

ROYAL CENTRAL

SCHOOL OF SPEECH & DRAMA

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

**PROF. PAUL BARKER,
PHD, MMUS, GGSM**

Job title

Course Leader, MA Music Theatre

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PROFILE

I trained at Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where I won several prizes, and began my professional career as an MD and composer in contemporary dance. I wrote my first opera based on a novel by Doris Lessing, under whose guidance I wrote the libretto. I helped create and run a new music theatre company which won funding from the Arts Council and others. For several years we toured many new works around the UK and internationally. My writing for the concert hall includes a violin concerto for Tasmin Little, a clarinet quintet for Joan Lluna and the Brodsky Quartet, and a work for Tambuco percussion which has been performed all over the world. There are three CD's of my music. Among many music theatre works is *El Gallo: an opera for six actors and two string quartets without text* (2009), performed over a hundred times in three continents as well as being recorded, filmed and televised. Before Central, I lived in Mexico for some years, where I was artistic director of another new opera company OpTeMús and worked as a composer, pianist, conductor, writer and stage director. Collaboration and devised work is crucial for me, and I enjoy how I have worked extensively with actors, singers, dancers, actor-musicians, clowns, synthetic speech technology, digital media, installations with fine arts.

TEACHING

I have taught in several universities and conservatoires in many countries, from degree to PhD level. My teaching is based on my practice as both performer and creator and all my teaching reflects the equal importance and synergy between these activities. I consider theatre and music as a continuum, both are essentially social art-forms; In my experience, collaborative practice lies behind all successful performances, and this is reflected in the structure of Central's MA Music Theatre, which I lead. The role of an artist is central to a healthy society.

COURSES

Music Theatre, MA

Research Degrees (MPhil/PhD)

TEACHING AREAS

Music

Composition

Performance
Vocal coaching
Choral training
Ensemble work
Devised work
Actor training
Actor-musicianship

RESEARCH AREAS

Voice
Text and music
Lyric theory and practice
Composition as research
Concepts and practice of non-verbal meaning

PHD SUPERVISION

I have supervised PhDs at the Royal College of Music, Royal Academy of Music and Trinity College of Music, as well as several UK universities. Subjects include extra-musical performance and composition; collaboration in composition and performance; actor-musicianship; spirituality in music; opera, music theatre, opera, and musicals.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

CDs of my music include:

El Gallo: Opera for 6 singers and two string quartets without text. Quindecim 2012

Entre Palabras: OpTeMús performs opera *The Pillow Song* and excerpts from *Songs Between Words*. Quindecim 2005

Turquoise Swans: Sarah Leonard, soprano; Paul Barker, piano. *Three Songs for Sylvia Plath*; *The Thief of Songs III*; *Some Dirty Tricks*. Sargasso 2000

Books:

Composing for Voice: exploring voice, language and music, co-authored with Maria Huesca; 2nd Edition, Routledge Voice Studies, NY 2018

Chapters:

Deterritorialising the Research Space: artistic research, embodied knowledge, and the academy Sage Open Journal. 2017; Joint article with Marc Duby, Univ. of South Africa.

With One Voice: Disambiguating Sung and Spoken Voices Through a Composer's Experience Foreword to *Voice(s): Critical Approaches to Process, Performance and Experience*, Routledge, 2015

The Business of Composing Opera, in *The Business of Opera*, ed. Derek B. Scott, Ashgate, 2014

Can a computer-generated voice be sincere? A case study combining music and synthetic speech Logopedics Phoniatrics Vocology. October 2013, Vol. 38, No. 3 : Pages 126-134: Joint article with Dr. Christopher Newell.

Encyclopedia of Peace Oxford University Press, 2010 Two articles: theatre and peace; performing arts and peace

Devising Music in *Devising - A Practical Guide*, Crowood Press 2002: Ed Bicat & Baldwin

Also in Spanish: Naque Editoria, ISBN 84-89987-50-5, 2003, Contributory chapter

PRACTICE

Some key compositions:

El Gallo opera for 6 actors and 2 string quartets without words; Claudio Valdés Kuri, director of *Teatro de Ciertos Habitantes*, premiered Festival de Mexico en el Centro Historico, March 2009. Performed in Chicago, Seattle, Chile, Brazil, Mexico, Spain, Portugal, Colombia etc. and the UK. Recorded for CD on Quindecim. [View on YouTube](#)

In Memoriam: for those who fall in time of war Chamber Music Theatre. Clarinet quintet commissioned by Joan Lluna and the Brodsky String Quartet, with funds from the Arts Council of England. Premiered Oxford University, 2005. [View on YouTube](#)

Stone Song; Stone Dance. For 4 players with stones; commissioned and premiered by Tambuco Percussion Ensemble, Mexico, 2001. [View on YouTube](#)

Of Zoe and The Woman I Sing. Act 1; Melodrama for pianist, actor and avatar; Zoe Lister's avatar was created by Toshiba Research, Cambridge through the Xpressive Talk © programme. Premiered Tête à Tête: The Opera Festival Kings Cross, 9th August, 2015, Kings Place, London. [View on YouTube](#)

La Malinche. Libretto by the composer drawn from historical documents of the conquest of Mexico, composer conducting. Directed

by Caroline Sharman with Modern Music Theatre Troupe, toured under the auspices of the British Council. Commissioned by the Festival del Centro Historico, Mexico, 1992. Recorded on Mexican National TV. [View on YouTube](#)

AWARDS

McElwee Family Fellowship, 2005;

Royal Philharmonic Society Prize for Composition, 1978

Countess of Munster Trust Scholarship, 1983;

Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust Scholarship 1983;

AHRB Research award to create web-based opera The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit, 1998;

Commissions from national, local and International Arts Council institutions and private institutions;

POSITIONS

I am or have been, at various times:

Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts: HKCAAVQ Panel member

A lottery assessor for ACE;

A London Arts Board panel adviser;

A founder member and chair of the Opera and Music Theatre Forum;

Research Consultant for Toshiba Research (Cambridge);

Advisory Board Member, Journal of Interdisciplinary Voice Studies (Intellect)

Panel Member: International Jury for Colombia Music Composition Award;

REGISTER OF INTEREST

Nothing to declare.