increased to 6.45% (8 out of 124). In addition, female composers are significantly less successful in terms of the number of recordings on which they feature (McAndrew and Everett, 2015).

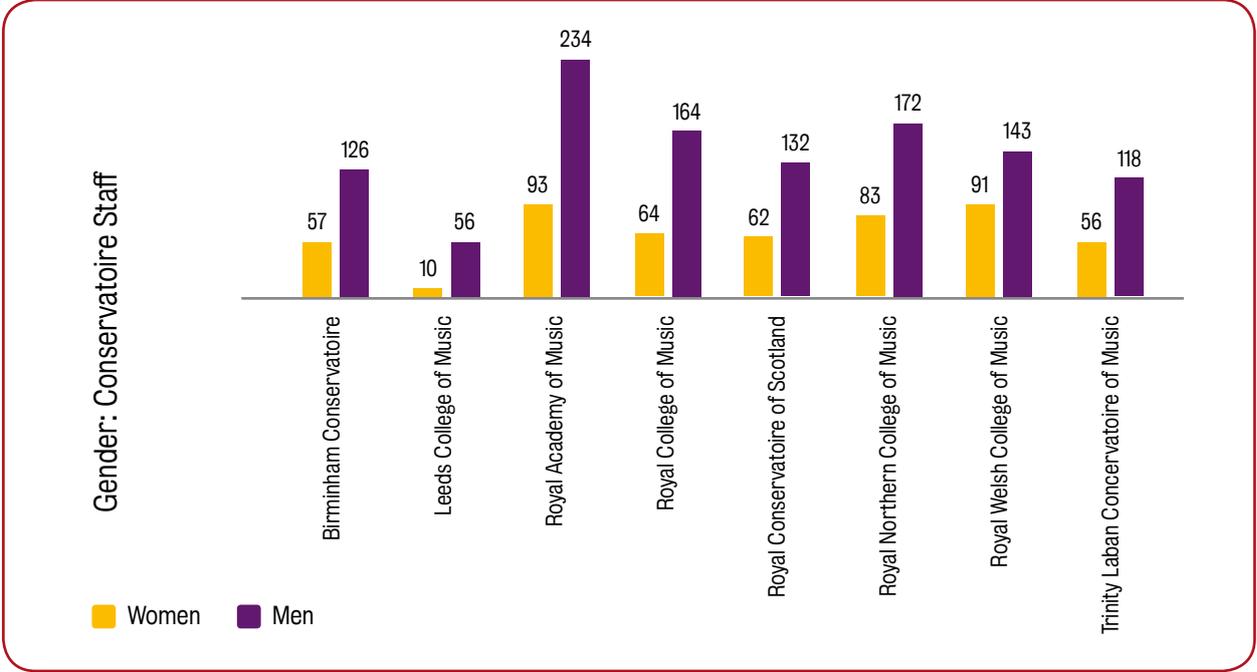
- ♦ By contrast, women are over-represented in teaching. Currently, 71% of music teachers are female, 28% are male, and one per cent preferred not to say (ABRSM, 2014). However, music teaching is often considered a less prestigious form of music making (Bennett, 2008; Mills, 2005).

**4. Vertical segregation**

*Vertical segregation refers to the over or under-representation of particular groups in positions of power and prestige. More colloquially, this is often referred to as the ‘glass ceiling’.*

- ♦ Men are over-represented at conservatoires, which is regarded a more prestigious form of teaching.

**Table 8 – Gender profile of conservatoire teaching staff**



♦ In 2014, around 70% of conservatoire teachers were male (McClure, Kokot and Scharff, 2014).

Out of 1787 staff, we could identify the gender of 1,661. 516 were female and 1,145 were male.

**Table 9 - Ethnic background of conservatoire teaching staff**

CONSERVATOIRE	BAME	WHITE	GRAND TOTAL
Birmingham Conservatoire	4	114	118
Leeds College of Music	1	62	63
Royal Academy of Music	10	321	331
Royal College of Music	1	198	199
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	4	95	99
Royal Northern College of Music	3	204	207
Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama	3	172	175
Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance	2	151	153
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1317</b>	<b>1345</b>

♦ Our research shows that the representation of black and minority ethnic staff is also low at conservatoires (McClure, Kokot and Scharff, 2014). Out of 1787 staff, we could identify the ethnic background of 1345. 28 staff, or around 2%, were from a black and minority ethnic background.

♦ In the arts and cultural sector at large, less than one in ten managers are from a black and minority ethnic background (Arts Council England, 2014).

♦ Reflecting the lack of women in positions of authority, few conductors are female (Bartleet, 2008; Bennett, 2008), and this seems to be changing slowly. According to data collected by Women in Music (2014), 1 out of 50 conductors was a woman (2%) at the 1992 BBC Proms. In 2014, 4 out of 62 were female (6.45%).

♦ Orchestras are also marked by vertical segregation.

**Table 10 - Total number and percentage of women conductors and artistic directors in orchestras**

Position	Total	% women
Conductor	72	1.4
Artistic/Musical Director	35	2.9

- ♦ Women are under-represented amongst conductors, artistic leaders and principals (McClure, Kokot and Scharff, 2014). In 2014, women only made up 1.4% of conductors and 2.9% of artistic/musical directors.

**Table 11** - Total number and percentage of women in orchestras for (i) all players, (ii) sub-principals, and (iii) principals; by instrument

Instrument	ALL PLAYERS		SUB-PRINCIPALS		PRINCIPALS	
	Total	% women	Total	% women	Total	% women
Violin	729	60.4	65	61.5	87	41.4
Viola	244	51.2	16	43.8	33	36.4
Cello	238	51.7	18	38.9	38	28.9
Double Bass	151	25.8	10	10.0	34	17.6
Harp	25	84.0	2	100.0	12	83.3
Flute	94	60.6	5	80.0	44	50
Oboe	85	51.8	4	75.0	37	32.4
Clarinet	93	24.7	4	25.0	49	18.4
Bassoon	89	37.1	6	33.3	36	30.6
French Horn	144	13.9	8	25.0	42	14.3
Trumpet	92	9.8	8	0.0	36	5.6
Trombone	84	13.1	3	0.0	36	16.7
Tuba	22	0.0	0	0.0	13	0.0
Timp/Perc.	124	9.7	9	0.0	55	9.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2214</b>	<b>43.2</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>43.7</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>26.8</b>

- ♦ While women represented 43.2% of players in orchestras in 2014, only 26.8% were principals (McClure, Kokot and Scharff, 2014).
- ♦ In addition, women tend to be under-represented in prestigious orchestras, and this has been the case historically (Allmendinger and Heckman, 1995). While women currently make up 43.2% in British orchestras, they only represent around 30% in the London Symphony Orchestra (McClure, Kokot and Scharff, 2014), which is often regarded as prestigious (Gramophone, 2008).
- ♦ Women are poorly represented at board level. In the music sector, 65.3% of board members are male, and 34.7% are female. The grand total for board membership in the arts and cultural sector is 56.5% (male) and 43.5% (female) (Arts Council England, 2014).
- ♦ Probably related to horizontal and vertical segregation, statistics on the UK music sector demonstrate there is a gender pay gap. Men earn £7.92 per hour while women's hourly pay is £6.92 (Creative and Cultural Skills, 2010).

## 5. Sexualisation of female musicians

- ♦ Women musicians encounter particular challenges in relation to appearance, femininity and sexuality.
- ♦ Research on media representations of female and male musicians in the US, Germany, France and the Netherlands between 1955 and 2005 has demonstrated: “Female musicians receive less media attention than their male counterparts and, when they do receive recognition, their physical appearance and their family lives often garner as much or more attention than their music” (Schmutz, 2009: 301).
- ♦ The marketing and promotion of female musicians differs from that of male musicians. As Mari Yoshihara (2007) has shown in relation to representations of Asian and Asian American musicians in the United States, the visual marketing of male Asian musicians is much more subtle and less explicitly gendered or sexualised than for their female counterparts. According to Yoshihara, images of female Asian musicians generally fall into one of three categories: the innocent and somewhat alien child prodigy; the young, sensuous, sexy Asian; and the mature, slightly exotic woman.
- ♦ The visual representation of female musicians is not a trivial matter. As Lucy Green demonstrated several years ago, an emphasis on “femininity risks reducing the seriousness with which women’s instrumental music-making is taken” (Green, 1997: 65). This means that sexualized marketing can affect the reputation and credibility of female musicians.
- ♦ In-depth interviews with over sixty, early-career female musicians (Scharff, 2015) have shown that female musicians have to strike a careful balance. For marketing and performance purposes, they are expected to emphasize their femininity. At the same time, doing so might jeopardize their credibility as artists. As one research participant

put it: “I do not want to be a product; I want to be an artist [...] It really cheapens you when they are trying to sell it, your art, through the way you look [...]. I do not want to be portrayed as one of those girls who just look good and cannot do it, because that is not why I work so hard” (Scharff, 2015: 106).

- ♦ The situation is compounded by the fact that female musicians may face sexual harassment (Lamb, 1993), which has been described as “music education’s ‘dirty little secret’” (Gould, 2009: 66). Quoting again from the research conducted with early-career, female musicians, 10 out of 64 research participants reported relevant incidents, including sexual harassment by teachers or by colleagues in orchestras and ensembles (Scharff, 2015).
- ♦ This evidence calls into question commonly made claims that it is an advantage to be a female musician because it may be easier to get work on the basis of good looks (Scharff, 2015). As outlined above, an emphasis on femininity and sexuality may reduce the seriousness with which a female musician’s music-making is taken and may negatively affect her reputation and credibility. The claim that being a woman is an advantage is further misplaced in a setting where sexual harassment is present.

## MAKING SENSE OF THE PERSISTENCE OF INEQUALITIES

There are various ways of making sense of the persistence of inequalities in the classical music profession. A historical analysis would, for example, examine some of the processes that have led to the inequalities that characterise the sector today, showing how classical music institutions helped create and reproduce hierarchies of social class, gender,

race and ethnicity (see for example: Green, 1997; Johnson-Hill, 2014; Roe-Min Kok, 2006). Instead, this report focuses on the working conditions that characterise the classical music profession and, indeed, the cultural sector at large. A better understanding of the ways in which work in the cultural industries is organised provides some explanations for why inequalities persist.

- ♦ Work in the cultural sector is flexible. Often, this is represented as a strength, particularly in terms of allowing parents to combine having a career with caring responsibilities. Research has demonstrated, however, that flexible work routines may make it more difficult to carve out the time and space to work whilst negotiating domestic and caring issues (Pohlman, 1996; Rafnsdottir and Heijstra, 2013). Alison Bain (2004) has shown that women artists working from home struggle to have an uninterrupted and undisturbed space to work.
- ♦ Indeed, it is frequently argued that women are underrepresented in the cultural sector because of difficulty reconciling managing a career with raising a family (Skillset, 2010). While it is true that it is difficult to combine parenting with the flexible, long and irregular hours in the cultural industries, Rosalind Gill (2014) has cautioned against positing ‘mothering’ as the sole explanation for gender inequalities in the cultural sector. These arguments overlook the fact that men as well as women are parents, and presume that women are the primary caregivers. Instead of accepting mothering as the only issue, we also have to look at the nature of work in the cultural industries to understand why inequalities persist.
- ♦ Apart from allowing for a high degree of flexibility, work in the cultural sector is informal, which further contributes to its inequalities. Networking, rather than formal recruitment procedu-

res, tends to be key to finding employment. As Siobhan McAndrew and Martin Everett (2015) have shown, network connections are critical for achieving great success in having works performed at the annual BBC Proms because they act as pathways whereby ‘raw talent’ is converted into success. The reliance on networks, however, tends to disadvantage women, as well as working-class and black and minority ethnic workers. Research on the UK film industry has demonstrated why. The research showed that white, male, middle-class research participants were more likely to enjoy networks which could provide access to quality work. Many working-class, women and black and minority ethnic informants possessed strong networks but these were less well linked to high-quality work (Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012).

- ♦ Informal work cultures also mean that artists and creative workers have to promote themselves actively in order to obtain work, which poses particular challenges to women (Moss-Racusin and Rudman, 2010). Women who self-promote risk violating gendered prescriptions to be modest (Rudman, 1998; Scharff, 2015). Indeed, women from a minority-ethnic background may be specifically disadvantaged because of additional cultural expectations to be modest and not to stand out (Williams et al, 2012). However, self-promotion seems to be key to obtaining opportunities for career advancement.
- ♦ A further stumbling block for female artists relates to prevailing notions of creativity, which are gendered. “In contemporary Western mythology, the artist is understood to be male” (Bain, 2004: 172). This myth risks marginalising women from creative processes (Proctor-Thomson, 2013). It may also explain why female artists tend to be overrepresented in supportive roles (such as teaching), while men inhabit roles that are considered more creative (such as composition).

- ◆ Despite their prevalence, inequalities in the cultural sector often remain ‘unspeakable’ (Gill, 2014). The term ‘unspeakable’ means that inequalities are not discussed. While musicians provide a range of reasons for the under-representation of particular groups, inequalities are not usually mentioned as a possible explanation (Scharff, 2015). This has to do with a wider, individualist culture where success and failure tend to be attributed to individuals alone, and where there seems to be little open discussion of wider social forces that shape artists’ working lives and careers. Indeed, success is often said to derive from self-application, talent and merit, and is not linked to privilege and status. The unspeakability of inequalities makes it more difficult to detect, contest and challenge them; indeed, unspeakability may contribute to the perpetuation of inequalities.

## SUMMARY

This report has documented a range of inequalities in the classical music sector, relating to:

- ◆ The under-representation of children from lower socio-economic backgrounds in music education, suggesting that musicians from middle-class backgrounds are over-represented in the industry.
- ◆ The under-representation of women and musicians from a black and minority ethnic background. In relation to gender, under-representation in the profession is particularly pronounced because women make up a high proportion of students on relevant degree programmes.
- ◆ Horizontal and vertical segregation: Women tend to work in particular fields of the profession that, in the case of teaching, tend to be considered less prestigious. Women are also under-represented in positions of authority and prestige; few con-

ductors, principals, artistic directors and board members are female. Given the low number of managers who are from a black and minority ethnic background, similar trends seem to apply to black and minority ethnic players. Horizontal and vertical segregation might also explain the gender pay gap in the music sector.

- ◆ For women musicians, sexualised marketing and self-presentation is common and often expected, but may negatively affect their credibility as artists. In a context where sexual harassment is present, and where women are more readily judged on their appearance than men, female musicians face particular, gender-specific challenges.
- ◆ Analysis of the working conditions in the classical music profession and the cultural sector at large provides a new and important angle to our understanding of inequalities. The informality and flexibility of the sector, the reliance on networking and self-promotion, gendered constructions of creativity as well as the unspeakability of issues around diversity and equality contribute to the persistence of inequalities.
- ◆ The research highlights that limited evidence is available in relation to musicians’ racial and class background, and the way gender, race and class intersect with each other in the classical music profession. Apart from exploring gender, race and class, further research is needed to document equality issues in relation to sexual orientation, age and disability.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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### 1) Monitoring through data collection

*There is an urgent need to collect more data on the demographic background of the cultural workforce, including musicians who work in classical music.*

- ♦ Available and accessible data provides an informed understanding of the demographic makeup of the cultural sector workforce and highlights good practice as well as areas for improvement and intervention.
- ♦ Such data would make visible existing inequalities and, over time, generate an evidence base for longitudinal research to identify changes and continuities.
- ♦ Existing initiatives, such as the various studies cited in this report, have done important work to document inequalities in the classical music sector. Indeed, cultural sector organisations could collect data on the demographic background of the workforce themselves, and do so routinely and voluntarily.

### 2) Putting inequalities on the agenda

*Inequalities have to be discussed openly.*

- ♦ Inequalities are a key issue because they shape the very thing we call ‘culture’. An informed and open discussion of inequalities in the classical music sector, and the cultural sector at large, will lead to greater understanding of why they matter.
- ♦ Bringing inequalities out into the open is important in light of their wider unspeakability. Debates about inequalities will challenge prevalent myths of individual success, talent and meritocracy by fostering an understanding that some obstacles and opportunities are not down to the individual.
- ♦ Increased awareness of the wider social forces that shape working lives may help musicians and the wider cultural sector workforce to cope with the high demands of their profession.

### 3) Structural issues require structural solutions

*Inequalities are a structural issue. They reflect wider social patterns and cannot, therefore, be addressed on an individual level. Research has demonstrated that formal arrangements work well to address inequalities: the switch to blind auditions in US orchestras can possibly explain 25% of the increase in the percentage of female players in the orchestras from 1970s to 1996. (Goldin and Rouse, 2000).*

- ♦ Due to the informality of large segments of the classical music sector, it is not feasible to introduce **blind auditions** in all contexts. The available evidence does however suggest that they can successfully be implemented in institutionalised settings (such as conservatoires and orchestras).
- ♦ The introduction of **quotas** also helps to increase the representation of minority groups. Quotas can be applied to a range of contexts, including, but not limited to: commissions, prizes, scholarships, concert programming, conductors and composers.
- ♦ These more formal measures (blind auditions; quotas) would work in tandem with more informal ways to address inequalities, such as **mentoring schemes** or **professional development courses** aimed at under-represented groups, as well as **campaigns** that critique the sexualisation of female musicians and focus on attitude change. Informal interventions should not, however, replace more formal ones, such as blind auditions and quotas.

## **ANNEX: INFORMATION ON RESEARCH METHODS**

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### **1) Existing research**

This report is based on a review of existing research on inequalities in the classical music profession and the cultural sector. This research is published in cultural sector reports (such as the recent report by the Arts Council (Arts Council England, 2014)), academic books and articles, as well as publicly available web-resources such as the Women in Music statistics on the BBC Proms. For more information on the methods underpinning the existing research, please refer to the original studies (full citations are available in the reference section).

### **2) Blamey, Kokot and Scharff (2014)**

Apart from drawing on existing research, the report is informed by data purchased from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). This data included all students doing an undergraduate or postgraduate music degree in the UK in 1995/1996, 2002/2003, 2007/2008 and 2012/2013. The data contained information on the demographic background of the students, including gender, ethnicity, nationality, and class background (as composed of the fields 'state school marker', 'socio-economic classification' and 'low participation neighbourhood marker').

Dr John Blamey and Dr Patrizia Kokot analysed this data, looking in particular at the demographic background of students at five conservatoires and how this compares to music students in the UK as a whole. The data cannot be shared with the wider public, but further questions can be directed to: [christina.scharff@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:christina.scharff@kcl.ac.uk).

### **3) McClure, Kokot and Scharff (2014)**

Data on the British orchestral landscape/conservatoire staff is based on a study conducted by B McClure, Dr Patrizia Kokot, and Dr Christina Scharff. This study documented publicly available information on the demographic background of orchestral musicians and conservatoire staff.

The data set for the conservatoires includes the 8 conservatoires listed by the Conservatoires UK Admission Service (see <http://www.cukas.ac.uk/>). B McClure used staff listings by department (e.g. strings, woodwind, brass, percussion, keyboard etc.) to document the demographic background of the teaching staff. 'Vocal studies, opera and musical theatre', as well as 'Composition, production and music technology' were combined due to overlap of staff roles and job titles.

The data set for the orchestras includes the 61 orchestras listed as full members of the Association of British Orchestras (see <http://www.abo.org.uk/members/directory.aspx>). Where available (in 43 out of 61 orchestras), demographic data was collected in relation to orchestral members' gender, ethnic background, instrument, instrument group, and position, including conductors and artistic directors.

### **Gender**

Where the gender was not obvious through photograph and/or name, a brief Google search was conducted. This method does, however, contain a margin of error.

### **Ethnicity**

In the interests of collecting as detailed information as possible, and to enable analysis of potential correlations between ethnicity and gender, as well as ethnicity and leadership positions, the project

aimed to record the ethnicity of every individual orchestral player/member of staff at the eight conservatoires. Where photographs and/or biographical details were provided on the ensemble/conservatoire website, an assessment of ethnicity was made, based on the photograph, name and birthplace. In cases where only a few photographs were missing, a Google search was conducted. Again, this method does contain a margin of error and is problematic because it bases ethnicity on a narrowly defined set of characteristics, and relies on visual clues. In the absence of data on the demographic makeup of the classical music profession, this rather crude method was employed to provide a starting point for analysis and to highlight the need for further systematic research.

Many ensembles did not include photographs or biographical details, which explains why ethnic background has only been identified in relation to 17 orchestras (629 orchestra members) and 1345 out of 1787 conservatoire staff.

The Arts Council and other cultural organisations use the two categories 'White' and 'BAME' and these categories have been used here for comparability.

Dr Patrizia Kokot analysed the data that B McClure collected. The study was conducted under the direction of Dr Christina Scharff.

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