

MUSEUM REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2022 / AUGUST 2023

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Richard Martin, Digitisation & Documentation Officer [RM]
Lydia Baldwin, Learning & Participation Officer [LB]
Hannah Gardner Seavey, L&P maternity cover [HGS]
Ellen Seidell, Conservator [ES]
Nicole Cochrane, Museum Administrator [NC]



Mission Statement

The Royal College of Music Museum manages, preserves, interprets and displays a Designated collection of musical instruments, paintings, sculptures, early prints and drawings, photographs and memorabilia relating to music.

The museum supports formal and informal learning through heritage, promoting onsite and online access to the RCM's collections for the RCM's student and professorial body, as well as reaching new and wider audiences locally, nationally and internationally.

Through partnership and collaboration, the Museum undertakes, promotes and supports research and knowledge exchange on the collections and in the field of music and material culture.

The year in brief [GRR]

At the beginning of October 2022, the Museum concluded its first year of operation after the reopening following the transformation of its spaces, activities, research infrastructure as well as the reorganisation and extensive conservation of the Collections supported by the NLHF 'More Music' project.

Between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2023, the Museum was visited by 19,580 people. Visitors in the past academic year have increased by 50% compared to the same period in 2022/23, substantially exceeding the general trend of comparable London museums for 2022 (see *The Art Newspaper*, annual report 2022, 27 March 2023).

The Learning and Participation activity for the past year – led by Lydia Baldwin and since February 2023 by her maternity cover Hannah Gardner Seavey – has focused specifically, although not exclusively, on sharing the Museum and Museum Collections with the RCM Community and in increasing the use of the museum for curricular, extracurricular and artistic activities. Public concerts (30 lunchtime concerts organised in collaboration with P&P) proved particularly attractive to students – over 160 performed in the Museum over the academic year – and to external audiences alike. A new regular series of *Museum Late* concerts was launched in September 2022 with concerts inspired by pieces from the collection (the guitar by Belchior Dias, 1581 and the Broadwood piano 1799 for the first two events). The third concert in the series, entitled *Something New from Something Old*, celebrated the collaboration between the museum and the Composition Faculty and featured new music written for the occasion by RCM students and inspired by pieces in the collection. Several classes and numerous rehearsals were also held in the Museum during opening hours, and our historical instruments were used for classes, rehearsals, and performances in 68 individual instances.

Over 50 public events were hosted in the Weston Discovery Centre, among them GTA classes and welcome events for doctoral students and visiting students from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) in Singapore. Students have also actively engaged with the collections through volunteering in digitisation and cataloguing projects and in learning and participation activities.

Three special exhibitions were presented in the temporary exhibition space of the Museum: *Hidden Treasures from the Royal College of Music Collections* was the first edition in a series that is meant to show, once a year, parts of the Museum and Library collections that are usually held in storage. A second exhibition, *Music, Migration and Mobility*, curated by Norbert Meyn, Michael Holden, and Alison Garnham, was opened on the 16 January 2023 and closed on the 21 May 2023, after a two-month extension, and received extensive press cover, among others, from the *Spectator* and the *Jewish Chronicle*. It is the result of a large AHRC-supported research project led by Norbert Meyn and the first attempt to represent the breadth of RCM research through special on-site and digital exhibitions. A second edition of *Hidden Treasures* was then opened in June, featuring a new choice of objects selected from the Museum and Library collections and including a showcase on women and music – curated by PhD student Laura Casas Cambra – and recent acquisitions from the Christopher Hogwood collection. The exhibition also includes a group of Central, Southeast and East Asian musical instruments on long term loan from the Royal Collections.

Work on a three-year plan has started and is aimed to be delivered by the end of the current academic year, based on extensive surveys focussing on external (non-RCM) and internal audiences. At the same time, the Museum has been fully reaccredited by the Arts Council of England, based on a review of all current plans and procedures (risk management, collection management and development, documentation, care, accessibility and audience development and engagement). These, and further procedures, were also externally reviewed as part of an independent audit by KCG, whose results were summarised as follows: 'It is our opinion that the College's processes for the operation of the Museum provide **satisfactory** assurance that associated risks material to the College's objectives are adequately managed and controlled'.

In summer 2022 the Museum has welcomed a new part time conservator, Ellen Seidell, from the Henry Ford Museum in Detroit, with specific competences on functional objects in museums. Among other projects, she is currently supporting an extensive assessment of the potential for playability of the instruments in the Museum collections in collaboration with Heads of Faculties and professors, currently focusing particularly on winds. This will be followed by a conservation project aimed at increasing the musical engagement with objects in the collections when it is safe for the objects to do so. In this perspective, the relationship with the lending collection has been strengthened as an ongoing process to widen the range of cultural and musical activities that collections can support, as a whole. Major conservation treatments, supported by external specialists in relation to our display or external exhibitions have focused on a square piano by Clementi, 1822, and three paintings – the portrait of Tito Gobbi by Leonard Boden, then loaned to an exhibition at the Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn, the frame and canvas of the recently acquired portrait of Samuel Arnold by Thomas Hardy and the frame of the portrait of William Shield by the same artist.

Documentation, led by Richard Martin, has included the digitisation of over 2,700 items, which are added to the 9,000 already available online, taking the online coverage of the Museum Collections online to 88% of total holdings.

The year also saw the delivery and launch of the new Wolfson Centre in Music and Material Culture, which was promoted through several public events and through a video created by the RCM Marcomms Department and Studios. The Centre is now regularly open to the public and has already welcomed 65 research visits, mostly by external researchers. It also supported two successful research grant applications to the British Academy/Leverhulme Trust and – with the support of the RCM Development Department – to the Wolfson Foundation. The former supported the collaboration of a Post Doctoral Research Fellow – Jola Pellumbi – who researched the crossover between decoration, art, materials and musical instrument making in early modern Venice, while the second supports a project exploring the potential of 3D printing for musical instrument conservation and performance.

The Museum team has seen several changes during the year, including welcoming Nicole Cochrane as Administrator, replacing Kirsty Bowie, and Louise Richardson as Welcome Desk Assistant for weekends, replacing Iris-Lara Nahimana and joining Henriette Poos. They join a team of eight people formed by a curator, an administrator, a documentation and collection management officer, a learning and participation officer, a conservator (part time), two welcome desk assistants (weekdays and weekend) and a post-doctoral research fellow (project based). A team of 20 volunteers supports gallery invigilation, digitisation and learning and participation activities.

Forward Plan

Over the past five years, the Museum activity plan has been based on the documents approved by the NLHF for the capital and activity redevelopment More Music project. The Museum team is currently in the process of finalising a three-year plan

2023-2026 to build on the results of the previous plan and expand on the experiences and results achieved so far. The new plan is informed by the revised RCM Strategic Plan 2017-2027, the RCM Research Strategy and reflects the values expressed in the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion policy and other relevant institutional policies. It also includes recommendations provided by the independent audit undertaken by KCG in March 2023.

Following consultation among team members and with students and Directorate members, the plan will cover the following areas:

- Maximise the use of the new spaces for the internal and external communities, responding to changing needs and based on regular feedback.
- Provide access to the collections through physical access, digital resources (online catalogue) and interpretive resources (in part. digital exhibitions, Hidden Treasures annual exhibition, educational packages).
- Expand the digital availability and reach of the collections through the continuation of the digitisation programme, refinement of data and exploration of innovative digital technologies.
- Continue the modernisation of the Collection Management Systems to cloud-based access systems, enabling methods for record improvements, research access, and community-generated content.
- Intensify relationship and mutual support with RCM Lending Collection.
- Streamline temporary exhibitions through the development of a three-year rolling programme, fostering further internal and external collaborations towards the delivery of exhibitions that address the role of music in society and the arts from a cultural, social and historical perspective and obtaining Government Indemnity Cover for external loans.
- Promote the collection internationally through loans to high impact temporary exhibitions.
- Strengthen the collaboration with the RCM Library through providing spaces for the display of Library material and the development of academic and performative opportunities that highlight the connection between Museum and Library holdings.
- Reinforce the connection between the collections and the RCM curriculum and identity through collaborating in the development and delivery of collection-based modules and seminars at undergraduate, master and doctoral level, hosting lessons and seminars in the Museum and WCMM, actively engaging in collaboration with Faculties, Heads of Undergraduate and Post Graduate Studies.
- Support the activity of the Junior Department through availability of spaces, performing and volunteering opportunities and dedicated activities.
- Deliver a collection-based programme of Learning & Participation activities for formal and informal education, aiming to reach new and underrepresented audiences in line with the museum Audience Development Policy and Learning Policy and Plan, coordinating target communities with RCM Sparks and developing a solid system of benchmarks to evaluate success.
- Offer volunteering opportunities reflecting the diversity of the London community.
- Support RCM core artistic and public engagement activities such as festivals, selected concerts and performances, selected corporate events and external hires through extended openings and dedicated activities.
- Reinforce the role in the national/international network of museums in general and music museums in particular and the connections with music education nation-wide through digital resources, on-site and digital seminars and workshops and opportunities for HE placement and internships.
- Institutionalise the activity of the WCMM for internal and external users.
- Continue the conservation of the collections in line with the Collection Conservation Plan, with particular attention to playability and research opportunities and strengthen the focus on preventive conservation.
- Monitor compliance with Accreditation requirements and other certificates held by the Museum.
- Maximise potential for grant applications through the development of a research plan in line with the RCM Research Strategy.

- Implement a sustainability plan post NLHF which maximises the use of the space for external hires, grant applications which include budget relieving elements, income from the shop, image licencing and sale of technical drawings as well as other income generating activities.
- Periodically revise staff structure as required for the delivery of this plan.

Compliance

Accreditation

The Museum has been Accredited by Arts Council of England since 2008 (n. AN1796). As usual, Accreditation status changed from 'full' to 'provisional' over the years of closure due to the redevelopment. A full application to regain full accredited status had to be submitted in spring 2022.

The Museum was awarded renewed Full Accredited status on the 22 November 2022.

The next review is due in five years.

KCG Higher Education Internal Audit

The Museum was also subject to internal audit from KCG Audit in February/March 2023. The audit considered the adequacy and effectiveness of controls over the following key risks:

- Ineffective management and governance arrangement for the Museum result in Council not being able to discharge their duties in accordance with their Charter.
- Failure to undertake proper checks to ensure items that were temporarily stored in external locations have been retrieved, checked and recorded on the collections management system.
- Items are loaned to other museums without adequate checking and vetting processes being performed.
- Failure to capture and record retail income in a timely and accurate manner resulting in loss of income.
- Failure to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning and participation programme against internal and external indicators and long-term strategic objectives may result in non-achievement of Museum objectives.
- Failure to provide a positive visitor experience.

The final report was submitted on the 23 March 2023 and highlighted how 'the College's processes for the operation of the Museum provide satisfactory assurance that associated risks material to the College's objectives are adequately managed and controlled'.

The report included one priority 2 recommendation that 'internal benchmarks/indicators are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the individual programmes delivered as part of the learning and participation programme'. A formal benchmarking protocol is being developed and will be submitted to Collection Management Committee and to Collections Committee in Autumn 2024.

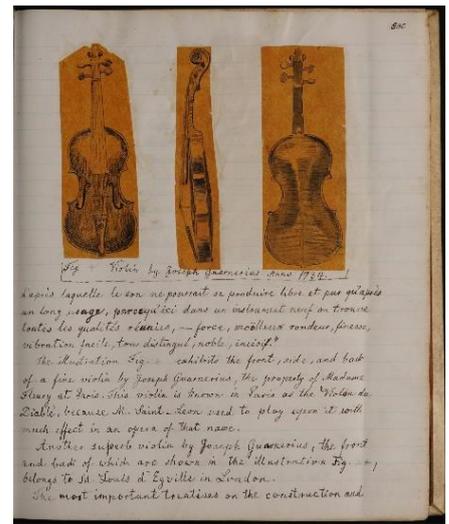
Collections

New Acquisitions

- Autograph manuscript of Carl Engel, *A World Encyclopedia of Musical Instruments*, London c. 1875-1882. This is the unpublished manuscript of the earliest known general encyclopedia of musical instruments, written by one of the foremost scholars of the time. The volumes have been fully digitised and made available through the Internet Archive before being transferred to the RCM Library.



Sample pages from the manuscript



- A copy of the Museum's 1674 Magnus Feldlen baryton. The original, held in the collection, is the earliest surviving baryton and is not in playing conditions. The copy is now available for practice, demonstrations and performances in the Museum's handling collection.
- A bust of RCM patron Edward Fox OBE FRCM by the sculptor Martin Jennings, donated by Edward Fox and Joanna David.
- Conversion from a loan to a full donation of two instruments from The Robert Anderson Research Charitable Trust: a viola d'amore by Josef Knitl, and a bass viol attributed to William Cross



Documentation [RM]

Assessment of the playability of instrument collections



Over the 2022-2023 academic year, the Museum has collaborated with RCM Heads of Faculties and professors to undertake a systematic assessment of the playability of musical instruments in the collections.

The systematic assessment evaluates the historic musical instruments in the collection for their potential use in performance projects in collaboration with Faculties and academic research. The instrument's physical condition,

conservation needs and prospective treatments, risks of use, maintenance for playing, and historical value are measured in relation to one another. From these criteria, the risk of playability is determined. These assessments – based on a specific protocol developed internally – are collectively undertaken under the responsibility of the Museum Curator and the Conservator.

So far, over 110 flutes (with Prof. Ashley Solomon) and all the brass instruments (Jason Evans) have been assessed and a conservation plan, based on a weighted priority list, will be drafted and delivered, with the support of external conservators, over the next year.

As a first outcome of the project, an early 20th century infantry bugle, was used by RCM student Jack Wilson to perform the Last Post for the RCM's Armistice Day ceremony.

Digitisation

The Internet Archive have supported further digitisation of postcards, prints, and scrapbooks in the museum collections.

2,714 items have been digitised. The remaining focus of digitisation works will be on large format items such as concert posters, and three-dimensional objects such as memorabilia. **88%** of the overall collections are now digitised.

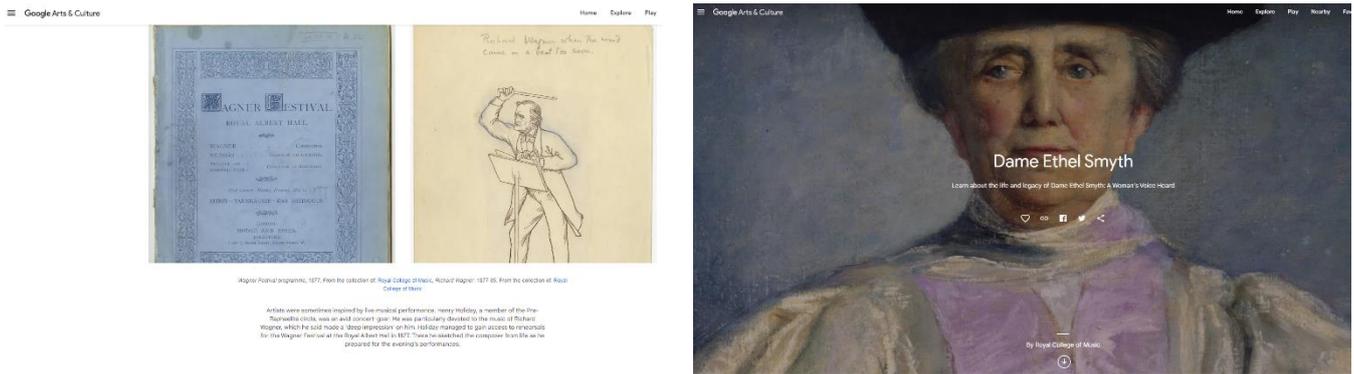


Google Arts & Culture

The Museum has published two further virtual exhibitions on Google Arts & Culture:

- *Music Portraits in Bohemian London* – a digital edition of the first temporary exhibition in the re-opened museum, produced by work placement student Yahui Zhang.
- *Dame Ethel Smyth* – produced in collaboration with Emily Rooke, a student from the Vocal faculty, the exhibition explores the life and RCM connections of the composer Ethel Smyth. The exhibition was published ahead of the 2022 Proms season which featured many performances of Smyth's works.

- From the period September 2022 to 9th September 2023, the items and exhibitions from the Royal College of Music on Google Arts & Culture received **43,543 views**.



Student placements and collections volunteers



Millie Schurmer undertook a two-day placement with the museum in February 2023. Millie learned about cataloguing of photographic collections, and spent time learning about museum interpretation and research practices.

Douglas MacMillan has undertaken a systematic review of the digital records related to woodwind instruments in the collection in order to update the internal and public digital catalogue. Over several months, Douglas has updated over 300 records related to western woodwind instruments.

Four collections volunteers – Arianna Rigamonti, Stuart Longley, Reshmi Banerjee, and Marianne Yule – have undertaken basic collections care, research and cataloguing works of photographic items, as well as photography training and new imaging of musical instruments. The Wolfson Centre hosts collections volunteers every Thursday and Friday and will continue to produce new documentation and images of under-researched areas of the museum collections. Their current focus is on under-documented areas of the

photography collections, and undertaking new photography of musical instruments which have only historic black-and-white images.

Conservation [ES]

As planned at the beginning of the redevelopment, the RCM Museum team includes a part-time conservator working one day a week to support maintenance and ongoing conservation of the collections. General conservation includes:

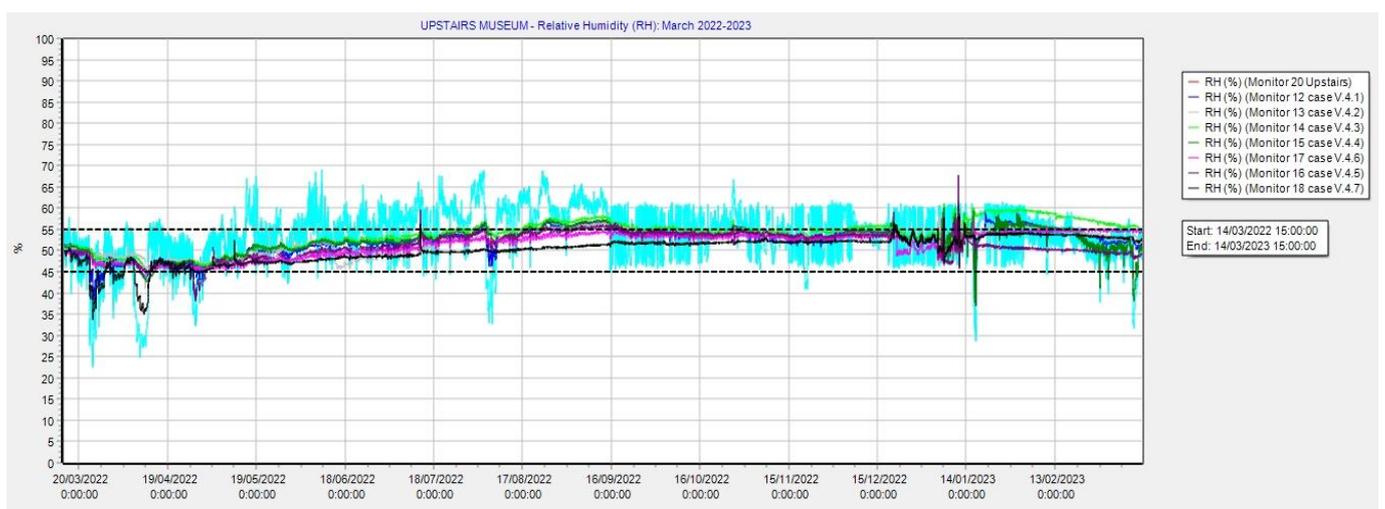
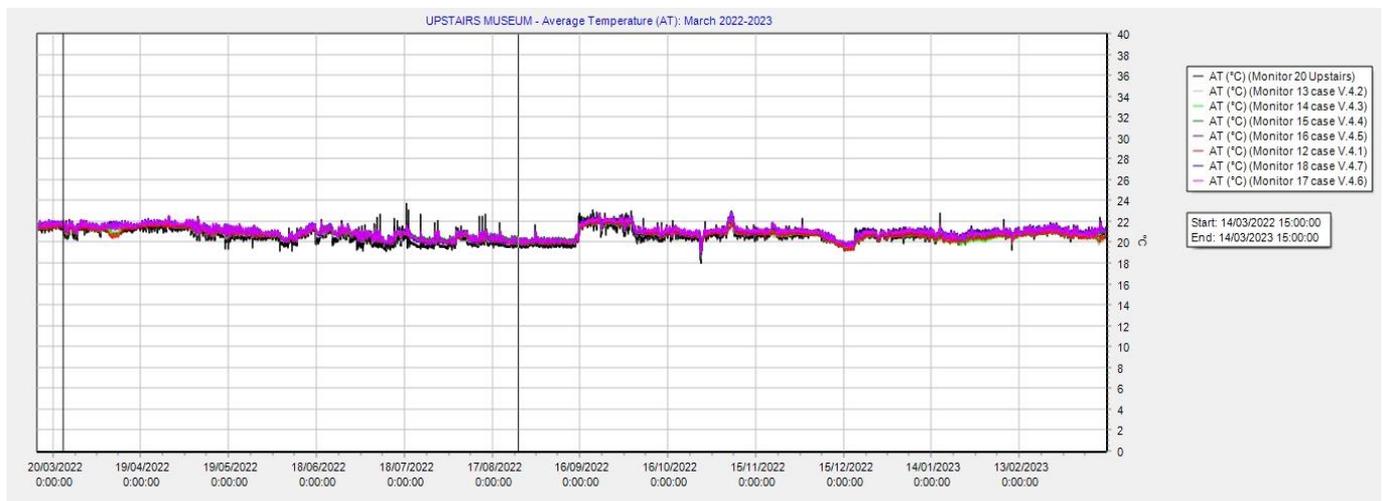
- Implementation of preventative care for collection in the new museum and collections storage spaces.
- Weekly surface cleaning of open display instruments.
- Monitoring of the physical condition of collection items on display and in storage.
- Regulation, in agreement with the Curator, of the use of playable historical musical instruments.
- Scheduled analysis of environmental conditions, pest management, and risk assessments.

Additionally, the conservator is responsible for recognising and implementing any necessary conservation needs for the collection, including liaising with external conservators for specific treatments and supporting the bi-weekly tuning undertaken by an external consultant (Ed Pickering).

Preventative Conservation Measures – Environmental Monitoring

In recent months, the establishment of preventative conservation in the new spaces has been undertaken including the use of environmental monitors to continually measure the relative humidity and temperature fluctuations in the museum, Wolfson Centre, and open galleries at RCM. This has provided a better understanding of the conditions and potential concerns for the collection and a strategy for preventative needs in the future. Between March 2022 – 2023, the upstairs and downstairs of the museum galleries stayed within safe AT (average temperature) and RH (relative humidity) ranges with select exceptions due to seasonal changes, events, and monitor calibration. Example of Eltek AT and RH annual values below:

UPSTAIRS GALLERY – OPTIMAL AT & RH RANGES vs. ANNUAL VALUES		
	Average Temperature	Relative Humidity (%)
Keyboards	20 - 25	45 - 65%
Woodwinds	20 - 25	45 - 60%
Brass	20 - 25	45 - 60%
Strings	20 - 25	45 - 60%
Paintings	15 - 25	45 - 55%
OVERALL SAFE RANGES	20 - 25	45 - 60%
AVERAGE RANGE MARCH 2022-2023	20.6 – 21.2	50.0-53.3%



Preventative Conservation Measures – Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Policies and strategies for IPM were established at the beginning of 2023 as a means of accurately assessing the threat of pests to the collection. Insect, moth, and rodent traps were strategically placed throughout the museum and collections

storage and are replaced and individually analysed monthly. Thus far, there have been little to no pests present in both spaces; a positive start to the IPM data collection.

Recent Conservation Projects

In the past year, notable conservation treatments were undertaken and completed for the following items in the collection:



Conservation of the Clementi Square Piano

The Clementi Square Piano is currently undergoing treatment to fully restring it and replace sections of the hitchpin plank due to previous woodworm damage. The structural repairs will ensure the safe use and longevity of the object, allowing it to continue to be utilised by musicians and academics for years to come.

Conservation of the portrait of Tito Gobbi (1913-1984)

The portrait of Tito Gobbi by Leonard Boden, painted between 1962 and 1968, underwent cleaning, repairing a tear in the canvas, treating canvas dents, and in-painting losses to the paint. Superficial losses to the gilding on the frame were also filled. The treatment was undertaken by Donatella Banti.



Conservation of the portrait of Samuel Arnold and its frame

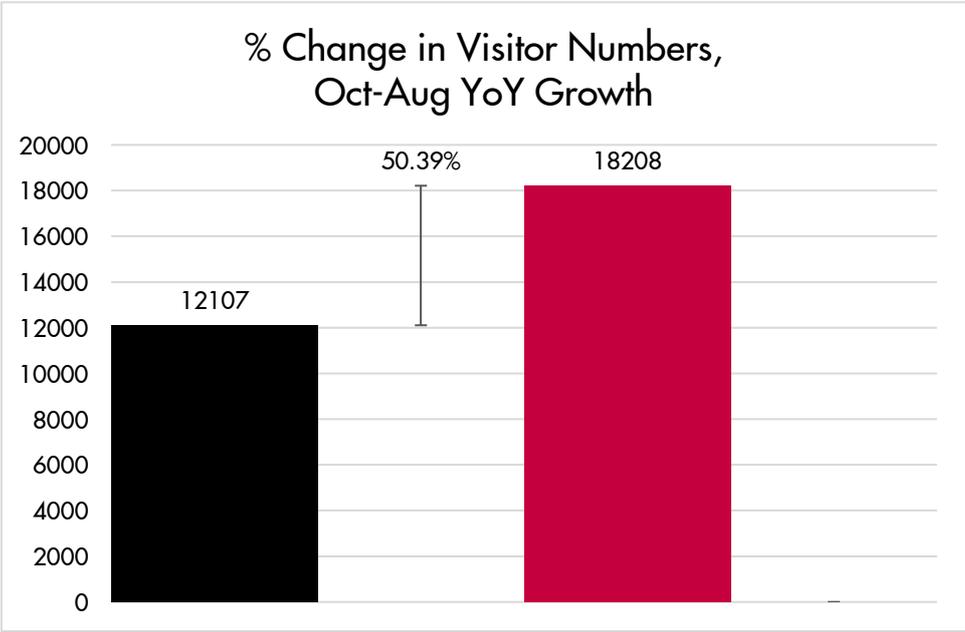
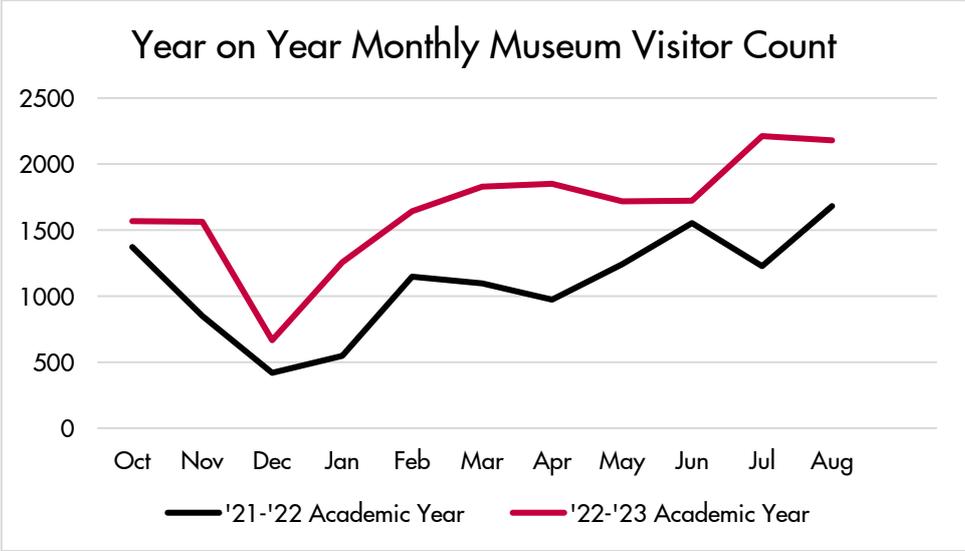
The portrait of Samuel Arnold by Thomas Hardy, painted in the late 1790s, is part of a series of paintings commissioned by London publisher John Bland to celebrate some of his most successful composers. Three other portraits from the same series are part of the Museum collections – including the famous portrait of Joseph Haydn – and the one of Samuel Arnold was purchased from a private collection in 2001.

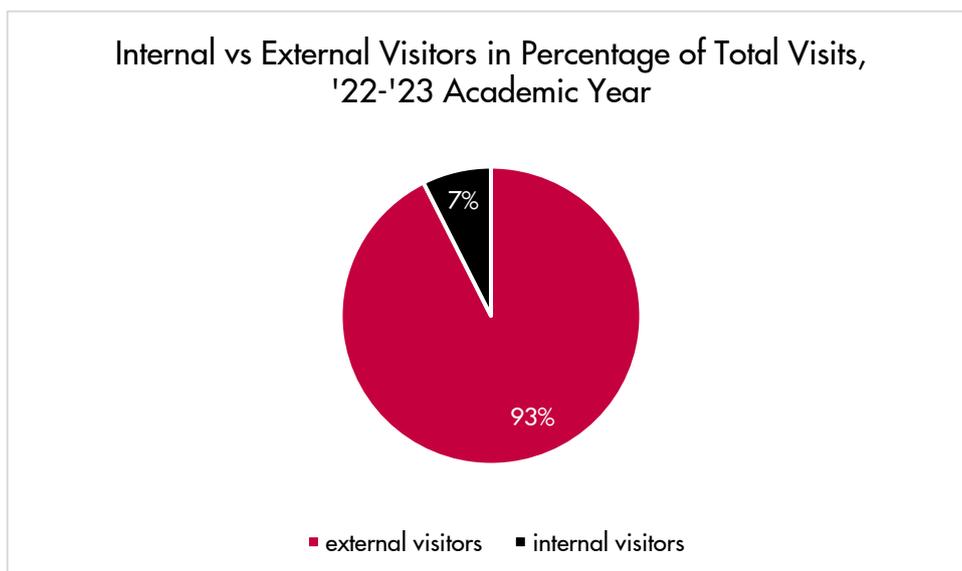
The painting was cleaned and prepared for display by Donatella Banti and the frame was conserved and partly re-gilded by Yuki Barrow of Barrow Conservation Ltd. In April 2022. Yuki also proceeded to a substantial conservation treatment of the frame of the portrait of William Shield, part of the same series.

Public Engagement, Communication and Dissemination [LB/HGS]

Our Audience in Numbers

Between 1 October 2022 and 31 August 2023*, the museum welcomed over 18,208 visitors. This is a **50% increase** in visitors compared to the same period in the previous academic year. A year-on-year comparison of monthly visitors during the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 academic years displays continual steady growth for the museum. On average, the museum welcomed over 1,655 visitors monthly in the 2022-2023 academic year, up from just over 1,100 visitors monthly in the same period of the previous academic year. The Museum's primary audience tends to be external visitors, with 93% of total visits (16,856 people) in the 2022-2023 academic year made by individuals who are not affiliated with the Royal College of Music.





*As the Museum reopened in October 2021, year-on-year analyses compare October 2021-August 2022 against October 2022-August 2023 to avoid data skews. In the 2024 Museum Annual Report, year-on-year analyses will compare the September 2022-August 2023 and September 2023-August 2024 periods to reflect the full academic year.

Knowing our Audience

Audience Feedback & Consultation

Now that the NLHF project has completed, the Museum has revised its evaluation framework to reflect the next phase. This framework outlines data collection plans, methods, and metrics for the Museum from 2022 – 25. As a part of the framework, the Museum plans to annually survey general visitors and RCM students. Please see below for key findings from these surveys in 2022.

The 2023 visitor survey concluded at the start of September 2023, and a data report with key learnings will be drafted in the autumn term. The 2023 student survey will commence in October 2023. Data gleaned from these surveys will be made available in the Museum’s 2024 Annual Report.

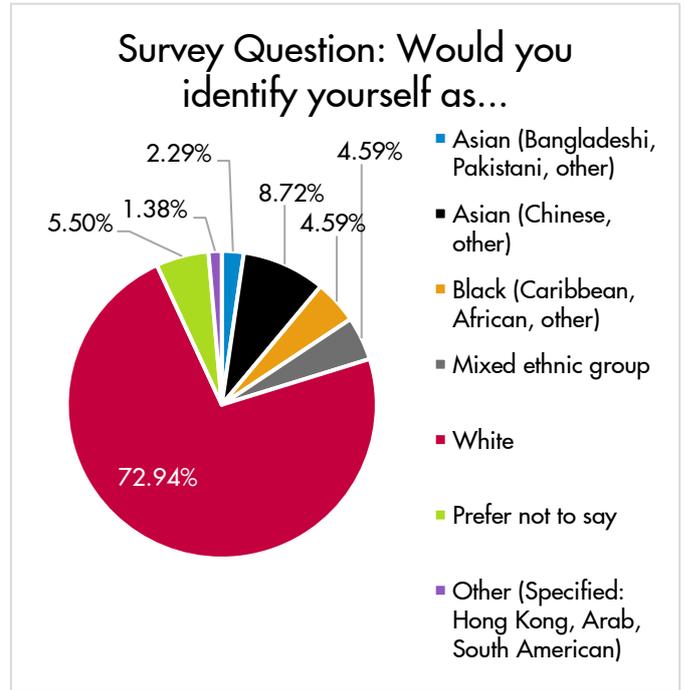
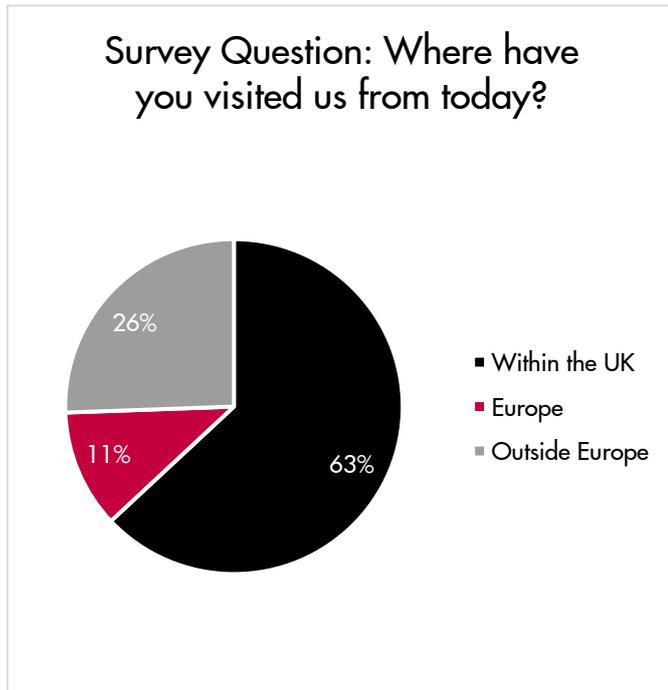
2022 Visitor Survey

Survey data demonstrate newer and wider audiences (e.g., first-time visitors) to the RCM Museum. Many visited the Museum specifically after finding out about it online (most often through a Google search or the RCM website) or were chance visitors who happened to be in the vicinity.

Following the Museum’s reopening, visitors responded very positively to the new design, displays and interpretation, with 98.4% of visitors rating their enjoyment of the Museum either a 4 or a 5. Nearly 90% of respondents said that they gained new knowledge during their visit, and over 60% felt or thought about something differently as a result. When asked to detail various aspects of their experience, respondents rated helpfulness of staff very highly with 90% rating helpfulness of staff a 5, and the remaining 10% rating it a 4. Feedback on panels, lighting, display and digital interpretation such as audio guides and videos was also very positive, with a few experiencing some technical issues. Accessibility was highly rated, although it is worth noting that over 90% of visitors survey said they did not have a disability. Overall, visitors were so satisfied with their experience that 85% would like to visit again, and 95% would recommend the Museum to others.

Results show almost two thirds of visitors were from the UK, and a third from Europe or beyond. Our largest ethnic demographic was ‘white’, followed by ‘Asian (Chinese, Japanese)’, comparable to demographics recorded in our last comprehensive survey in 2015. Visitors were mainly comprised of employed individuals and students (approx. 86% of respondents), as well as individuals between the ages of 26 and 59 (49% of respondents). The museum has had more success engaging with ‘harder-to-reach’ audiences through funded projects and our visitor data show they are otherwise

unlikely to visit. Our approach to attracting audiences who consider themselves to have a disability is to host tailored events such as relaxed concerts and openings, with a view to helping them feel comfortable at the RCM and see it as a safe and welcoming space. Over time, we hope to see these efforts reflected in our visitor demographics.

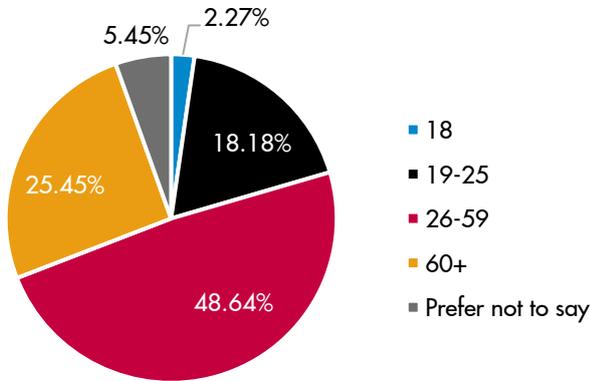


2022 Student Survey

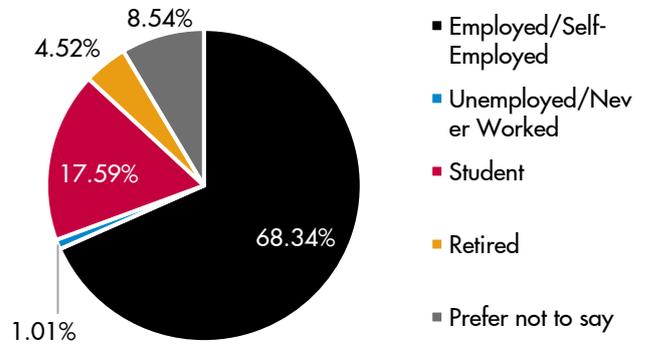
Overall, students showed greater awareness of the presence and purpose of the RCM Museum than prior to the redevelopment, and 80% of student respondents had visited at least once. Student motivations for visiting the Museum varied, but when asked to describe the reason for their visit to the Museum, students often cited performance opportunities, curiosity, and an interest in the collections. 96% of students were familiar with the Museum’s collections, but 47% of respondents identified themselves as only ‘vaguely aware of what kinds of objects are in the RCM collection’. Their awareness of the breadth of Museum opportunities available to them was primarily performance-centred with 91% of respondents aware of concert opportunities in the Museum, but only 45% of respondents aware of the opportunity for tours and object-handling sessions. In the interest of increasing the visibility of Museum activity among students, it is important to note that the approximately 75% of respondents identified email as a preferred way to hear about museum updates.

Student motivations for engaging with the Museum were diverse and often conflicting, with an array of interests and needs to cater for. Students were primarily motivated by a chance to earn money and performance experience, with 58% and 72% of respondents, respectively, ranking their interest a 4 or 5. They also appreciated the Museum as a social space, with 55% of students rating their interest in social events in the Museum a 4 or 5. In terms of the museum’s educational merits, they showed interest in exploring the collections on their own, with 38.75% of respondents rating their interest a 4 or 5, but were more motivated to find out more about the collections as an integrated part of their study, with 49.4% of respondents rating their interest a 4 or 5.

Survey Question: What age group do you belong to?

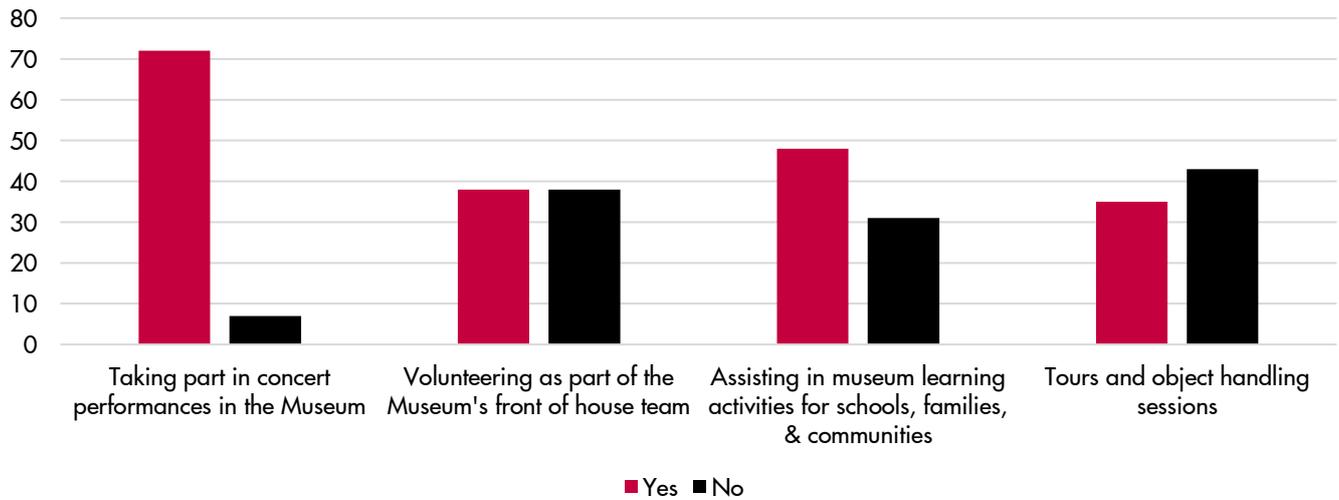


Survey Question: Please tell us which of the following best describes you.

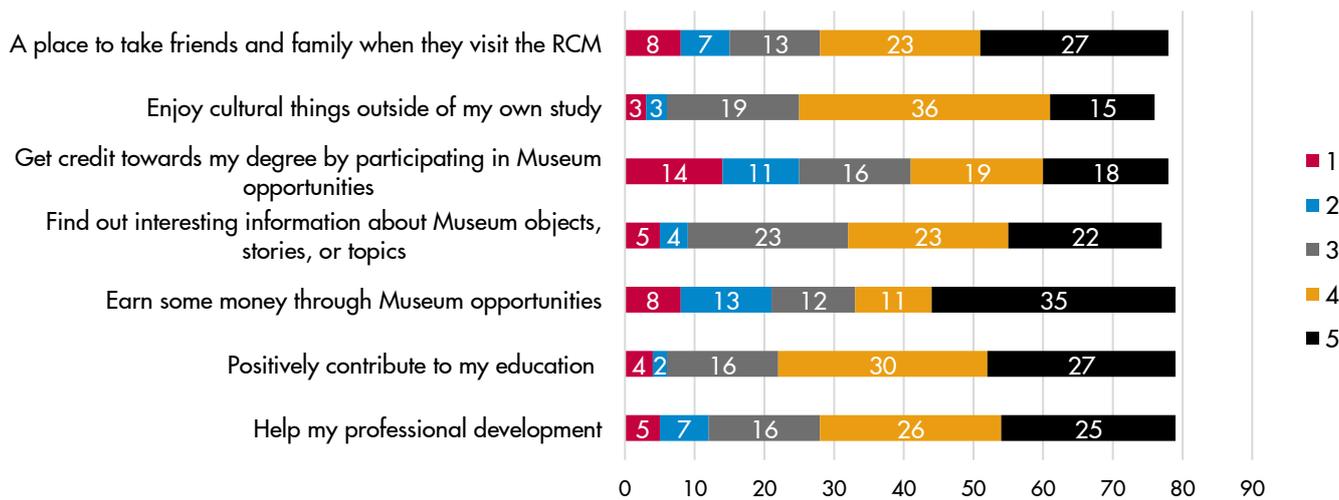


When asked to describe the main purpose of having a museum or collection at the RCM, most students expressed that the Museum was intertwined with the public promotion of the RCM's heritage, possessed a purpose as a global musical institution and was utilised as a public engagement strategy. Secondary to that, they saw the purpose of the Museum as a space for research and study of music history, for the preservation of cultural heritage, and for education. Although many students rated the relevance of the collection to their study highly, their comments show that linking the collections and museum resources more closely to their study would make it more relevant. They also wanted to see more diversity in the collections in terms of types of instruments, people and contemporary musical heritage. 36% of students saw a lack of time as the main barrier preventing them from engaging with the museum and collections, which could be remedied by integrating the collections into their existing study programme. This was closely followed by lack of awareness or info on how to engage (19% of respondents), demonstrating that there is still progress to be made to ensure students know what the Museum has to offer them to enrich their educational experience.

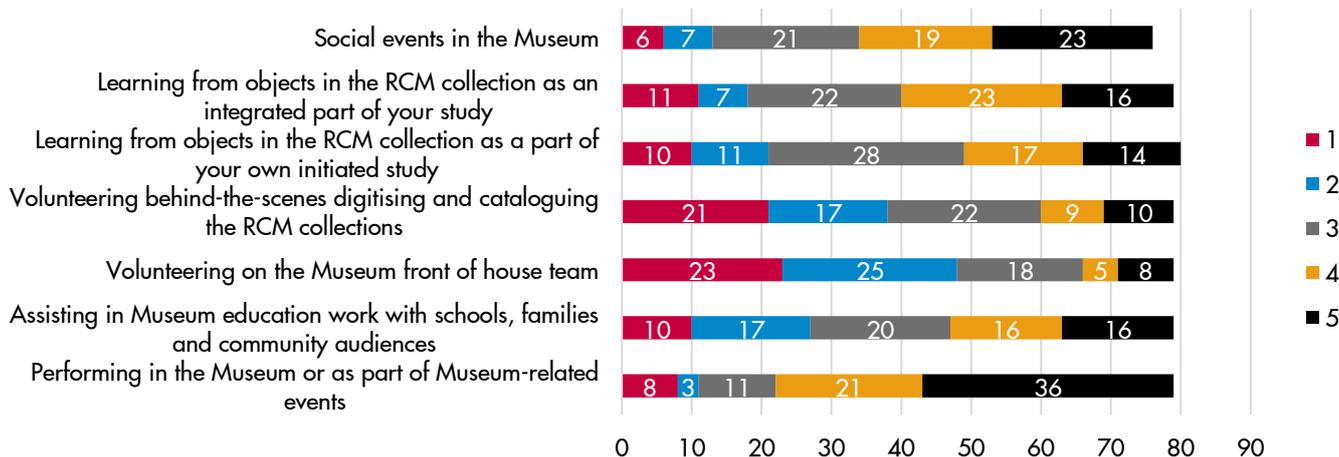
Survey Question: Are you aware of the following opportunities the museum offers students?



To what extent would the following statements personally motivate you to engage with the Museum? (1 = not at all and 5 = a lot)

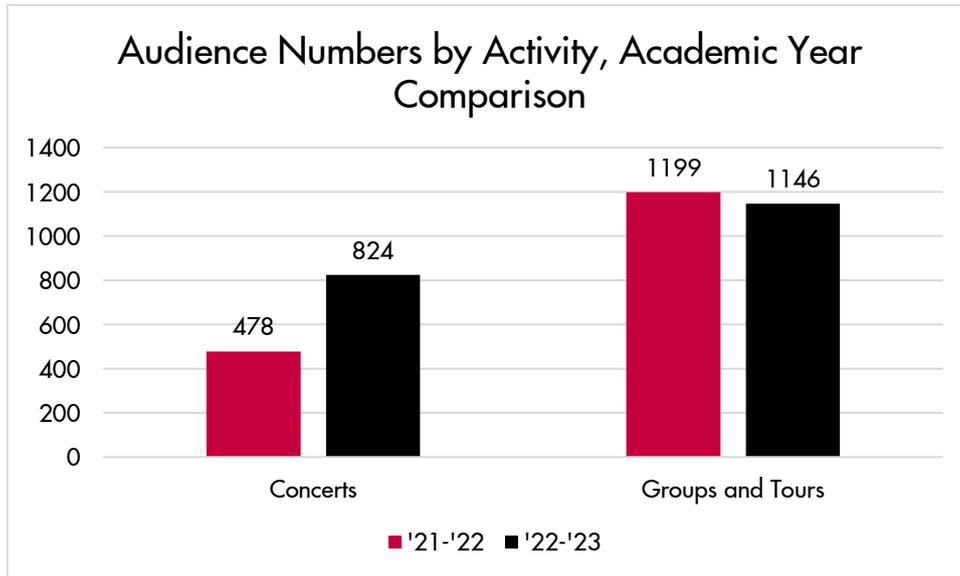


Survey Question: On a scale of 1-5, how interested are you in taking up any of the following museum opportunities? (1 = not interested and 5 = really interested)



Museum Public Activities

The Museum's core public activities include a diverse range of regular concerts and group and tour visits. Concert attendance increased by 72% in the 2022-2023 academic year, while group and tour activity remained fairly stable when compared to group and tour activity during the 2021-2022 academic year.



Concerts

For the academic year 2021–22, we offered over 30 public concerts (45 rehearsals). 104 students were given performance and composition opportunities as part of the Museum's concert programme. The Museum hosted 38 concerts in the 2022-2023 academic year, giving 247 students the opportunity to perform within the galleries.

Concerts include the Museum's weekly Friday lunchtime concert series, *Music in the Museum*, as well as *Museum Lates* which are offered once a term in partnership with a particular RCM faculty or professor. During these performances, student often directly engage with museum collections by performing on historical instruments. In the 2022-2023 academic year, student favourites from the collection have included the 1799 John Broadwood & Sons grand piano, the 1773 Kirkman & Sons harpsichord, and the Kessler collection of viols which were performed in full consort for the first time.



On 17 May 2023, our *Something New from Something Old* late concert featured five brand new compositions, created using museum instruments as performance instruments, or using the museum collections as inspiration.

The performances included:

- Arya Pugala – *In Between Imaginary Chances*
 - Featuring the c.1685 Keene spinet, 1894 Dolmetsch clavichord, and a bozhong (bell) from the Museum collections
- Molly Frances Arnuk – *Our Lady's Colour*
 - Featuring the 1661 Catenar viola, and the 1693 Barak Norman bass viol
- Toby Longhurst - '*Fleten*' for Bass Viol and Piano
 - Featuring the 1799 Broadwood grand pianoforte, and the 1693 Barak Norman viol
- Nien Chai – *Stratiotes for Mixed Quintet*
 - Composed as a response to the *Music, Migration and Mobility* exhibition
- Liam Dougherty and Jasmine Morris – *Canro Metrics*
 - Composed using samples produced from archival recordings of museum instruments.



Groups and Tours

The Museum offers a free weekly guided tour on Wednesdays, as well as private tours at a small cost. Demand for these has been consistent throughout the year, and groups have ranged from local societies to tourist trips from abroad. The team also deliver regular tours for RCM Friends and RCM departments.

Public Access to the Collections



Two public *Hidden Treasures* events were held in the Wolfson Centre in October and November 2022 including object-based tours celebrating the 150th anniversary of Ralph Vaughan Williams and featuring items from the collections such as the composer's Order of Merit medal, instruments belonging to associates such as Gustav Holst, and batons belonging to conductor Adrian Boult.

Hidden Treasures tours will be renewed for the 2023-4 academic year, following the opening of the next *Hidden Treasures* exhibition in the main museum gallery.

Other combined Museum/Wolfson Centre tour groups included:

- The Academy of Ancient Music, learning further about our collection of historic keyboard instruments, and depictions of music from the Christopher Hogwood Collection of prints.
- The London Appreciation Society, who viewed objects closely related to London music history.

Museum Learning and Participation Programme

Support to teaching and doctoral student engagement



During the current academic year, the Museum hosted several classes including harpsichord, historic piano, recorder and recorder ensemble, viols, a faculty class on the barytone, and Lied accompanied on historical keyboards.

First-year doctoral students visited the Wolfson Centre for a museum doctoral showcase on 9th March 2023, taking part in an object-based learning discussion, and discovering how the museum collections can support their research interests.

The Curator supervises three PhD students whose dissertations focus on, or include elements that relate to, the Collections and to the broader relationship between music and non-textual sources.



Students in the vocal faculty also took the opportunity to sing with the accompaniment of our 1799 Broadwood fortepiano as part of their lessons.

Schools

After reopening in October 2021, the Museum welcomed self-guided school group visits, supported by tailored visit resources to help pupils get the most from their visit. From May 2022, we started to test and refine our programme of workshops in our new spaces, as well as a new 'combined' offer with Sparks gamelan sessions which allowed larger school groups of around 60 pupils to visit the RCM. In the 2022-2023 academic year, 271 students visited the Museum through combined Sparks gamelan workshops, and an additional 369 students visited for guided or self-led tours of the Museum. In total, 640 primary and secondary students visited the Museum in the 2022-2023 academic year.

In September 2022 we launched the Museum's school's programme. All sessions are offered at cost and involve RCM student support. These sessions were developed as part of our Lottery funded *Teacher Ambassador Programme* in order to maximise the teaching potential of the collections and make close connections with the National Curriculum. Currently there is more demand for school visits than personnel or time to deliver them.

Families

As of January 2022, the Museum had limited time to complete a series of Lottery funded activities (many of which had been revised several times as a result of covid-19). Families are a primary audience and part of the Museum's remit to attract new and wider audiences through the RCM doors. The Museum space is relatively small, so we adopted new 'drop-in' models of family engagement as part of RCM and wider local festivals. These included RCM Percussion and Conducting Festivals, FestivALL, and the Great Exhibition Road Festival. This year, GERF and FestivALL fell on the same weekend. Due to limited capacity within the College to host GERF activity, the Museum's GERF activity took place on the Family Stage in Prince's Gardens. While this model brought the RCM into the local community on the bustling Family Stage, it is difficult to ascertain the number of individuals drawn into the Museum as a result of this activity and we estimate this number to be significantly lower than in 2022, when Museum GERF activity took place within the College. For FestivALL, the Museum hosted two sold-out concerts including repertoire from diverse and under-programmed composers, performed on our historical instruments. The combined GERF and FestivALL weekend drew 176 visitors into the Museum, a number which may be improved by hosting GERF activity in the College in the 2023-2024 academic year.



'The Singing Suffragette' at Great Exhibition Road Festival



'Build Your Own Instrument' workshop tent

Image: © Polly Swann



Hackoustic exhibition in the Concert Hall



Sensory tour during FestivALL

The Museum also established its regular holiday programme offer for families; The *Mini Music Makers* for children from 2-5 years old and the *Museum Family Concert* (or Workshop) for children aged 7-12. The latter is held in a larger performance space, such as the Performance Studio, in order to accommodate more families. The RCM collections inspire the content of all programming help bridge the gap to learning more about our heritage objects and stories.

RCM Junior Programmes

Continuing a successful model developed during the pandemic, the Museum now partners regularly with RCM Sparks on its Explorers Course for children aged 8-12. Every course is now inspired by an object or person from the RCM collections which form the basis for storytelling and creative music-making. Over the last few years, the course has created a bank of stories and songs about the museum collections which have a legacy on the RCM website as digital resources for families. Going forward we are looking at ways we could maximise these resources for public engagement.

Diversity & Inclusion

The London 2022 Turtle Song project took place at the Royal College of Music between January and March as a partnership between Turtle Key Arts, English Touring Opera and The Royal College of Music (Museum & Sparks). This project focused on objects and stories from the recently reopened Royal College of Music Museum. As part of its Heritage Lottery funded redevelopment, the museum aimed to use the RCM's musical heritage to inspire music-making and creativity and to deliver positive, quality-of-life experiences for people living with dementia, as well as better support and equip partners/carers. Up to 15 participants engaged in the project, with 12 on average attending each week for 9 weeks. Participants felt welcomed and supported, evidenced in final testimonials and weekly feedback. The sessions had a positive emotional and physical impact (carers included). Engaging with the museum objects created an 'even playing field' for participants to feel inspired, creative and connected to each other and to people, places and events of their past. All participants felt their contributions were valued and many commented on the relief to engage, socialise and network in-person after a long period of isolation. They felt confident to perform in front of others and proud of what they had created and achieved. Carers and family members were visibly uplifted during the final sharing.

Through taking part in Turtle Song, RCM students gained confidence working with people living with dementia and their carers, managing their needs during sessions and leading group activities. The majority of students were eager to continue working with this audience. Students highlighted that they had developed their facilitation skills, expanded their knowledge of dementia and in many cases challenged preconceptions through the positive relationships they developed with participants. These findings met project aims for students: to build future leaders and facilitators and create enriching experiences for all involved.

In October 2022 the Museum piloted a relaxed concert in the Performance Studio in partnership with the Performance & Programming department. Direct advertising (as opposed to merely relying on the website to attract audience) was successful and 35 people attended, including return visitors from the Turtle Song project as well as adults from local hubs for people with learning difficulties. The concert programme was themed around animal-related objects in the Museum collections. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and all visitors wanted to see a regular concert offer like this at the RCM. Spaces at college are in high demand, but there are plans for a further relaxed concerts in the 2023-2024 academic year.



Communication and Media [LB/HGS]

Media

In July 2023, the Museum featured in *The New York Times*: [London Tours on Opera and Classical Music Offer Looks Behind the Curtain](#)

In August 2023, the Museum featured in Google Arts & Culture's [10 Museums for the Musically Minded](#).

Website

<https://www.rcm.ac.uk/museum/>

The Museum revised its webpages in October 2021 in collaboration with the Marcomms Department to reflect the reopening and new activities offered. Aside from minor updates throughout the year, major reviews and revisions are made during the summer holiday period. Due to the recent website migration, changes are still being made to the Museum's pages to make audience offers clear and information more accessible.

The Newsletter

In September 2022, we launched the Museum termly newsletter, part of our strategy for communicating Museum news and opportunities with RCM students and staff. Feedback on the first two terms has been very positive, with a noticeable increase in engagement among staff with regards to new project proposals and willingness to learn more about the RCM collections as relates to their faculty.

Social Media

<https://twitter.com/RCMMuseum>

As a team, we work closely with RCM Marketing to share Museum and collections content through the RCM's social channels. The Museum's Twitter account continues to grow with a following of almost 3,000, although rates slowed during the Twitter change of ownership, so we are monitoring our numbers to ensure we are still using the right platform to communicate with our audiences. Engagement with our posts is very healthy and allows us to connect our material to a wide range of online partners and themes. Content on the Museum's Twitter account is more wide ranging to reflect new exhibitions, Museum activities and behind-the-scenes or more story-based content about our objects. Content shared through the RCM's channels tends to be more activity-centred or reflect changes in the display.

Museum tweets received **173,300** impressions over the previous reporting year.

Learn.rcm

<https://learn.rcm.ac.uk/courses/3345>

We have launched new pages on learn.rcm as part of our initiative to communicate clearly with RCM staff and students, providing them with easy access to all the information they need to engage more meaningfully with the collections. This includes details of how to get involved in projects and performance opportunities, as well as links to our resources for teaching and study. We have gone to great lengths to do the hard work for our staff and students, including making list of objects in the collections according to each faculty. There is also information about our new spaces and how to contact our staff team. Since launching we have already found that students and staff have been in touch to follow up on opportunities, such as volunteering with us.

Temporary Exhibitions [GRR, RM]

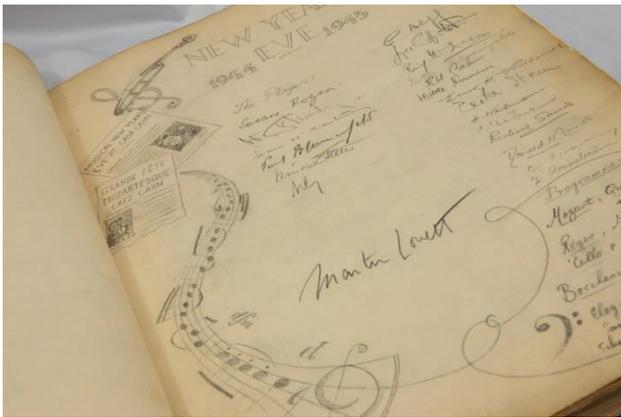
Music, Migration and Mobility (16 January – 21 May 2023)

The *Music, Migration and Mobility* exhibition opened to the public from 16 January 2023. The exhibition, curated by Norbert Meyn and the 'Music, Migration and Mobility: The Legacy of Migrant Musicians' (MMM) research team, explores the lives and legacies of émigré musicians in Britain who fled the Nazi regime and the ravages of war.

The exhibition included several private loans from family members of émigré musicians, which were arranged in co-ordination with the MMM team. Through these artefacts, the exhibition shared key stories and experiences around refugee journeys to Britain, internment, and the influence of the musicians on British opera, chamber music, education, composition, and even humour through the 20th century. The RCM Library kindly provided manuscripts and printed music representing the works of émigré composers.

Other institutional loans included:

- From the **British Library**: graphic scores by Mátyás Seiber, produced for the scoring of the 1954 animated film *Animal Farm*.
- From **Glyndebourne Opera**: costume worn by Irene Eisinger, and a baton used by the conductor Fritz Busch.
- From **Senate House Library**: programmes and advertisements for concerts arranged by the Anglo-Austrian Music Society in London.



Visitor book featuring the signatures of musicians who performed chamber music at the home of refugee Martin Cahn, kindly lent by Martin Cahn Jr.



Original poster for the *What A Life!* Revue, which featured music by Hans Gál, performed during internment of 'enemy aliens' on the Isle of Man.

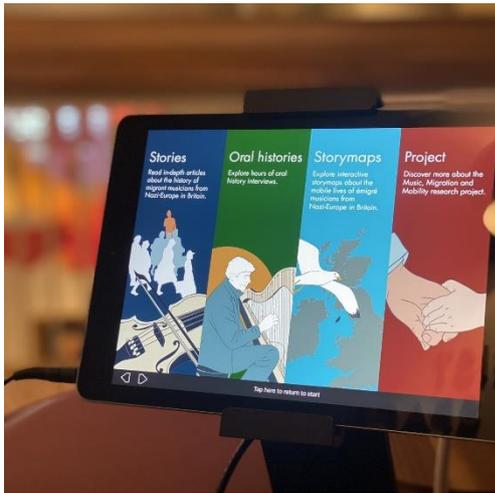


Ivor Novello trophy, awarded to the composer Mátyás Seiber.

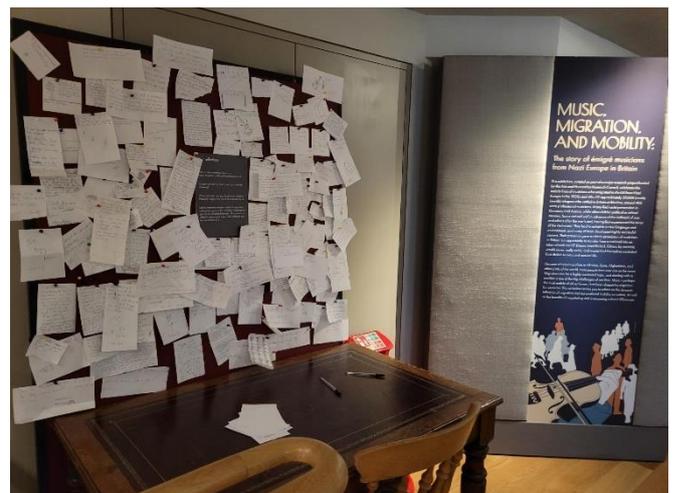


Cello case belonging to Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, co-founder of the English Chamber Orchestra. Lasker-Wallfisch survived Auschwitz, where she was part of the women's orchestra, as well as Bergen-Belsen.

Digital interactives in the display included oral histories from émigré musicians and family members, and access to story maps through tablets in the Urs Riest Learning Space. A new tour on our audio guide allowed visitors to hear further personal stories, and performances of music by émigré composers recorded through the MMM project.



The exhibition also featured contemporary responses to the stories of journeys, mobilising music, and memory, using colourful illustrations by researcher Dr Giada Peterle. A pinboard provided space for visitors to share their own thoughts and reflections, with many sharing their own memories of friends and family affected by the escape from Nazi Europe to Britain. These written reflections are being retained as further historic records by the MMM project team.



Over 100 visitors attended the launch event on Monday 16th January, the positive response led to an extension to 21st May 2023 before final closure of the exhibition. Positive press coverage was received in publications such as the *Spectator*, *Classical Music*, and the *Jewish Chronicle*, as well as online through *Classical Music News* and *Planet Hugill*.



German Ambassador to the UK, Miguel Berger (left), visits the exhibition.

Hidden Treasures of the RCM Collections (June 2023 - January 2024 edition)

An updated iteration of the *Hidden Treasures of the RCM Collections* exhibition opened on 6th June 2023. The exhibition features new content including:



- Photographs and memorabilia from the personal collections of early 20th century opera singer, Mary Garden.
- Items from the Library collections celebrating the works of two female composers from the RCM, Marion Scott and Freda Swain, with interpretation produced by post-graduate student Laura Casas Cambra.
- Drawings from the Milein Cosman collection.
- Musical instruments on loan from the Royal Collection.
- A focus on the project to conserve playable wind instruments.
- Rare prints and artworks from the Christopher Hogwood collections.

Research and Knowledge Exchange

External research visitors / Wolfson Centre in Music & Material Culture

The Wolfson Centre has been open to external research visitors since September 2022, and welcomed **117 research visits** up to 8th September 2023.

Research visits have included:

- Research and record improvements of over **400 woodwind instruments** completed by Douglas MacMillan. Douglas is also providing advice and playing guidance on the use of historic flageolets for a forthcoming concert by BMus Composition students ahead of a May 2023 Museum concert.
- Study of a c.1580 cittern by doctoral student Esteban Mariño.
- Visiting Research Fellow, Simon Waters, undertook seven days of research assessing woodwind instruments for playability, and potential for 3D scanning and printing as part of the Materialising Music and Wolfson 3D Printing projects.
- Francis Wood provided additional research support to this fellowship, studying the construction of ivory pipes on a late 17th century musette.
- Donna Agrell and Áurea Domínguez (FHNW University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland) studied construction methods of rare tenoroons and bassoons, undertaking additional measurements and

endoscopic video recordings. The results have been published: (<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7698547>, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7698923>, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7698937>, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7698967>).

- Viol maker Paul Fremantle, and a student, studied the construction of bass viols by Henry Jaye and Richard Meares.
- Bassoon player and doctoral student Wouter Verschuren studying historic bassoons.
- Historian Richard Norman viewing postcards depicting music venues from the Paul Campion collection, in preparation of talks on the history of opera houses.
- Anthony Parkinson studying a rare 14-key serpent by Thomas Key, c. 1840.
- Emeritus Professor Kevn Jones (Kingston University), reviewing photographs relating to Edward Elgar from the Dora Powell collection.
- Florian Leonhard studying the construction of the 1714 cello by Gaetano Pasta, Brescia.
- Kinetic artist Max Eastley, and musician Benjamin D. Duvall, researching aeolian harps from the collections to inform their constructions of new instruments, artworks, and compositions.
- RCM student Beatriz Vila, researching brass and horn instruments for presentation in a lecture examination.
- RCM student Matyas Houf studying the construction of a 16th century Italian cornett.



RCM student Matyas Houf measuring an ivory 16th century Italian cornett



Jared Clous studying with the c. 1685 spinet by Stephen Keene.

British Academy / Leverhulme Foundation: Materialising Music



Materialising Musical Instruments is a multidisciplinary research project that engages with European Instruments from 1500 to 1600 from a material culture perspective focusing on their role as products of complex processes of manufacture, distribution, use and circulation in order to foster a better understanding of them as material objects and their contribution in the making of early modern musical soundscape.

Funded by the British Academy Leverhulme Small Research Grant (2021-2022), this project aims to situate early modern instruments within the larger framework of economic interconnections, cultural history of commodities and their production and dissemination.

The project included the international conference *Materialising Music: Perspectives In Music And Material Culture*, held on the 8-9 December 2023, with invited speakers from the UK, France, Germany, Austria, Spain and the US.

Wolfson Foundation / Department for Culture, Media and Sport: 3D printing

The Royal College of Music Museum has received a grant of £33,000 from the DCMS and the Wolfson Foundation to enable the creation of 3D printed models of historically important musical instruments from their collection, increasing outreach and engagement opportunities for visitors with additional needs and younger audiences as well as student musicians. The grant forms part of DCMS and the Wolfson Foundation's £4 million fund to improve displays, protect collections and make exhibitions more accessible to visitors, with the Royal College of Music (RCM) one of a handful of London institutions to benefit from this funding.

MINIM-UK Project

The MINIM-UK resource (www.minim.ac.uk) has extended its online availability for a further three years, until at least the end of 2025. No further records or collections have been added to the resource in the previous academic year, but the project continues to support public enquiries regarding instruments in British collections made via the MINIM-UK website.

The website has had **32,153 unique user visits** in the previous reporting year.

Serendipity Programme



The Museum is hosting meetings of the Serendipity Programme, which is led by the Centre for Performance Science (ICCESS – Imperial College London, and Royal College of Music).

The project gathers experts in science and the performing arts, bringing to light some of the social and cultural aspects that have been traditionally overlooked in the research practice and training of scientists. The programme will focus on three main levels:

- relationship between sciences;
- relationship between science, the arts, and society;
- relationship between the different ways in which an individual expresses their own needs and abilities.

The project is in early development phase, and the museum will develop its collaboration with the programme through further hosting of discussions and learning sessions in both the Weston Discovery Centre and Wolfson Centre, as well as through activity developments with group participants.