

Artistic Citizenship Training within the 21st Century International Conservatoire

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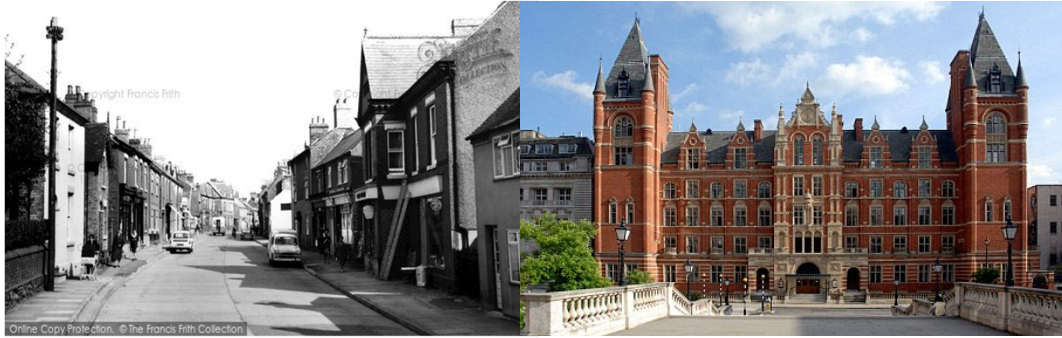
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Artistic Citizenship – a place holder

Within the artistic, pedagogical, and intellectual discourse there is a widespread belief in the power of music, not only as an intrinsic experience for its own sake, but as an instrument for the ethical pursuit of transformational change in communities and the empowerment of individuals therein.

Specific literature, as it relates to the music conservatoire, is highly specialised and niche, such as Grant 2018 and Gaunt, Duccy, Coric, A Gonzalex Delgado and Messas, (2021). **Within it, there is evidence of a growing consensus (by the increase in literature dedicated to the subject in the last ten years) that the traditional conservatoire model is currently insufficient to meet the challenges being placed upon it by the emergent needs of contemporary society.**

Social mobility!



This....growing up in the 60's here – my grandma's grocery shop is on the right and I went to primary school just down the hill.....to this- the Royal College of Music in 1982. It was like landing on Mars. Many of my youth orchestra mates from similar backgrounds are now eminent members of the profession – we owe our careers to free music lessons. Today, decades of cuts in our music provision make it virtually impossible for kids from these backgrounds to make this journey. The Government's position on funding will not change in the foreseeable future. We therefore need to find alternatives ways to address issues of social inequity. One way is to train artists differently.

So that's my personal take and was one of the motivating factors for embarking on my doctoral research.

But there are others too:

Tregor, Sloboda, Tulve and Wistrich posed a question back in 2016:

“In the face of growing social, political and environmental challenge, should conservatoires be more overt in expressing a mission to sustain & improve the societies in which they are located?”

Research Question:

How might conservatoires effectively combine *Artistic Citizenship* with performance excellence education, in order to create next generation artists, equipped and willing to:

- i) Intelligently engage with the current dialogue around ethics, social justice and well-being?
- ii) Define their own lives as 21st Century Artists in Society?

So it is these two reasons combined that have led me to my research question:

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This leads to a number of subordinate questions:

- What skills and learning are conservatoires giving their students to prepare them for engagement with the social dialogue?
- To what extent do students themselves feel prepared for this by their institution?
- To what extent are they exposed to socially diverse settings during their learning journeys?
- What wide-ranging principles could be extracted from this research to inform a robust and scalable curriculum?

This leads to a number of subordinate questions:

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Research Structure

- **Phase 1**

To undertake a literature review, to understand terms and concepts

- **Phase 2**

To undertake basic research into global best practice in artistic citizenship through a study of 24 conservatoires around the world. Looking specifically at training for Artistic Citizenship and how it is taught and practised

So I decided to set my research up in four phases.

Phase 1

To undertake a literature review to understand terms and concepts. What artistic citizenship actually means. What elements make up the work - this is an essential ingredient in knowing what to look for in Phase 2. What does the current research tell us about this social dialogue and how has it been applied so far?

Phase 2

To undertake basic research into global best practice in artistic citizenship through a study of 24 conservatoires around the world. Looking specifically at training for Artistic Citizenship and how it is taught and practised

In this first phase, which I am currently in, I am investigating how *Artistic Citizenship* is formally taught within the conservatoire sector, how relevant it is within degree programmes and what aspects of practice does it actually encompass? And in some cases whether it is even present at all.

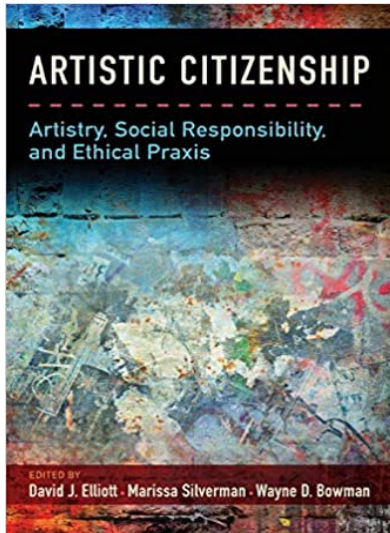
In the search for answers to these questions my research has taken me on a virtual tour of 24 different institutions around the world. From Japan to the US, Finland to Austria I

have collated and compared information relating to socially engaged practices within conservatoire settings in an attempt to form a picture of how important Artistic Citizenship is to 21st century performing arts training.

The second phase will determine the third. Following analysis of the 24 I will choose a shortlist of 3 institutions which I believe to have the strongest provision in this area to warrant further study.

I will come to the 2 final phases at the end.

Artistic Citizenship as Praxis



“Active reflection and critically reflective action dedicated to

(1) human well-being and flourishing,

(2) the ethical care of others, and

(3) the positive empowerment and transformation of people and their everyday lives”. (p22)

Elliot cites Martin Heidegger, William James, John Dewey, Joseph Dunne, Richard Bernstein, and Paulo Freire

Bradley (2018) *“Even when used metaphorically, the term citizenship cannot divorce itself completely from the legal definition. What is also clear is that this definition of citizen, with its legal, social, philosophical, and governmental underpinnings, excludes a great many people: non-citizens, refugees, the dispossessed, the disappeared, the incarcerated, migrants, immigrants— even those with “permanent resident” status”*

She argues that those who write about or practice Artistic Citizenship therefore enable a *“discourse of privilege”* (p83) but concludes that this may do a disservice to both scholars and practitioners to dismiss it as such – particularly if the discussion fails to venture

beyond academia, giving the *discourse of privilege* some validation. For those, like me, that interpret Elliott and colleagues' use of "citizenship" simply as a shorthand or conceptual model for socially engaged practice, most would understand the limits of its usefulness and not attempt to align it with any legal state imposed by a nation state. Paradoxically, the concept of Artistic Citizenship is designed specifically to reach out to the very dispossessed people that Bradley claims it excludes.

I'd like to congratulate Maria Westvall and Charles Carson on their introduction to "*Music as Agency*", for me this contains by far the best and most complete discourse on the definition of Artistic Citizenship that I have so far encountered.

Grant's Working Definition

- a well-informed global world view; (G1)
- a cosmopolitan outlook as well as local perspective on social and cultural issues; (G2)
- cross-cultural understanding and awareness;(G3)
- respect for cultural and social diversity and difference; (G4)
- empathy and sensitivity toward, and the ability to work with, people of different; (G5)
- gender, age, ethnicity, culture, religion and political persuasion; (G6)
- a high regard for human rights, social justice, and equity; (G7)
- a sense of social, moral, ethical and practical responsibility, both individual and civic; (G8)
- a mature judgment and understanding of social and ethical implications of actions; (G9)
- an aspiration and ability to contribute to the intellectual, cultural and social life; (G10)
- local, national and international communities in a full and meaningful way; (G11)
- an awareness of and respect for the social, biological, cultural and economic interdependence of global life; and (G12)
- a concern for the environment(G13)

Since my doctoral work began I have had a number of further growing concerns.

- 1) The qualitative aspect of social impact interventions – we spend a juggernaut of provision focussing on Principal Study and the skills required for AC work are left as rather marginal considerations in most of our institutions.

2) A concern about the “entry level” Identity Arts now taking place in the UK – where social signifiers are often tokenistic and two dimensional. They explore the “what” a person is, rather than “who” they are.

It’s therefore more important than ever that we curate, commission and create real quality and depth in all our artistic outputs.

I often quote Marcus Rashford, the English footballer who single headedly led a successful campaign to overturn a UK government policy to scrap free school meals. – I ask students in this context about how they might use their platforms as artists to bring about social good transformations in the way that Rashford used his platform as an elite athlete.

Grant's definition has resonance with the position of Crossick and Kaszynska (2016) who claim that

“A key component of cultural value is the ability of arts and cultural experience to help shape reflective individuals. This may include giving one an improved understanding of oneself and one's own life, an enhanced sense of empathy with respect to others, and an appreciation of the diversity of human experience and cultures.” (p42)

1. Contextual Awareness	
• 1.1 Master works & Cannon;	E1
• 1.2 Appreciation of historic provenance;	E2
• 1.3 Understanding Social Agenda;	CK7, G9
• 1.4 Setting Historic Context;	E2
• 1.5 Awareness of Social Dialogue;	G12
• 1.6 Decolonizing the Repertoire; and	E2, G7, G8, G9, G12, CK3
• 1.7 Repertoire & Programming as political narrative.	CK7
2. Self-view	
• 2.1 Ethics;	E5, G8, G9
• 2.2 Self-Reflective individuals/ engaged citizens;	CK4, CK5, CK6, CK7, CK8, CK9
• 2.3 Aspiration to contribute to cultural/social life of nation;	G6, G11, CK3
• 2.4 Enhanced sense of empathy to work with others;	G5, CK2
• 2.5 Understanding oneself and one's life ;	CK1
• 2.6 High regard for human rights, social justice and equity; and	G7
• 2.7 Judgement understanding implications of actions.	G11

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3. World-view	
• 3.1 Well-informed global world view;	G1, G12
• 3.2 Cosmopolitan outlook/local perspective on issues;	G2
• 3.3 National Perspective;	G11, CK5
• 3.4 Cross-cultural understanding and awareness;	E2, G12, CK3
• 3.5 Respect for diversity and difference;	G4, G12,CK2
• 3.6 Respect for interdependence of global life; and	G12,G13, CK8
• 3.7 Concern for the environment.	G12,G13, CK8
4. Skills & Knowledge	
• 4.1 Presentation Skills/ management/ leadership;	G9, G10, CK1
• 4.2 Knowledge of Instrumentalisation of Art;	E3, CK1-9
• 4.3 Artists as disruptors (Bad public good);	E4
• 4.4 Education for Artistic Citizenship;	G1-9, E1-5, CK1-9
• 4.5 Sociological organisation of music + community practice;	G8, CK5, CK6
• 4.6 Ethics and Justice in Music Education; and	G7, G8, G9, E5
• 4.7 Acquisition of skills/ Psychology/ Outreach/Critical Thinking.	G11, CK1, CK2,

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I used a varies of definitions drawn from the literature to build a framework of some 30+ signifiers that I wanted to look for within conservatoires' courses.

5. Fields of Engagement

- 5.1 Peace, Reconciliation & Healing after conflict and trauma; CK4, CK9
- 5.2 Beneficial impact on cities life and economy; CK5
- 5.3 Positive Health Outcomes and Wellbeing; CK6
- 5.4 Music Education; G8, CK5, CK6
- 5.5 Music Therapy; G5, E3, CK6, CK7
- 5.6 Build confidence in Political Engagement; and G6, CK7
- 5.7 Engage in Climate Change issues. G13, CK8

Citizenship & Art as “Bad Public Good”



Julia Bullock's
*History's
Persistent
Voice*



Liz Lehman
*The Good Jew and
Safe House: Still
Looking*



Roddy Williams
*The Rain Is
Coming
by Emily Levy*

Element 4 Citizenship itself.

Citizenship originally developed to unite people around shared values and common principles to the benefit of their communities.

However, if artists are activist, and their work is disruptive do they not lie outside the conventional definition of good citizens? How can a hegemonic construct like *citizenship*, with all its associations of conformity to national values, possibly relate to artist activism?

Ana Vujanovic supplies us with one possible answer with her concept of *Art as Bad Public Good* – she contends that capitalist democracies are more concerned about the market and commerce than they are about public good. and that therefore we need the oxymoron “*bad public good*” as an invitation and a demand to include critical and disobedient artists as catalysts for genuine public good.

Examples of artists whose work reframes the artistic narrative and asks difficult questions about the nature of humanity include:

Guildhall School’s visiting artist, Julia Bullock who commissioned five Black Women Composers to set text by enslaved people in the United States, Guildhall alumnus, Roddy Williams, who being struck by the patriarchal standpoint of Schubert’s *Die schöne Müllerin* commissioning Emily Levey to write a companion work which reframes the narrative from the maiden’s feminist perspective.

Liz Lehman's dance projects *The Good Jew* (is a community dance project in which she is on trial to ask whether she is Jewish enough).

All of these artists use artistry to present work which challenges conventions and social norms.

<p><u>Asia</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Central Conservatory of Music Beijing 2. China Conservatory of Music 3. Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts 4. Tokyo College of Music <p><u>Australasia</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Australian National Academy of Music 6. Sydney Conservatorium of Music <p><u>Europe</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Kungl Musikhögskolan Stockholm 8. Royal Danish Academy of Music 9. Sibelius Academy 10. Universitat Mozarteum 11. Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory 12. Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien 	<p><u>North America</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Curtis Institute of Music 14. Juilliard School, New York 15. Manhattan School of Music 16. Oberlin Conservatory of Music 17. Yale School of Music <p><u>United Kingdom</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Guildhall School of Music & Drama 19. Royal Academy of Music, London 20. Royal Birmingham Conservatoire 21. Royal College of Music, London 22. Royal Northern College of Music 23. Royal Scottish Conservatory 24. Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama
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Institutions set within a university or broader context

It is also interesting to note, though not surprising, that institutions which are set in a much larger university contexts, or who have affiliations with other liberal arts schools, tend to have a great many more course options offered by departments from complementary areas of study.

Conservatoires set in universities or working in collaboration with other institutions include

Sydney Con, Stockholm, Sibelius, Mozarteum, Vienna, Oberlin, Yale, the Royal Academy, Birmingham and the Scottish.

However, it should be noted that sometimes these relationships are only arms length validating partnerships.

The ones that appear to really benefit from a university setting with course options offered by departments from complementary areas of study such as Liberal Arts, Psychology and Sociology are Sibelius, Sydney Conservatory, Oberlin and China Conservatory. However, it is not always clear how precisely these electives link to the context of the Performing Arts. Nor is it obvious whether a students studying a performance discipline can even access this wider provision within the confines of their study programme.

Early Findings continued

Most institutions have:

- Some credit-bearing elements
- Some choose very traditional paths of musicianship training, concert giving with communities and instrumental pedagogy
- All have regional variation and reflect, to some extent the character of their society

Most institutions make reference to citizenship, artist in society or social impact in some form or other. The majority have built it into their curriculum and many have it as a credit-bearing element. A small but notable handful only offer this type of provision on an ad-hoc, visiting speaker led, basis.

Interestingly some London conservatoires, the Royal College and the Royal Academy, also have very little to offer on their websites in the context of socially engaged practice, preferring to focus on traditional musicianship skills, principal study, traditional concert giving and traditional forms of instrumental pedagogy. It is the UK regional conservatoires, and the Guildhall School, which have the greatest amount of material concerning citizenship-related content on their websites

All have regional variation and reflect, to some extent the character of their society – it's too early in my research to comment further on this at present but it seems to me the national context of the way a society functions has an enormous bearing on the content of these programmes and this is an area which I'd like to explore further at a later stage.

Of the American institutions, all of which had well evolved areas of study for citizenship, there is one which is, in my research terms, head and shoulders above the others and I will come to it shortly. Of the others, Juilliard has a rich vein of strong, formal curriculum programmes. Notably Curtis has its own section dedicated to "Artist Citizen Curriculum" as well as a Community Arts Programme and Community Artist Fellowship.

Perhaps unsurprisingly the Chinese and Japanese institutions are less well developed and rely largely on visiting speaker, workshop and lecture work, although the Beijing Central Conservatory has a pedagogic programme of study.

Hong Kong Academy has worked in partnership with the Disability Association of Hong Kong who delivered “two well received workshops” in the Autumn of 2019 teaching their students sign language.

The Mozarteum has a number of courses run in partnership with other institutions which appear to be largely conventional Art Education styled programmes.

ANAM is a rather exceptional case in point, as it does not run anything that could be considered conventional. It has no degree bearing programmes but does contain options to study Musicians Health and Performance Support as well as Community Engaged Practice.

Sydney Conservatory was difficult to navigate as it was set within the University of Sydney website. There are many interesting joint courses such as Arts and Social Work and Arts and Social Science, but these are degrees in their own right and not performance related training.

Sibelius Academy, set within the University of the Arts, Helsinki, has a number of really interesting elective options. Electives relating to citizenship are largely aimed at Masters students with a few for "4th and 5th year " students.

Royal College of Music, Stockholm (KMH) offers Music Therapy and work relating to *“health care, education, elderly care, social work and wellness.*

Research around Artistic Citizenship principles is thriving in many of these institutions but it is not always clear to what extent this influences the content of teaching programmes.

But, from my research so far there is one institution whose web content on citizenship related topics is way ahead of the field:

Top of the class so far...

Oberlin Conservatory of Music -a “peculiar mix of scholarly ambition and stubborn moral idealism.” *Geoffrey Blodgett*

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• American Mixed Blood• Justice in America?• The Anthropocene: Human Actions, Global Consequences• Everyday Life in Twentieth Century European Dictatorships• Objects & Apparitions• Decolonizing Cinema• Musical Snobbery• Conceptions of the Self | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know Your Place: Civic Humanism and Community Engagement• Malcolm X & Martin Luther King• Rebellion, Revolution, Rock-n-Roll: 20th-21st Century Russian Culture• The Complexities of Identity: Exploring Social Justice Through Self and Others• Holocaust in American Culture• Black Women's Narratives on Page, Stage and Screen• Selfishness or Altruism? |
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I have to keep emphasizing that this research is far from completed but I did want to give you some early indicators. The institution that I was most impressed with was Oberlin. Oberlin is situated in Ohio, west of Cleveland and south of Lake Erie. Its founding principles are centred around coeducation and the abolitionist civil rights movement. Here, all forms of socio political and socially engaged practice are hard-wired into the very DNA of the institution.

The institutions says of itself

"From its founding in 1833, Oberlin College has been a school with a mission, or rather, many missions. Beginning with abolition and coeducation, and most recently addressing the challenges of climate change, Oberlin has always been—to quote historian Geoffrey Blodgett '53—a “peculiar mix of scholarly ambition and stubborn moral idealism.”

Oberlin aims to prepare graduates with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives essential to confront complex issues and to create change and value in the world. It seeks to offer a diverse and inclusive residential learning environment encouraging a free and respectful exchange of ideas and shares an enduring commitment to a sustainable and just society” end quote

This slide lists the mouth watering array of just some of the first year undergraduate electives available for performers. I think you'll agree it's pretty astonishing.

Oberlin



The current phase of my study, Phase 3 is to undertake an in depth study into Oberlin with field work interviews.

Oberlin –further historic notes:

1837 – first/ oldest US institution to admit women

1844 –first to award a degree to an African American man

1862 – first to award to an African American woman

Nexus of activism and academic reform

Current Phase

Phase 3 Fieldwork

To undertake an in-depth study into Oberlin:

- Site Visits
- Staff, student and alumni interviews

The phase 3 fieldwork interviews have shown a number of interesting early findings:

- 1) That Oberlin develop the skills of listening and reflection through peer review and filming
- 2) That foundational pedagogy underpins the student learning based on three pillars
 - 1) Listening
 - 2) Questioning
 - 3) Feedback

OB 1: Summary of Oberlin Findings to date

Focus of Interview: Integrating **artistic citizenship** in conservatoires.

• **Key Themes:**

- **Experiential Learning:** Practical engagement, foundational pedagogy.
- **Reflective Practice:** Self-assessment and critical reflection.
- **Institutional Dynamics:** Resistance from traditional conservatoire culture.

The research has thrown up a number of controversial issues:

- 1) That a DNA/ brand value of activism creates both a positive and negative learning environment.
-) A growing passive resistance amongst faculties who pay lip service to this work but in practice drag their feet when it comes to delivery – a resistance to tracking or making more credit bearing makes for a difficult internal dialogue.

OB 2: Experiential Learning, Embodied Pedagogy, & Reflective Practice

- **Experiential Learning:** Develops interpersonal skills (listening, questioning, feedback).
- **Embodied Pedagogy:** Uses peer observation to improve nonverbal communication, aligns with **Bloom's Taxonomy**.
- **Reflective Practice:** "Reflective river journey" promotes personal growth, aligning artistic practice with social and ethical concerns.

That the "Reflectiver River Journey" is a crucial part of student development based around Tanya Mitchell's traditional vs critical service learning

OB 3: Balancing Theory and Practice, Navigating Controversy

- **Theory vs. Practice:** Blends factual knowledge with interactive learning to foster social responsibility.
- **Navigating Controversy:** Ethical dilemmas in community work; “little a” activism focuses on relational change over systemic reform.
- **Student Activism:** Music as protest fosters civic engagement, yet needs structured, intentional approaches.

1) Oberlin’s mix of “scholarly ambition and stubborn moral idealism” attracts more activist staff and students and this in turn drives curricula agendas but also presents challenges:

- Hypersensitivity around religion means that any large ensemble work has to be performed on a voluntary basis – too many students either see all religion as toxic or are evangelical fundamentalist
- Exemplary work in Grafton Prison is being challenged as supporting an evil and punitive system of incarceration by a verbal minority of students.

3

OB 4: Institutional Culture, Socio-political Influences, and Future Directions

- **Institutional Challenges:** Balancing artistic excellence with social engagement within conservatoires.
- **Socio-political Pressures:** External influences (e.g., critical race theory) affect commitment to social justice.
- **Future Directions:** Reimagining curricula to integrate **artistic citizenship**—artists as socially responsible change agents.

In addition, the impact of recent Congressional hearing is creating a challenging and nervous environment for all HEIs in the US. – cancelling of books and edicts about not teaching critical race theory for example.

Final Applied Research Phase

- **Phase 4**

To apply the implications of the findings of this research to the Guildhall School's music curriculum through:

- An audit of the School's current position
- A debate at different levels with different stakeholders on possible policy trajectory
- A projection forwards of what a new curriculum might look like if the recommendations from these research findings were to be enacted

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