

Music education formed an important part of musical developments in nineteenth-century Britain, as professional and academic education, music in schools, and amateur music appreciation underwent significant changes. This study offers a mid-nineteenth-century view on music education, drawing on an investigation undertaken in the 1860s by the Society of Arts, that focused on advanced, vocational music provision, and centred on the Royal Academy of Music in London<sup>1</sup> The Society of Arts' investigation into the management of the Academy in 1865-66 gives an important insight into the structures of music education at the conservatoire level at this time.<sup>2</sup> It reveals the fractures and difficulties in establishing a focus for professional training in music, and the tensions between professionals and amateurs that pervaded the Royal Academy and beyond. Moreover, it helps to illuminate some fundamental debates about the nature of music making, identity and education that remain of interest and relevance today. Then, as now, financial worries were crucial, but the Society also addressed questions such as curriculum, the relevance of specifically professional skills, the nature of management in a professional institution, state involvement, and the place of general education. In particular, in search of government funding, the Society questioned music's place in national life, the relationship between music education and the profession, and the efficiencies of the Academy's management and approach to music education.

In this study I draw on the reports of the 1865-66 investigation together with associated documentation to investigate the opinions and arguments surrounding the debates, and to provide a snapshot of the state of music education and the concerns of the music profession in

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<sup>1</sup> The Royal Academy of Music founded in 1822 was set up to address the dearth of training for home-grown musical talent available in the early nineteenth century. Its chief proponent was Lord Burghersh, who secured the support of many fellow members of the aristocracy. See Frederick Corder, *A History of the Royal Academy of Music, from 1822 to 1922* (London: Corder, 1922).

<sup>2</sup> Founded in 1753, the Society of Arts was intended to promote British interests in trade, agriculture and culture.

1860s London. As well as being published as a collected volume, the reports were printed in the *Journal of the Society of Arts* as the investigation progressed.<sup>3</sup> The majority of the work was undertaken by a small Committee drawn from members of the Society interested in, but not necessarily with direct experience of music and music education. The reports are set out as a series of interviews with key members of the music profession and musical institutions; only after completing this work did the Committee offer summaries and conclusions. The Society's work also received notice in specialist music periodicals as well as literary journals and the national press, adding to the range of opinions put forward by both musicians and others.

The Royal Academy's early fortunes were mixed. Although it had a reputation for producing mediocre teachers for the provinces, the Academy helped to train many of the country's most successful composers and performers and a full professional education was usually completed with a period at a European conservatoire. It also taught large numbers of fee-paying amateurs. By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, the Academy was in dire financial circumstances. Initially, it had been founded with the intention of financial independence, funded by subscriptions and donations from wealthy individuals. As Janet Ritterman notes, the Academy was essentially a private institution, dependent on fees and private benefactors.<sup>4</sup> The level of financial support needed had not materialized, and private sponsorship dwindled over time. Student numbers had dropped, forcing the Academy to take large numbers of paying students with a low musical level in order to balance the books.<sup>5</sup> Its accommodation was too small and in poor condition, and the large number of professors were underpaid and unregulated. Although a government grant was instituted in 1864, further reform at the institutional level was needed both to ensure long-term

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<sup>3</sup> The collated reports were published as Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, *First Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into and report on the State of Musical Education, at Home and Abroad* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1866).

<sup>4</sup> Janet Ritterman, 'The Royal College of Music, 1883-1899: pianists and their contribution to the forming of a national conservatory' in Michael Fend and Michel Noiray (ed.), *Musical Education in Europe (1770-1914): Compositional, Institutional, and Political Challenges* (Berlin: BWV, 2005), Vol. 2, 353.

<sup>5</sup> The Principal, Charles Lucas, reported a total of 71 students in 1861. See *Journal of the Society of Arts [JSA]* Vol. XIII no. 661 (21 July 1865), 568. The Academy's dependence on student fees is clear from the financial statement included in Lucas's report: out of total receipts of £2,766, the contribution from student fees was £1,768. With a government grant of £500, the amount received from subscriptions and donations totalled just over £426. See *Ibid.*, 572.

financial viability and to raise the standards of musical education on offer. Furthermore, an overhaul of its image was needed to promote its role in serious, professional training. The institutions connected with music, and routes into the music profession, were essential to its status. Furthermore, critics linked musical standards, in particular the perceived lack of a distinctly British school of composition, with failings in the training available in both London and the provinces.<sup>6</sup>

### **The Society of Arts, Education and Music**

The Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (also known as ‘The Society of Arts’) was founded in 1753 with broad philanthropic aims, intended to support developments in both commerce and culture. Incorporated by Royal Charter in 1847, its mission was confirmed as

bestowing pecuniary and honorary rewards for meritorious works in the various departments of the fine arts, for discoveries, inventions, and improvements in agriculture, chemistry, mechanics, manufactures, and other useful arts, for the application of such natural and artificial products, whether of home, colonial, or foreign growth and manufacture, as appear likely to afford fresh objects of industry, and to increase the trade of the realm, by extending the sphere and operations of British commerce.<sup>7</sup>

Speaking in 1853, the Chairman Harry Chester affirmed the role of the Society as ‘an active promoter of education’, being

thoroughly convinced that an improved education for the whole people, rich and poor, adult and child, is the first requisite for the improvement of manufactures, commerce, and

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<sup>6</sup> Similar themes are drawn by Lynn Sargent in ‘A New Class of People: The Conservatoire and Musical Professionalization in Russia, 1861-1917’ in *Music and Letters* Vol. LXXXV no. 1 (Feb. 2004), 41-61.

<sup>7</sup> Extract from the Charter quoted in the Address to the First Ordinary Meeting of 1853-4 given by Harry Chester, Chairman of Council, *JSA* Vol. II no. 52 (18 November 1853), 2.

arts; that a liberal measure of science must enter into that education; and that it is the duty of this Society to promote vigorously this great object.<sup>8</sup>

The Society's work in education, and music in particular, provides important context for its involvement in the Royal Academy of Music.

The Society championed the work of Mechanics Institutes and Literary Societies across Britain as well as running its own competitions and examinations aimed primarily at encouraging self-help and innovation among the working classes. Literary and Mechanics' institutes were adopted 'in union', the Society enabling their work and advertising lists of classes and lectures in its weekly proceedings and *Journal*. The *Journal of the Society of Arts* began publication in 1852, when the activities of the Society and its associated institutes could no longer be covered adequately in weekly proceedings. At this time it boasted over 90,000 members, including 225 affiliated institutions 'in all parts of the Empire'.<sup>9</sup> The Society was closely involved in the Great Exhibition of 1851 through the work of Henry Cole (1808-1882); the decision to invest the proceeds of the Exhibition in education in the Arts and Sciences was very much in line with its aims and interests .

As part of its work, the Society took an interest in music and music education, and its activities provide an overview of some of the contexts in which music was to be found and discussed in the middle of the nineteenth century. Musical lectures and events were often featured in its reports from provincial institutions.<sup>10</sup> Local education institutions were run by both benefactors and educationalists, and it was not unusual to find musicians and music teachers represented on governing bodies. On occasion the Society offered direct support to local musical initiatives. In 1861 the *Journal* carried an article in support of the 'Hullah Fund', raising money to allow John Pyke Hullah (1812-1884) to conduct his music classes in the wake of a fire

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<sup>8</sup> Address given by Harry Chester, Chairman of Council, *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>9</sup> *JSA* vol. I no. 1 (26 November 1852), 1.

<sup>10</sup> The Croydon Literary and Scientific Institution, for example, reported in 1861 that 'The singing classes are continued with success under the able direction of Mr. Budd. An organ is about to be erected in the Hall, chiefly for the use of the Choral Society of the Institution. This acquisition will, doubtless, tend to promote the cultivation of vocal music.' See *JSA* Vol. IX no. 424, 104.

which destroyed St. Martin's Hall in London.<sup>11</sup> As part of its programme of local examinations, the Society offered papers in Music between 1859 and 1919.<sup>12</sup>

Topics in music also fell under the Society's remit for developments in science and technology. In November 1860, for example, the *Journal* reported on the desirability of adopting a standard for Musical Pitch.<sup>13</sup> More directly relevant was its support of 'rational recreation' through the work of the literary and mechanics' institutes. Music often formed an important part of the curriculum provided by local institutes, offering an enjoyable pastime as well as intellectual stimulation.<sup>14</sup> Yet introducing music as a part of formal education met with resistance. Hullah, well-known for his work in mass musical education for the working classes, explained some of these barriers in a letter 'On Music as an Element of Education'.<sup>15</sup> Hullah identified a key problem in the identity and purpose of music education. As he noted, 'Education, or training, may be classed under two heads – the one direct, or professional; the other indirect, or unprofessional.'<sup>16</sup> The focus of music education, however, was unclear. Music (performance, composition or teaching) was a professional occupation. It was also an amateur interest and hobby. The two were not kept distinct (the Royal Academy of Music admitted both amateurs and professionals), nor were there clear pathways for education in each area.

The Society's reports on music education in the Mechanics Institutes and Literary Institutions covered only a portion of music education on offer in mid nineteenth-century Britain. Instrumental tuition was an increasingly important market, and many large towns and

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<sup>11</sup> *JSA* Vol. IX no. 424 (4 January 1861), 100-1. Hullah made important contributions to music education, both by campaigning for improved music education in schools, and by his singing classes for school teachers and the general public.

<sup>12</sup> See David Wright, 'The Music Exams of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, 1859-1919' in Paul Rodmell (ed.), *Music and Institutions in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012) 161-180.

<sup>13</sup> *JSA* vol. IX no. 418 (23 November 1860), 8. The Committee consulted with 'many eminent musicians' and agreed a pitch of C=528. Having obtained the cooperation of music instrument makers, composers and performers, it also 'caused a standard tuning-fork to be prepared, verified copies of which may now be obtained'

<sup>14</sup> The *Journal* of 1863, for example, contains a report on setting up a new centre for helping working-class men, and argues for the central place of music in improving recreational opportunities, being both 'harmless and pleasurable'. See *JSA* Vol. 11 no. 553 (6 February 1863), 205.

<sup>15</sup> Among the reasons Hullah gives for not including music in general education are '1. That music is a mere accomplishment' and '2. That it is so difficult, as to take from other studies, an amount of time and attention which cannot be spared from them'. See *JSA* Vol. II no. 88 (28 July 1854), 628.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

cities hosted music schools. An increase in amateur involvement fuelled the need for trained music teachers, and shortages in the profession, together with a series of crises at the country's flagship music school, the Royal Academy of Music, initiated the Society's interest in professional musical training.

### **The Royal Academy of Music**

By the 1860s, the Royal Academy of Music was widely acknowledged to be falling far short of expectations in its role in professional education and training. Finances had been a concern since the Academy's foundation in 1822; as early as 1823, the management had petitioned the government for a grant, which was refused, but King George IV pledged an annual subscription of £100, continued by successive monarchs.<sup>17</sup> The institution managed to continue to support students and pay its running costs thanks to individual generosity and the profits from concerts and fancy dress balls.<sup>18</sup> From 1846 the balance sheets show a deficit of around £900 per year and in 1859 the death of Lord Burghersh (1784-1859), the Earl of Westmorland, a key founder of the Academy and one of its most important financial backers, led to a crisis. High-profile management troubles followed through the 1860s, as tension grew between professional musicians and amateur supporters.<sup>19</sup>

Henry F. Chorley (1808-1872), speaking in 1859 as the Society's interest in music grew, described the Academy as 'an institution which it would be pleasanter to pass by than to enter'.<sup>20</sup> Chorley suggested that the Academy had failed to produce any noteworthy musical artists in the previous twenty years, and that talented students had been 'driven abroad' by both the high cost and poor quality of tuition.<sup>21</sup> A government grant of £500 was instituted by the Liberal

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<sup>17</sup> See Frederick Corder, *History*, 21-2.

<sup>18</sup> See Corder, 50. For example, a quarter of the profits from the 1834 Handel Festival went to the Academy, totalling £2250.

<sup>19</sup> See Corder, 70-75.

<sup>20</sup> Chorley, 'On the Recognition of Music among the Arts', a paper read at the 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Society on 11 May 1859, printed in *JSA* Vol. VII no. 338 (13 May 1859), 448. Chorley was active in many areas of musical and literary life, but is best remembered for his role as music critic and journalist at the *Athenaeum* between 1834 and 1868.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

government in 1864, on the understanding that the Academy seek to bolster its private funding and improve its organization and status within the profession.<sup>22</sup> Henry Wylde (1822-1890), who gave evidence to the Society in 1866, suggested that even government backing failed to reverse the Academy's fortunes. Wylde described the Academy's 'decadence and inutility, so far from being ameliorated by Governmental aid, has gradually declined both in numbers and even its questionable usefulness, into that effete condition which no longer leaves the verdict of a signal failure in the least doubtful.'<sup>23</sup> Despite government support, student numbers had dropped to just 72 and the Academy had failed to develop either appreciation or talent in music among the British: 'The voice of public opinion had already pronounced the institution a failure, and the majority of the musical profession were inimical to its further maintenance'.<sup>24</sup> Wylde had studied at the Royal Academy of Music but founded his own conservatoire, the London Academy of Music, in 1861. His position at the head of a rival institution without the government support enjoyed by the Academy may well have increased his desire to see the Academy fail.

In addition to the problems of finance and organisation, the Academy existed in challenging times for music and its profession. The constraints within which it was working became clear as the Committee's work progressed. One key issue was the state, and status, of the music profession. Without fixed professional standards or hierarchies, professional musicians occupied an undefined social status. The piecemeal nature of musicians' work and lack of formal qualifications meant most were held in low regard. Wylde added the observation that British audiences had a marked preference for foreign artists, thus further impeding the professional

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<sup>22</sup> A letter from the Lord Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, dated 29 June 1863 and printed in the *JSA* in 1865, noted that the government 'regret to perceive the extreme slenderness of the present funds of the Royal Academy of Music' and suggested that public funding would be contingent upon the Academy's management addressing a series of 'reservations'. See *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 666 (25 August 1865), 636.

<sup>23</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 696 (23 March 1866), 321.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

success of British musicians.<sup>25</sup> Finally, the music profession carried gendered connotations which meant young men from well-off homes were unlikely to make music their career.<sup>26</sup>

With its broad remit, the Society was well placed to comment on educational provision for music when it began to become clear that the Royal Academy of Music, looking towards its fourth decade, was unable either to deliver a sound professional music education or to operate with the mixture of amateur and professional provision that had characterized its early years. It was in June 1861 that, in response to a request from the Directors of the Royal Academy of Music, the Society ‘appointed a Committee to consider, in conjunction with that body [the Royal Academy], what measures should be taken to place that Academy in a position to realize the hopes of its founders, by subserving the purposes of a National School of Music.’<sup>27</sup> As we have seen, the Society was broadly concerned with the potential impact of music on the mental and moral health of the nation. In addition to its interest in amateur music making as an acceptable form of recreation or study, its concern for trade and commerce included the profession of music. Thus the ensuing investigation focused on practical and ideological problems of music teaching, in addition to issues of organisation and administration within the Academy.

### **The Musical Education Committee**

It was not until 1865 that the proposed Committee was formed and began its investigations. One of the first actions was to put together a list of questions, setting out the scope of the project and the problems that needed consideration. Enlisting the help of the Foreign Secretary, Earl Russell, the committee intended to draw on the experiences of European conservatoires in order to gain new perspectives on the scope and organisation of music education institutions. Questions were to be circulated to ‘the professors, amateurs, and others

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<sup>25</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 696 (23 March 1866), 324.

<sup>26</sup> John Capes, in a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, had commented on the recent trends towards music-making in public schools. However, music as a professional occupation remained very unusual among the upper and middle classes. See *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 694 (9 March 1866), 294.

<sup>27</sup> *JSA* Vol. 9 no. 449 (28 June 1861), 586.

interested in the subject’, and members of the Society were also ‘requested to communicate their views’.<sup>28</sup> The questions demonstrate that the financial situation of the Academy was one of the key issues, and the associated problems of organisation and management accompanied this. The Committee was also concerned with the efficacy of the Academy in producing professional musicians and the questions, reproduced as Appendix 1, attest to the variety of issues and possible scope of the institution they were considering. The questions indicate that the Committee members were already considering some of the features of other institutions; in particular, the Edinburgh museum of musical instruments stood as a model.<sup>29</sup> Other possibilities included closer association with the School of Military Music, founded at Kneller Hall in 1857, and the numerous Cathedral choirs.

The role of the Academy within the broad spectrum of music education on offer across the country clearly needed investigation. The question of funding was also paramount: despite having received funding from the government, the Royal Academy had floundered financially. Even supporters of the scheme were keen that government money should be spent responsibly, in order to ensure long-term sustainability of the institution. The Society of Arts was, of course, interested in the broader picture of music education across the country, both in local institutions and schools, and among other professional and training institutions. The questions reflect the desire to use the London-based institution for supporting musical education across the country, but also suggest a deeper ambition for developing the Academy as a hub for musical activity as well as education, and a source of standardisation and expertise.

Responses to the queries were sought from representatives from music colleges across Europe. Much of the detail concerns administration and finances. For example, the first response printed, from Bavaria, covered both the Royal Conservatoire in Munich and the Musical Institution at Wurzburg and gave an outline of government subsidies and student fees, together

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<sup>28</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 639 (17 February 1865), 217.

<sup>29</sup> An overview of the history of the Edinburgh museum is available on the museum website (<http://www.euchmi.ed.ac.uk/uhwr.html>); its place in Edinburgh’s schemes for music education is addressed in Rosemary Golding, *Music and Academia in Victorian Britain* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013), 42-44.

with numbers of students.<sup>30</sup> Other entries give more detail on the curriculum, noting the numbers of classes, teachers and students for each instrument and the overall content of classes in theory and composition. The details of each conservatoire's workings are interesting in themselves, but tell us little about attitudes to music education or the real relationship between the teaching in each conservatoire and the ideals of music education to be found in each place.

The Committee also interviewed and invited contributions from professional musicians and those involved in music education provision within the UK. The investigation sparked debate elsewhere, too, and letters published in journals and newspapers were reproduced in the Society's *Journal* for further circulation. It is within these debates that the more fundamental questions regarding the purpose and scope of the Academy were raised.

The Committee was chaired by the Prince of Wales, who as President of the Royal Society took a close interest in its activities, and also had a great interest in music. In practice, much of the work was led by Henry Cole, a key member of the Society. Cole is best known for his involvement in science and technology innovations in the mid-nineteenth century, and his management of the Great Exhibition of 1851.<sup>31</sup> He was also instrumental in making use of the profit from the Exhibition for developing national museums on the South Kensington site bought with the proceeds, and was first Superintendent of the Department set up to improve education in art and design in the wake of the Exhibition's great success. Cole was of immense importance to the prospects for a new or re-configured conservatoire. His work in design education epitomised the efficient and socially-beneficial institution envisaged for music, and he controlled large amounts of public money. Indeed, the Royal Academy had already petitioned the Exhibition Commissioners for a new site on the Kensington Estate.<sup>32</sup> Other members of the Committee included engineers, architects and civil servants who had worked with Cole on the Great

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<sup>30</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 655 (9 June 1865), 495.

<sup>31</sup> See Ann Cooper, 'Cole, Sir Henry (1808–1882)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5852>, accessed 17 March 2015].

<sup>32</sup> Letter of 1856, reprinted in *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 663 (4 August 1865), 593. The RAM was unsuccessful in its petition, but the National Training School for Music (1873) and its replacement the Royal College of Music (1882) found homes on the Estate.

Exhibition and South Kensington site—civil servants with an interest in education, and politicians. Only two can be identified as having interests related to music: Lord Gerald Fitzgerald (1821-1886), an amateur ‘cellist who was president of the amateur band ‘Wandering Minstrels’, and Sir George Clerk (1787-1867), a retired Scottish Liberal MP who was Chairman of the Committee of Management at the Royal Academy of Music.<sup>33</sup>

### **A Curriculum for Higher-Level Music Education**

Early on in the Committee’s work, and before any of their findings were published, an article by John Ella (1802-1888) gave indications of the problems facing music education in England.<sup>34</sup> Ella described the committee as ‘composed entirely of amateurs, unbiased by professional interests’ – perhaps a warning as to the nature of some of the opinions they would meet during their investigations. In no other country, Ella countered,

are musical publications, classical works of the great masters – sacred and secular, instrumental and vocal – so *cheap* as in England, and in no other country is good musical instruction so *dear!* ... What is wanted to meet the increasing appetite for good music and for the instruction of youths whose parents are unable to afford them a *complete* education, is a national academy, with government aid, presided over by an experienced professor of independent means and moral influence... A national academy, with one thousand students, well educated, would supply us with competent organists, excellent vocalists, and efficient orchestral and military musicians... the reason that these young musicians fail to realise in manhood what they promise in childhood, is simply owing to

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<sup>33</sup> The full list of committee members was published in Vol. XIII no. 643 (17 March 1865), 287.

<sup>34</sup> Having trained as a professional musician, Ella developed a successful career as a concert promoter. He would have been well aware not only of the state of the music profession and musical standards in the 1860s, but also of the important role of amateurs and patrons in musical life. Ella’s work as a concert promoter is studied in detail in Christina Bashford, *The Pursuit of High Culture: John Ella and Chamber Music in Victorian London* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007).

the want of a cheap and complete education under competent masters, with access to libraries and good practical exhibitions of the art.<sup>35</sup>

Ella also put forward his views on the ideal curriculum for an aspiring musician:

What is meant by a complete education includes a knowledge of harmony, counterpoint, composition, instrumentations, musical history, structure and nature of instruments, and the elements of acoustics, requiring, at least, six years studious application. To these acquirements might also be added an acquaintance with modern languages – Italian, French and German.<sup>36</sup>

Ella's suggestions appear ambitious even in many modern contexts, and went far beyond what was on offer at English music schools or required for university degrees in music. The place of languages, musical history and theory, the role of the principal, and the necessity for government support, all became subjects of contention during the Society's work.

An interview with the Royal Academy's Principal, Mr. Charles Lucas (1808–1869), gave an overview of some of the key features of the institution. Teaching operated on a small group basis, as used under Mendelssohn at his conservatoire in Leipzig. Working usually in groups of four, each student was entitled to a half-hour lesson, then remained to observe the others in the group. Students learned two instruments, in addition to other classes:

If a lady goes there and learns the pianoforte as the principal instrument, she has two half-hour's individual instruction, besides attending the class two hours. Then she has a singing lesson and lessons in harmony twice a week. Then, twice a week she is obliged to attend a sight-singing class and orchestral singing... [L]adies, who make singing their principal study ... have but one lesson per week on the pianoforte, and one lesson per week in harmony; but then they have Italian twice a-week, and elocution once a-week; which makes the number of hours on individual instruction about the same; and they have also to attend sight-singing, and orchestral and choral practices. It is the same with

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<sup>35</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 658 (30 June 1865), 538.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

the male pupils; if the violin be the principal study, they have two lessons per week on the pianoforte, and in harmony, and they attend the sight-singing practice – that is to make them able to read music well.<sup>37</sup>

In practice, the system was less than effective. Otto Goldschmidt (1829-1907), a Professor of Piano at the Academy since 1863, had been a pupil at Leipzig under Mendelssohn and was therefore familiar with the scheme working successfully. At the Academy, however, ‘The professors have pupils varying considerably in proficiency assigned to them; this hinders the simultaneous instruction of several pupils by the same teacher.’<sup>38</sup> Not all pupils were assigned piano as a second study; the critic Henry Chorley noted that a student ‘must learn whatever orchestral instrument is wanted to fill up the band.’<sup>39</sup>

Goldschmidt was also clear on the ideal breadth of the Academy’s curriculum. Besides instrumental and vocal tuition, he recommended ‘harmony, counterpoint, composition, and such further knowledge of the art and history of music as may justly be expected from an institution of this stamp. The tuition should also include the study of church and cathedral music, not to compete with special cathedral education, but as an essential part of a complete musical education. Again, the Academy ought to have a fair instrumental band as an indispensable means of instruction.’<sup>40</sup>

Manuel Garcia (1805-1906), a baritone who had taught at the Paris Conservatoire before moving to the Academy, noted the latter’s relatively narrow curriculum. The Conservatoire taught ‘Composers, singers, instrumentalists for orchestra, pianistes [*sic*], organists, comedians, and tragedians’; among the subjects on offer for Garcia’s singers in Paris were solfeggio, deportment and declamation, as well as vocal training, subjects that chimed with Garcia’s

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<sup>37</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 661 (21 July 1865), 568.

<sup>38</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 664 (11 August 1865), 603.

<sup>39</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 668 (8 September 1865), 658. Chorley admitted he did not have recent experience of the Academy, and the list of lessons recorded as part of the reports suggests Lucas’s account was broadly true. See *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 661 (21 July 1865), 573-4.

<sup>40</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 664 (11 August 1865), 605

particular interests in vocal technique.<sup>41</sup> The Academy provided neither solfeggio nor deportment for its aspiring singers. Another key feature of the Parisian institution was its links with public and professional organisations, providing a reliable route into the profession for students.<sup>42</sup> Thus, both the curriculum and the institution's connections and standing enhanced its role in the full scope of professional preparation for musical careers. While the Academy provided technical and musical training, it appears to have lacked the directly professional elements found elsewhere.

Other commentators were even less generous towards the Academy's curriculum. Chorley, a staunch critic, suggested that the Academy needed a complete overhaul or replacement, better 'built anew from top to bottom, than that it should be repatched'.<sup>43</sup> Chorley disagreed with the general principle of students learning two instruments, arguing, 'I infer from this that a pupil may be required to do a little of everything, and therefore is likely to do nothing good in any special department.'<sup>44</sup> Chorley suggested that the Academy's failure to produce high-quality performers confirmed his views, adding that the institution had failed to employ well-known teachers, with the best English performers continuing to be educated outside England.<sup>45</sup> It is notable that the Academy's curriculum would have suited amateurs and aspiring music teachers rather better than talented soloists.

Some proposals for a curriculum took a broad view of music and professional preparation which tended towards general education. Ella's proposed scheme, detailed above, represented the most extensive music curriculum of those considered by the Committee, but many of the continental conservatoires offered instruction in elocution, languages, deportment, solfeggio, harmony and sight-singing as well as instrumental tuition on one or more instruments. The

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<sup>41</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 662 (28 July 1865), 586. Garcia was one of the most influential writers on vocal technique in the nineteenth century. This is particularly due to his experiments into the physical basis of voice production using the laryngoscope, an instrument he is credited with inventing.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, 587.

<sup>43</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 668 (8 September 1865), 655.

<sup>44</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 668 (8 September 1865), 656.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*.

programme at the Milan Conservatoire was perhaps most extensive, including literature, ethics, logic, elocution, French, Latin, mythology, history, geography, writing and arithmetic.<sup>46</sup> The Royal Academy was unusual in requiring all students to learn two instruments, but it offered few of these extra skills, even to singers training for stage performance.

The perceived incompleteness of the Academy's musical education applied to the length, as well as breadth, of its students' studies. Because professional musicians were often drawn from the working classes, those attending the Academy were usually under pressure to begin earning as soon as possible. Once located in London and making useful connections, pupils took advantage of the 'deputy' system to find ad-hoc engagements in orchestras and bands. A number of respondents noted the detrimental effect of this pressure on the quality of education the Academy was able to offer. Garcia commented that 'the studies do not last long enough, as the pupils are bent upon stopping as soon as possible the expenses of their education.'<sup>47</sup> Henry Leslie (1822-1896), principal of the National College of Music, offered similar reflections on the problems faced by his own institution:

Take, for instance, the case of a young man studying singing. The moment he is in a position to earn two or three guineas a week by engagements, his position is generally such that he is obliged to take them. It is almost impossible to hope for any artistic result in such a case. His education unfinished, his style is deteriorated, and the greater his musical capabilities the more serious is the danger.<sup>48</sup>

The majority of comparable institutions in continental cities received substantial public funding, allowing them to support these students throughout their education. The Academy had found little success in raising funds and therefore its own problems in training students were compounded by their reluctance to remain in education longer than necessary.

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<sup>46</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 670 (22 September 1865), 681.

<sup>47</sup> *JSA*, Vol. XIII no. 662 (28 July 1865), 587.

<sup>48</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 693 (2 March 1866), 258. The National College of Music was founded in 1864. It was in the process of closing when Leslie was interviewed in 1866.

One of the corollaries of the career-oriented approach to education was that trainee professional musicians often missed out on the general education they might have gained in a school or at a university. This point elicited an extended debate between J.M. Capes (1813-1889) and the composer George Alexander Macfarren (1813-1887), himself a former pupil of the Academy. Capes was of the view that ‘no one seems to have probed the subject below the surface, no one has shown to the committee that a mere improvement in the purely professional teaching of academies will only cure half the evil, and that what is wanted is a thorough general education and cultivation of musical teachers and performers.’<sup>49</sup> General education was important for status as a profession, and Capes argued that not requiring higher qualifications in general education from performers failed to distinguish them from lower-class manual professions. In response, Macfarren defended the general education of musicians as no worse than the sister arts, affirming further that ‘a very wide course of literary and scientific study is incompatible with sound musicianship’.<sup>50</sup>

Henry Wylde also agreed with Capes’s views on general education, adding that ‘no mere instruction in special branches of musical art is complete without the addition of such an education as will enlarge the intellect, refine the taste, cultivate the imagination, and strengthen the understanding. Mere technical skill is not enough.’<sup>51</sup> As Gresham Professor of Music at the Academy, Wylde was concerned with the general musical taste of the leisured classes to whom he offered regular lectures.<sup>52</sup> Wylde was also keen to make the distinction between the kind of general musical education that he, and other classes held in Literary and Mechanics Institutes, provided, and the talent or ‘genius’ expected to emerge from a national Academy of Music.

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<sup>49</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 694 (9 March 1866), 294. John Moore Capes published extensively on both music and religion. Capes’s enthusiasm for general education may have been influenced by his friendship with John Henry Newman, whose *Idea of a University* had been published in 1852.

<sup>50</sup> *JSA* Vol. XVI no. 697 (30 March 1866), 338.

<sup>51</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 696 (23 March 1866), 322.

<sup>52</sup> The Gresham College was an independent organisation established in the City of London to provide lectures in a variety of subjects open to the public.

The question of ‘genius’ provides a further point of consideration for the purpose of the conservatoire under scrutiny in the 1865 report. What was the place of musical genius in music education, and was the Academy set up to cater for such musical talent? Goldschmidt considered not: as he argued, ‘The main object of the Institution, as I apprehend it, is not so much to produce individual instances of conspicuous attainment as much as a comparatively numerous body of well-instructed and competent musicians.’<sup>53</sup> The structure of the lessons, of course, provided for instruction on a relatively large scale, as long as all the pupils were roughly the same standard, but gave little room for individual attention. Wylde agreed that

a general system can go no further, and never succeeds in developing those fine touches of genius upon the production and culture of which the highest musical excellence depends... As a centre, then, for the general diffusion of musical taste, the Academy may have its place; as a means of developing individual genius, it is not only proved, by precedent, to be powerless, but its tendencies are injurious, because repressive and mediocre.<sup>54</sup>

Wylde concluded that Academies teaching on a large-scale, ‘academical’ model would never succeed in cultivating the kind of musical genius required in high-level performers and composers: for this, individual tuition was needed over a long period of time, and outside formal educational structures.<sup>55</sup>

The question of genius and the ‘scientific’ aspects of music education formed the basis of a further disagreement between Macfarren and Chorley, which took place in the pages of the Society’s *Journal* as well as the *Athenaeum* magazine. Chorley, concerned with the systems of teaching used in conservatoire education, suggested that, ‘Though every master must have his own individuality, ... it is obvious that should conflicting theories and methods enter and be enforced in the same academy, the result can hardly fail to be unsatisfactory confusion: an

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<sup>53</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 664 (11 August 1865), 606.

<sup>54</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 696 (23 March 1866), 322-3.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 324.

absence of school, in short.’<sup>56</sup> Chorley’s recommendation was for the adoption of a single textbook for each branch of study, and that ‘some well-digested plan of instruction, avoiding alike antique narrowness and modern lawlessness, should be determined on... and strictly adhered to.’<sup>57</sup> Advanced students would, naturally, begin to develop their own style, and ‘Those having great exceptional genius stand in small need of academies.’<sup>58</sup> However, he was clear that the product of genius (citing Berlioz and Beethoven as examples) were not suitable as models for students.<sup>59</sup> Macfarren argued against this reduction of the professor’s role to ‘mere machine’, asserting the importance not only of ongoing development of theories and techniques, but also plurality of approach within an institution.<sup>60</sup>

### **Amateurs and Professionals**

Not all conservatoire students were intending to make music their profession. The Royal Academy of Music, though set up as a professional school, had long admitted amateur students with suitable preparation and an ability to pay the fees. Although the Society’s questions did not specifically touch on provision for amateur performers or general music classes, a number of the conservatoires provided details of their activities for non-professionals. The Vienna Conservatoire, for example, included ‘the public performance of good musical productions’ among its aims, drawing from across the musical community and providing for the public.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, the Royal Musical Institute of Florence supported a library for the use of the public,

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<sup>56</sup> *The Athenaeum* no. 1996 (27 January 1866), 140.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* Chorley reiterated the same point in further correspondence, for example in *Athenaeum* no. 2005 (March 31 1866), 437: ‘Genius, I once more repeat, has no need of academies, but makes rules for itself. These are not models.’

<sup>60</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 694 (9 March 1866), 281. It is interesting to note that the issue of conformity eventually found its way into the teaching mechanisms of the Royal College of Music. Frank Damrosch, later founder of the Juilliard School, commented in 1904 that the RCM had ‘unity of pedagogical effort’ under the watch of Sir Hubert Parry – unusual among European conservatoires of the time. See Ritterman, ‘The Royal College of Music, 1883-1899’, 371.

<sup>61</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 659 (7 July 1865), 547. The report from the Vienna conservatoire declared its ‘chief objects ... to be (1) the maintenance of a Conservatoire; (2) the public performance of good musical productions; (3) the maintenance of a musical library and its appurtenances; (4) general vocal and instrumental rehearsals and performances of the members; and (5) the encouragement of rising musicians by experimental or public performances of their works or otherwise.’

gave grants to artists and promoted new music and artists, as well as providing instruction to performers and composers.<sup>62</sup> The National Conservatoire of Music and Elocution in Paris went a step further, offering an ‘elementary and popular’ class in singing for adult females.<sup>63</sup> This institution had a broader remit than most continental conservatoires, offering classes in solfeggio and elocution as well as a library of musical works and books. In contrast, Peter Le Neve Foster (1809-1879), reporting on the Brussels Conservatoire Royal de Musique, noted that ‘The instruction... given is only for those intended for the profession, and not for amateurs; but, inasmuch as there is no control over the students after they leave the Conservatoire, practically the education is open to all, without distinction.’<sup>64</sup>

Sir George Clerk (1787-1867), Chairman of the Academy’s Committee of Management, was clear that the Academy was intended for professional preparation only: ‘The object of the Academy is to afford the means of more thorough musical education to persons who devote themselves to it professionally. It is not our wish that amateurs should be educated in the Academy at a reduced rate.’<sup>65</sup> The views were confirmed in his next two responses:

277. You would have no objection to amateurs joining the Academy if they paid sufficiently remunerative fees? – I think it might be managed, but I doubt whether it would be expedient. 278. Does the Academy require that they shall be professionals? –

It is understood that is their intention either to become public professors or teachers.<sup>66</sup>

Despite Clerk’s certainty on the matter, the Academy had relied on amateur fees for its income since its inception in the 1820s. Clerk was, perhaps, hoping that by emphasising the importance of the Academy’s professional nature, public funding would be forthcoming. He may have sensed the danger posed by the report to the Academy’s very existence; clarifying it as a

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<sup>62</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 670 (22 September 1865), 679.

<sup>63</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 660 (14 July 1865), 557.

<sup>64</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 684 (29 December 1865), 94. Le Neve Foster was Secretary of the Society of Arts at the time.

<sup>65</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 666 (25 August 1865), 634. Clerk’s family frequented the concerts of the Musical Union, organised by John Ella, so it is perhaps no surprise that they shared views on the need for a full scheme. See Bashford, *Pursuit of High Culture*, 149-150.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

professional institution would ensure its serious reputation and help garner public and political support.

The problem of musical amateurs and professionals extended to the management of the Academy. It had been set up by a number of wealthy donors, among them many amateur musicians, and had continue to survive financially partly due to their sponsorship of young talented musicians, and by teaching young amateurs from the upper classes. The role of the management committee had led to tension with the instrumental professors. William Sterndale Bennett (1816-1875), who had been a pupil at the Academy between 1826 and 1836 and went on to join the first Board of Professors in 1853, explained in his 1866 interview that the committee of management was entirely composed of laymen, who ‘left with the board of professors the arrangement of the classes and the examination of the pupils, and the Board of professors gave general advice upon musical matters.’<sup>67</sup> Bennett had left the Board early on in 1858, however, as ‘having given over certain powers and duties to the board of professors, the committee of management sought very much to limit and control those powers.’<sup>68</sup> The management retained overall control, including the right to overrule the professors on musical and professional matters. The difficulties in the relationship between the professional teachers and amateur managers had begun early in the Academy’s history. Lord Burghersh had been important in supporting the Academy financially. However, he had little understanding of the practicalities of professional music-making, and its amateur management impeded the reputation of the Academy as a professional training school.<sup>69</sup>

The role and nature of institutional management became an important topic in the Society’s investigation. Bennett was in favor of a professional musician taking on the role of general superintendent for the Academy, able to oversee the conduct of the students and the day-

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<sup>67</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 695 (16 March 1866), 301. Although Bennett’s composing career had not lived up to his early promise, he was elected Professor of Music at the University of Cambridge in 1856, and returned to the Academy as Principle only three months after his interview with the Society of Arts Committee.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> Ehrlich describes the conflict between the professionals and management in *Music Profession*, 86-7.

to-day management of the institution. He maintained, however, that overall management, especially where financial matters were concerned, was best dealt with by 'non-professional' gentlemen.<sup>70</sup> Capes took the opposing view: a professional musician in charge would open the Academy to claims of favoritism towards 'one particular party, country, or musical school; and, however dispassionate and liberal his character, he would find it all but impossible to act with perfect independence'.<sup>71</sup> While Capes agreed with Bennett that musical matters should be in the hands of professional musicians, he believed the role of the general manager should be kept separate from professional musical duties. Macfarren, in defense of both the talents and the conduct of his profession, urged that 'no institution can gain either the confidence of the public or the support of musicians which is not entirely and freely directed by a man who has spent his whole time in the study and practice of the art, and has passed through all the vicissitudes of a professional career.'<sup>72</sup> Macfarren blamed the shortcomings of the Academy on its 'non-professional' elements, deploring the influence of amateurs in church music as well as the profession's educational institutions.<sup>73</sup>

The comments made by Henry Cole give further views on the relation of the Academy and music education to the musical well-being of the country. Cole's perspective drew on his experience with the schools of Art and Design, which were founded as part of his development of South Kensington, following the success of the 1851 Exhibition. These schools developed skills in architecture and practical drawing, as well as training numerous teachers, and received state support due to the improvements in industry and manufacturing.<sup>74</sup> Music was different: Cole argued it 'is to be encouraged in order not that any special class, but that the whole country

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 302.

<sup>71</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 694 (9 March 1866), 295.

<sup>72</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 697 (30 March 1866), 338.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* 339. When the Royal College of Music was founded in 1883, George Grove was appointed as Director, rather than Principle Professor, underlying his amateur status. See Ritterman, 'The Royal College of Music, 1883-1899', 357.

<sup>74</sup> The Society took great interest in the development of Art and Design education, publishing in 1865 the report of the government's Committee of Council on Education, which recommended extending the funding for students at National Art Training Schools to students studying night classes at Mechanics' Institutes and other institutions, as well as students gaining expertise in drawing at state-funded schools. See *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 639 (17 February 1865), 232.

at large may derive benefit and pleasure from it. It seems to me that it is the business of some central institution – say the Government ‘to take care that the musical talent of the country is not wasted and lost.’<sup>75</sup>

Cole’s contribution gave a further summary of his views on the object of an academy of music: ‘To collect together from all parts of the United Kingdom those persons who have musical talent which it is important to cultivate,- primarily, to sing and play in public; secondarily, to teach. To give such instruction that the proficient would be available in either capacity.’<sup>76</sup> He also proposed the new academy include a theatre, particularly to assist in training opera singers, and necessary for ‘a complete musical education.’<sup>77</sup> Cole’s statements underline some of the difficulties facing the Academy, and the Society in its work. The combination of amateurs and professionals had been necessary for the financial sustainability of the Academy in its early years, but this became part of its difficulties in establishing a clear remit and structure.

Cole identified two key areas of professional activity: performing, and teaching. Yet his previous comments position the Academy as an important agent in musical appreciation and education at an amateur level, with possible influence across the whole country. The multiplicity of ‘audiences’ for music education diluted the effectiveness of any single national institution and, as Cyril Ehrlich suggests, the Society’s report failed to define the ‘vocational needs’ of Royal Academy students.<sup>78</sup> Comparison with Cole’s Art Training Schools further delineates the ‘problem’ of music. Whereas Art education, particularly at the basic level, could be linked to careers of national importance in manufacturing and design, campaigners for music education struggled to define a similar function for music. Private philanthropy was far more likely to be forthcoming than government funding, but this returned musicians to the problem of amateurs and the viability of an independent profession. To a country taken up with industrialisation and

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<sup>75</sup> Vol. XIV no. 684 (29 December 1865), 97

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, 101.

<sup>78</sup> Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain since the Eighteenth Century: A Social History* (New York: Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 1985), 98.

urbanisation, the role of music and the various branches of its profession was not yet established. While Cole was keen to construct an analogy between education in Art and in Music, others pointed out significant differences. Not only was art and design developed with close links to manufacturing and commerce, Henry Wylde argued further that the system of models used in art education would not transfer to musical teaching.

The Society clearly supported the notion of a government-backed musical academy to ensure the country's talented musicians had the opportunity to develop and form the backbone of both performance and teaching professions. The reports from European conservatoires were prefaced with an envious summary of the situation abroad, noting that the largest institution under scrutiny, the Conservatoire of Paris, was

maintained with the utmost liberality by the Government and under the control of the Minister of Public Instruction. And it appears to have amply repaid both the munificence and the administration provided by the Government in the excellence of its pupils and the general effect of the extension of musical taste and knowledge throughout France as an element of social progress.<sup>79</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The debates between members of the music profession, and the discussions carried out as part of the Committee's investigations, serve to rehearse many of the common themes characterising music education and the profession in the nineteenth century. The status of the music profession was low, concerns about standards abounded, and the profession struggled to find a clear identity amid tensions of class and gender. The role of education in this context, whether professional or academic, was not yet clear. Educational institutions such as the Royal Academy of Music represented one of the points where tensions over the value of music in public life, funding, philanthropy and the attending control came to the fore.

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<sup>79</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIII no. 655 (June 9 1865), 495.

Following its extensive investigation, the Society initially recommended that the Academy's management apply again to the Kensington Gore Estate committee for a permanent location on the site.<sup>80</sup> Suitable premises for the institution had been an important discussion point, and became an urgent consideration when the Academy's lease ran out in 1866.<sup>81</sup> The first report also encouraged a considerable increase in government financial support, to be matched by private donations and scholarships: once the Academy gained public confidence, it was hoped that individuals and institutions, such as the Society of Arts itself and Cathedral foundations, would support talented students. Other funds would be raised through fees from private pupils (the controversial term 'amateur' is not used).<sup>82</sup> The conservatoires in Naples, Brussels and Paris were identified as particularly relevant models for London. All three provided large-scale music education with considerable financial support from the State, although the Society's recommendations were rather less ambitious; while the continental institutions catered for 2-300, 500 and 600 students respectively, the London committee made recommendations for 200 publicly-funded students and another 100 fee-paying pupils.<sup>83</sup>

The Committee's appeals for government funds were not successful, but the importance of music education had been recognised, and it was agreed that music should remain one of the objects of the Society. In the early 1870s the Society's Musical Education Committee was revived and set to work establishing funds for scholarships through a series of concerts; at the same time the Committee began to shift its focus onto establishing a new institution.<sup>84</sup> In May 1873 it was finally decided to proceed independently from the Royal Academy of Music, and plans for the National Training School for Music (NTSM) were formed.<sup>85</sup> The NTSM took its place on the Kensington Estate among other cultural and scientific ventures. Its early history

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<sup>80</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 712 (13 March 1866), 565.

<sup>81</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 710 (29 June 1866), 543-4.

<sup>82</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 712 (13 March 1866), 565. A later report suggested the Society fund four scholarships. See *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 729 (9 November 1866), 769.

<sup>83</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIV no. 716 (10 August 1866), 613.

<sup>84</sup> *JSA* Vol. XIX no. 941 (2 December 1870), 29.

<sup>85</sup> John Skidmore, 'The Society and the National Training School for Music' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* Vol. CXL no. 5426 (February 1992), 205.

revisited many of the issues debated during the Society's work in 1865 and 1866; David Wright has traced the difficulties in establishing the nature of the Training School, including arguments over whether its principal should take a musical or administrative role.<sup>86</sup>

The Academy's fortunes were also mixed. The grant of £500 instituted in 1864 was removed in 1867 under Disraeli and an attempt made to close the Academy, no doubt after the Society's report failed to find much to recommend continued government support.<sup>87</sup> However, the return of the Liberal party in 1868 under Gladstone saw the grant reinstated, and student numbers began to rise.<sup>88</sup> Much of the debate may have followed political lines; certainly, two of the members of the Society's committee were politicians. Lord Henry Gordon Lennox (1821-1886) was a Conservative politician and friend of Disraeli, while Sir George Clerk was retired as a Scottish MP and Liberal. Other fault lines were drawn along loyalty to the Academy itself. Macfarren and Bennett both counted among former students and teachers. Debates on pedagogic approaches and theories also reflected musical tastes and divisions: Chorley's support of 'scientific' approaches to music education contrasted with Macfarren's appreciation of a range of approaches and progress in music. Musical 'genius' was approached with caution by those who preferred more traditional styles.

Why was it so difficult to find consensus or collaboration among the country's musicians in the mid-1860s? To some extent, Capes's views on the factions afflicting the music profession seem to reflect serious problems. Numerous music schools had been set up, and vied with the Royal Academy for status, perhaps jealous of its public and private funding. As the music

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<sup>86</sup> Wright, 'The South Kensington Music Schools and the Development of the British Conservatoire in the Late Nineteenth Century' in *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* Vol. CXXX no. 2 (2005), 241-4. See also Giles Brightwell, *The National Training School for Music 1873-1882: Catalyst or Cul-de-Sac? A Critical Analysis of the Circumstances Leading to the Rise and Fall of Sir Henry Cole's Music School at South Kensington* (MA Thesis, University of Durham, 1998). On the foundation of the Royal College of Music, see Ritterman, 'The Royal College of Music, 1883-1899', 351-353 and Rosemary Golding, '(Re-)configuring the idea of the Conservatoire in late-nineteenth-century London' in L. Sirch, M. Sita and M. Vaccarini (ed.), *L'Insegnamento dei Conservatori, la Composizione e la Vita Musicale nell'Europa dell'Ottocento* (Lucca: LIM, 2012), 141- 157.

<sup>87</sup> See Nicholas Temperley, et al. "London (i)." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) accessed August 12, 2014, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/subscriber/article/grove/music/16904pg8>.

<sup>88</sup> Corder reports that by 1873, the Academy had 250 students, with numbers increasing. See Corder, *History*, 76.

profession grew, the need for standardisation and regulation became more apparent, yet the more senior professional musicians active in the 1860s had been trained under the old systems of patronage and apprenticeship, finding their professional feet via informal networks rather than structured systems. The large numbers of professors holding posts at the Academy suggests its importance for professional musicians in securing status rather than teaching income (each professor taught only a few students, if any), but also perhaps hints at favoritism and may well have fuelled resentment.

The lack of consensus over the form, purpose and content of professional music education is also symptomatic of wider instability. Music education in the schools and universities underwent radical reform in the second half of the nineteenth century. Professional training in many areas was developed as formal organisations sought to gain status for discrete sectors. The issues tackled by the Society of Arts' committee were part of a more comprehensive change affecting musical tuition across Europe; as Michael Fend and Michel Noiray suggest, the older generalist model of musical training was replaced by a focus on narrower specialisation of technical skills, often to the detriment of a rounded musical experience. The new approach was not welcomed by all: 'The more the traditional concept receded, the more frequently did self-proclaimed "true" musicians lament the students' consequent ignorance of music's basic elements as a kind of moral degradation.'<sup>89</sup>

Although one sector of the profession, organists, were at the same time seeking to organise themselves in search of professional recognition and status as well as improving standards, the music profession as a larger body seemed unable to agree on systems and structures for overseeing music education at the professional level. Despite the undeniable gains to be had from regulation, there remained a suspicion of organised training and professionalism. This perhaps stemmed from the interference of amateurs in previous schemes such as the Academy. Necessary financially, amateurs from the upper classes brought their own prejudices

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<sup>89</sup> Michael Fend and Michel Noiray, 'Introduction' in Fend and Noiray (ed.), *Musical Education in Europe (1770-1914)*, 8.

and favorites when appointing to teaching positions. The College of Organists focused on professional recognition and examination, rather than offering teaching positions or imposing a tuition method, and did not engage with the financial elements of training or supporting student musicians. The debates surrounding the Royal Academy of Music hinged on the deeper question of the national value of professional musical training, but also exposed connected divisions in the administration and organisation of music teaching, as well as personal and political factors in running a large, national institution.

Many of the concerns of the Society of Arts and the professional musicians and music-lovers who responded to the Musical Education Committee were specific to their time, tied up with concerns of status and musical standards. Yet issues of finance and accountability, the relationship between education and professional practice, the breadth of the curriculum and pedagogical issues of conformity and style remain important to modern-day music educators. While Music can take its cue from other disciplines, ultimately its own identities, purposes and pathways are required. As Ehrlich noted, the Committee failed to pinpoint exactly what was needed from a professional musical education; perhaps the numerous Continental models and the differing opinions of British musicians made consensus impossible. In addition, there was no agreement over the intended recipients of the musical education on offer at the Royal Academy. While a much clearer remit usually characterises music programmes in the modern world, educators can do well to take heed of the need for clarity of purpose and careful consideration of curriculum in order to maintain status and support in a competitive environment.

## **Appendix 1: Questions used by the Committee to gain information on foreign**

### **Conservatoires**

Source: *JSA* No. 639 Vol. XIII (17 February 1865), 17.

1. What are the essential differences between the plan of the Royal Academy of Music in London, and the Conservatoires of the Continent, with regard to-

- a. Their constitution and management;
- b. Their revenues as derived from the State, annual subscriptions, fees from pupils, concerts, or other sources.
2. State the nature of any other Institution in the metropolis or the provinces, for providing or improving Musical Education.
3. The expediency or otherwise of taking the present Royal Academy of Music as the basis of any enlarged Institution in this country.
4. What improvements might be effected in the Royal Academy of Music?
5. Is any union between the Royal Academy and similar Schools, Cathedral Choirs, or Local Institutions desirable or otherwise?
6. Could the Local Examinations of the Royal Academy of Music be extended, and how?
7. Does the Royal Academy in any way promote the improvement of Military Music?
8. Could any useful connection be established by the Academy with the Regimental Volunteers or other trained Musical Bands?
9. What proper security may be taken for obtaining due results from any Funds granted by Parliament to the Royal Academy?
10. What is your opinion respecting-
  - a. The advantages derivable from Public Concerts.
  - b. The test of Musical Proficiency by Examinations.
  - c. The Formation of a National Musical Library, and of a Collection of Musical Instruments, by gifts, loans, &c.
  - d. The Competitive trials of Performers and of Musical Instruments.
  - e. The use of a standing Musical Jury, as in the French Institute.