



Press release

Royal Conservatoire launches new lectorate led by Professor Helena Gaunt

The internationally renowned Professor Helena Gaunt (Rome, 1965) has launched a new lectorate in 'Music, Education & Society' at the Royal Conservatoire. Gaunt will form a research group to strengthen the position of research at the Conservatoire in the coming years. Involving external social partners, it will be the Conservatoire's second lectorate, following that of 'Research in the Arts' directed by Henk Borgdorff.

With 'Music, Education & Society' the Conservatoire wants to bring its research and education – and hence the position of the Conservatoire – closer to society.

Gaunt, who is also Director of Innovation at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London, is an expert in how pedagogic development in the performing arts can stimulate innovation. At the Conservatoire she will build on her internationally admired research into subjects such as 1-on-1 teaching, feedback, testing and assessment, professional integration and entrepreneurship and innovation in education.

Henk van der Meulen, the director of the Royal Conservatoire: *“the new lectorate headed by Professor Gaunt is an enormous gain for the Conservatoire. She has earned an outstanding international reputation with her research and vision of the position and role of the conservatory's role in society. The second lectorate reinforces the Conservatoire's position as an internationally oriented institute and centre of expertise.*

Professor Helena Gaunt: *“this is a unique opportunity to focus intensively on the professional education of musicians for the twenty-first century, and how this can be part of enabling a renaissance of the performing arts in society. I am delighted to be able to work alongside colleagues at the Royal Conservatoire, adding further dimensions to the flourishing artistic research environment in the institution, and to connect to Leiden University and other partners in the city. I hope that this initiative will support the pioneering work that characterises the Royal Conservatoire.”*

About Helena Gaunt

Professor Helena Gaunt is Vice Principal and Director of Academic Affairs at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama where she provides strategic leadership in academic development, research, enterprise and internationalisation. She is a National Teaching Fellow (2009) and Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

Having been a professional oboist and member of the Britten Sinfonia, she has more recently developed research expertise, publishing on one-to-one tuition in conservatoires, orchestral musicians in the 21st century, and collaborative learning.

Current interests focus on ensemble practices in the performing and fine arts, creative entrepreneurship, and the potential for the arts to contribute to education and development

practices more widely. In 2013 she led the launch of Guildhall Creative Entrepreneurs in partnership with Cause4, an incubator dedicated to supporting sustainable business development in the performing arts.

Gaunt directs the international Reflective Conservatoire Conference, and is the Chair of the Innovative Conservatoire (ICON) partnership, providing pioneering professional development internationally for conservatoire teachers.

She has served on several working groups for the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC), including chairing the Research Working Group of the Polifonia project, 2007-10, and is currently a Visiting Professor at the Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts, Helsinki.
For more information see: <http://www.helenagauntconsulting.com/>

The Dutch 'lectorates'

Since 2001 so-called 'lectorates' have been established in the Dutch universities of applied sciences to bridge the gap between scientific knowledge and the professional field. Under the supervision of 'lectors' practice-based research is being undertaken by students and teachers in all universities of applied sciences with the goal to promote innovations in the universities and the professional field. This research should be methodologically sound, relevant to society and have a positive impact on curriculum development and, as a consequence, on the quality and innovation of education in the institutions. At this moment, about 600 'lectors' are active in The Netherlands.

Note for the editor, not for publication:

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Royal Conservatoire

At the Royal Conservatoire (KC) students lay the foundations for an international career in music and dance. The challenge for the Conservatoire is to provide the best education with top-class teachers and attractive projects and prepare students for international professional practice. This is not only in the interests of the students but makes an important and essential contribution to the development of the climate for music and dance in the Netherlands.

The Royal Conservatoire has evolved into a leading international conservatory with an excellent rating from the Netherlands-Flemish Accreditation Organisation. The Conservatoire is also regarded as an internationally excellent programmes and has an extensive network of conservatories throughout the world.