

AMELYA GOLDY

PhD Research Student, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London

Curriculum for the 21st Century Singer

UK conservatoires are experiencing a 'paradigm shift in specialist education in the performing arts' (Gaunt 2016:269) and burgeoning singers are facing increasing industry demands for versatile 'portfolio careers' (Bennett 2008:61). Now is the time to evaluate these changes and current debate is focused on whether the UK contemporary conservatoires curriculum meets present industry needs, whilst continuing to produce 'performers who uphold the classical tradition' (Ford 2010:14).

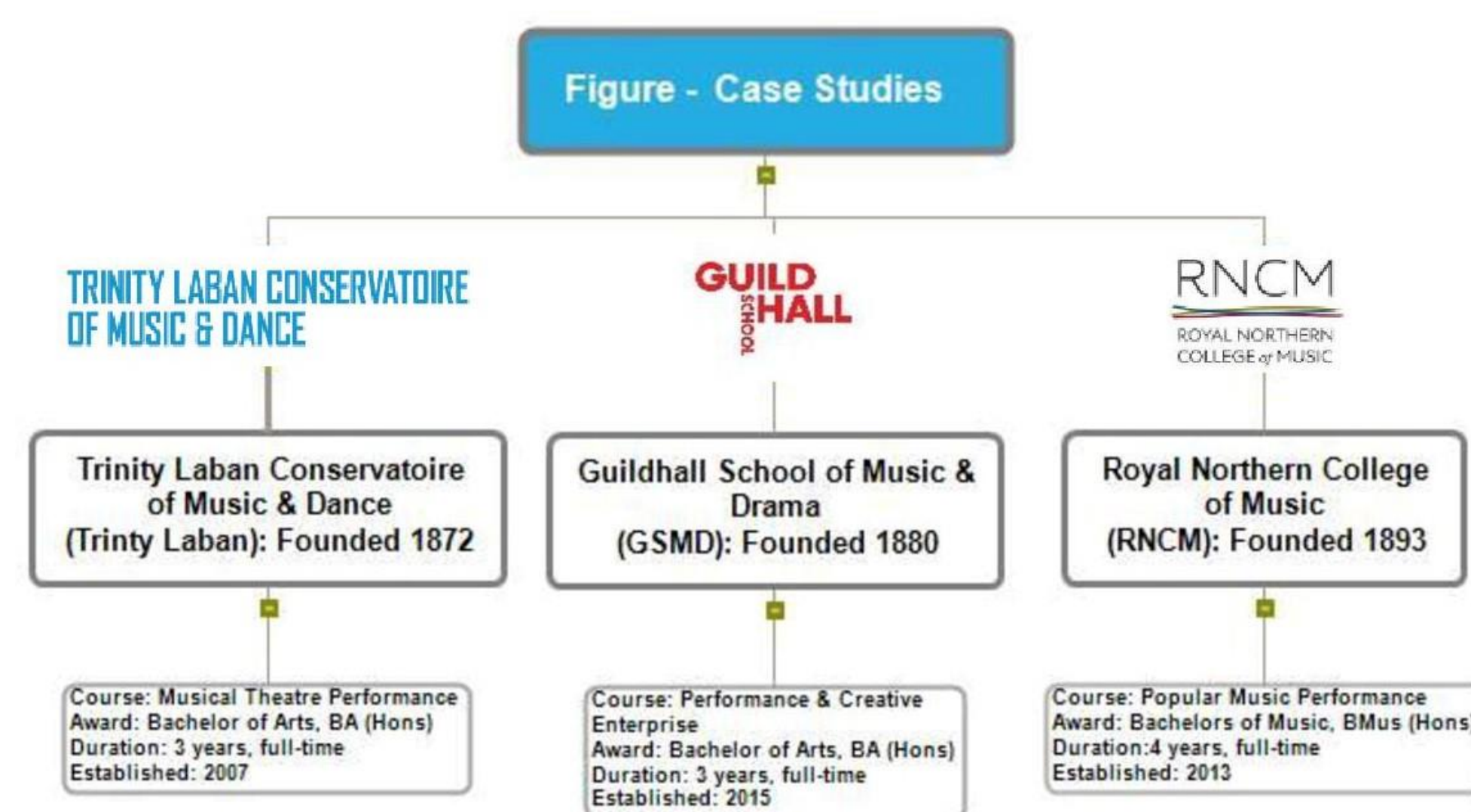
Whether acoustic or amplified, the human voice is the most versatile of all musical instruments and since the mid-20th century vocal pioneers and scientists' innovations have gifted us with a variety of singing styles and a wealth of new vocal understanding. The diversity of industry opportunities for singers has expanded and in response the UK classical music conservatoires have incorporated new ideas into the existing vocal curricula and introduced a range of diverse vocal genre programmes.

This poster presentation forms part of my PhD research which is principally focused on curricula studies and vocal training: employability and resilience; versatility and genre, transferable skills.

Data & Methods

Nine of the eleven members of Conservatoires UK (CUK) which provide vocal programmes were included in the initial data as shown in the central table. The programmes are at all levels from undergraduate through to post-masters that provide specialist vocal training.

The case studies as shown in the figure below were chosen by comparing the conservatoire prospectuses for the academic year 2017-2018. The three selected were founded as classical music conservatoires towards the end of the nineteenth century (1872-1893) and have initiated additional musical genre programmes since the millennia. The programmes are all awarded degree level status.



Limitations

Data was sourced from the conservatoires' public websites and prospectuses. This may not fully represent the conservatoires' practices or policies at a more detailed level.

UK Conservatoires (CUK) Members	Table - Vocal Programmes (as described on websites)				
	Classical & Opera	Jazz	Musical Theatre	Popular	Other
BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE	● ●	● ●			
GUILD HALL	● ● ●	● ●			● :Performance & Creative Enterprise ● ● ● :Historical performance
LEEDS COLLEGE OF MUSIC	●	●		●	● :Folk ● :Creative Musician
Royal Academy of Music	● ● ●	● ●	●		
ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC London	● ● ●				
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	● ●	● ●	● ●		● : Historical Performance
RNCM ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC	● ● ●			● ●	
ROYAL WELSH COLLEGE OF MUSIC & DRAMA COLEG BRENHINOL CERDD A DRAMA CYMRU	● ●	● ●	●		
TRINITY LABAN CONSERVATOIRE OF MUSIC & DANCE	● ● ●	● ●	●		

● Undergraduate ● Postgraduate ● Post-masters (excl. research programmes)

Observations of Vocal Programmes Table

Except for the Royal College of Music (RCM), the remaining eight members of UK conservatoires (CUK) that include vocal programmes have introduced additional vocal style programmes.

Questions:

- ? To what extent do the faculty and students of the differing vocal programmes collaboration or interaction with each other?
- ? Does the inclusion of new curricula ideas and introduction of diverse vocal genre programmes dilute or enhance vocal training?
- ? To what extent if any does the tradition of the conservatoire encourage vocal genre hierarchy?

Continuation of PhD Research Project

Using grounded theory methods this research will develop the following:

Historical overview of the development of vocal training within the UK conservatoire and the introduction of new vocal genres. This will include consulting archives to collect data on the changing face of the UK conservatoire via manifestos and funding requirements.

Case studies and interview to review current vocal programmes, focusing on classical, jazz, musical theatre and popular vocals. By comparing current curricula specifications and conservatoire Course Handbooks for training singers to generate a comparison chart. The chart will provide an overview of vocal techniques and additional genre specific skills, and observations on how they are delivered.

Finally a comparison of the types of preparation for employability and career resilience that vocal students currently receive from UK conservatoires.

Literature cited

Bennett, Dawn. (2008) *Portfolio Careers and the Conservatoire*. In: Bennett D and Hannan M (eds) (2008) *Inside, Outside, Downside Up: Conservatoire Training And Musicians' Work*. Perth: Black Swan Press.

Ford, Biranda. (2010) *What Are Covatoimseres For? Discourses of Purpose in the Contemporary Conservatoire*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.

Gaunt, Helena. (2016) *Introduction to special issue on the reflective conservatoire*. In: *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education (A&H)* Vol. 15. New York: SAGE Publishing.

Conservatoires UK (CUK). <http://www.conservatoireuk.ac.uk/> [Accessed March 28, 2017].

Further information

Amelya Goldy is a PhD Research student in the Vocal Department at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London. She also works is a singing teacher and contemporary singer.

She can be contacted at: amelya.goldy@stu.gsmd.ac.uk.

Acknowledgments

With thanks to my supervisor Dr Biranda Ford, my support tutor Linda Kiakides, the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and to my PhD colleague Donald Wetherick, who's poster presentation was the inspiration for my posters design https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Donald_Wetherick.