

CHELTENHAM

**Jazz**  
Festival



# Keychanges at Cheltenham Jazz Festival

Challenges for women  
musicians in jazz and  
ways forward for equal  
gender representation at  
jazz festivals

## **Findings and recommendations**

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**Design and data visualisations by Adam Kelly-Williams**  
**Images courtesy of Cheltenham Jazz Festival**



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# SUMMARY

This report documents the activities, findings and recommendations of a research project undertaken by Dr Sarah Raine in partnership with Cheltenham Jazz Festival on their *Keychange* pledge to programme a 50/50 gender balanced schedule by 2022.\* It offers a critique of the *Keychange* quota element as it relates to jazz festivals, provides insight into the experiences of women musicians active on the UK jazz scene, and (based upon the model provided by Cheltenham) offers a range of recommendations for other music festivals who are interested in becoming a *Keychange* pledgee.

It draws upon interviews with festival staff – most notably with Emily Jones (Head of Programming 2018–2019 and Festival Manager 2013–2018) – and ten women musicians who performed at the 2019 festival. It provides an overview of the gender data from throughout the Festival's twenty-three-year history, demonstrating the continued underrepresentation of women jazz musicians and a comparative lack of instrumentalists. Data from three other jazz festivals involved in this research project (Glasgow, Hull and Manchester) also highlight similar issues with both the *Keychange* interpretation of 50/50 (one woman on stage) and the jazz scene more generally.

This report is a culmination of collaborative work and testimony to partnerships between academia and industry. It was funded and supported by Midlands4Cities (M3C, Arts and Humanities Research Council) as part of their Creative Economy Engagement Fellowship scheme.

\* The initial findings of this research project were also published as a book chapter – S. Raine (2019) 'Keychanges at Cheltenham Jazz Festival: Issues of Gender in the UK Jazz Scene' in *Towards Gender Equality in the Music Industry*, edited by Catherine Strong and Sarah Raine, Bloomsbury Academic (2019).



# KEY FINDINGS

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The key findings of this research project relate to issues with the current *Keychange* pledge and the gender imbalance of the UK jazz scene, and to the experiences of women musicians.

## Gender Data and Keychange

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- Although the four festivals had each succeeded based upon the *Keychange* interpretation (of one woman on stage) to reach a 50/50 gender balanced programme, they continued to **experience a gender imbalance**.
- Women made up **at the best a third** of the total musicians scheduled.
- **Women instrumentalists** were particularly underrepresented.
- **All male bands** continue to be a common sight at jazz festivals in the UK.
- The 'one woman on stage' interpretation of 50/50 **hides continued gender inequality and the gendering of certain roles within jazz**.

## Musician Experience

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- Nine women had experienced **gender discrimination** in their experience as musicians.
- Most found the jazz scene **particularly male-dominated**.
- Three had experienced **direct sexual harassment** in the course of their career
- Most identified **barriers in education** relating to the continued gender imbalance of staff and student body, the competitive nature of informal setting (such as jam sessions), and the restrictions of increasingly "standardised" genre boundaries within jazz courses.
- The **business side of their higher education courses was often missing** which meant that women had to learn all of these skills independently through trial and error.
- Female artists expressed concerns that the *Keychange* pledge **won't mean long term change**.
- The careers of some of the women musicians had been significantly supported by **informal mentoring, industry talent development schemes and diversity-aware collectives**.

# GENDER AND THE UK JAZZ SCENE

**'Prior to 2017 there was a significant lack of women in our festival line-up, both as band leaders and also within the bands'**

– Emily Jones, Head of Programming 2018–2019 and Festival Manager 2013–2018, Cheltenham Jazz Festival

With numerous jazz festivals across the country, bolstered by a healthy offering of year-round regular gigs, jazz continues to play a role in the musical identity of many UK cities and towns. However, as with other music genres, it is clear to those involved that a gender imbalance exists amongst musicians, audiences, industry professionals, Further Education/Higher Education students and the staff that support them. The jazz festival programme managers and directors that were involved in this project were keenly aware of this gender imbalance within the scene, and their own everyday experiences of and reflections upon this led them to becoming part of the Keychange initiative. Beginning this research project, what was most problematic was finding data-based evidence to support the observation that women are underrepresented.

Gender data is gathered and released by industry bodies such as the Musicians Union and Publishing Rights Society for Music (PRS) based upon their membership. However, this data is not clearly broken down into genre-specific groups. From the data that is available, it is clear that the music industry continues to be male dominated; from music company CEOs to gigging musicians. What is less clear is how these gender politics play out in specific music genres, and (relating to this) how the particular histories and cultural contexts of these genres create barriers for women. In part, this short research project aimed to provide some genre-specific data and a detailed case study on the UK jazz scene. In the pages that follow, this gender imbalance is set out in the data provided by Cheltenham Jazz Festival, Glasgow Jazz Festival, Hull Jazz Festival and Manchester Jazz Festival.

In exploring some of the key issues expressed by women jazz musicians during interviews, I also provide snapshot data relating to conservatoire teaching teams and media representation of jazz musicians. This represents the beginning of providing genre-/music scene-specific gender data. However, as the Keychange initiative requests gender data from its pledgers, it is possible that such data will become more easily available. Furthermore, through concerted reflection by festival professionals, the specific issues and barriers facing women in particular genres or scenes should become clearer. As this research project demonstrates, it is essential that such data and insights are shared in order for barriers to be addressed.

However, as this report will explore in detail, the data provided by following the Keychange interpretation of 50/50 – at least one woman on stage per performance – hides continued gender imbalances in **total number of musicians** and the replication of gendered roles within jazz. Working with Keychange and pledged festivals, the recommendations made here encourage other festivals to critically analyse the data gathered and reflect upon this in relation to the specific nature of the genres or scenes that they engage with.





# CHEL TENHAM JAZZ FESTIVAL

Cheltenham (established in 1996) is the second largest jazz festival in the UK, with over seventy main venue events and a lively Fringe offering. The annual Cheltenham-based festivals (of Jazz, Literature Music and Science) attracted over 215,000 attendees in 2018 and engage with 25,000 people through a year-round education and outreach program. Cheltenham Jazz Festival is also presented in association with BBC Radio 2 and is broadcast on Radio 2, 6 Music and Radio 3, with a potential reach of over 25 million listeners. The festival therefore represents a significant platform for jazz musicians, with festival programming teams acting as critical gatekeepers—alongside agents, promoters and the specialist media—to progression within the UK jazz industries.

As a registered charity that is-funded by ticket income, commercial sponsorship and funding, the programming and development aims of the festival are also subject to both financial and community-focused responsibilities. The annual programme of the jazz festival must therefore achieve box office targets and be in line with their charitable mission statement. It is within this context that the CJF team must negotiate their *Keychange* pledge and, in stark terms, ensure that the flow of talent continues to feed future Cheltenham festivals. Alongside these restraints of music festival programming, Jones also negotiates the suggestions and aims of Festival Curators – UK radio presenter and DJ Gilles Peterson, UK musician Jamie Cullum and US musician Gregory Porter – and long-standing Programme Advisor, Tony Dudley-Evans. It is also worth noting that CJF programmes an ‘accessible’ line-up from across the wide church that is jazz music, from free jazz to jazz-inspired chart-toppers.

<sup>1</sup> Extract from S. Raine (2019) ‘Keychanges at Cheltenham Jazz Festival: Issues of Gender in the UK Jazz Scene’ in *Towards Gender Equality in the Music Industry*, eds. Catherine Strong & Sarah Raine. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, pg 188–189.



# THE PROJECT

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This report summarises a ten-month (running from January to October 2019) study of female musicians scheduled to play at the 2019 Cheltenham Jazz Festival. The project aimed to examine the *Keychange* pledge – to implement a 50/50 gender balance by 2022 – launched by PRS Foundation at the EU Parliament in 2017. The project itself was organized into two phases. Phase 1 involved working with Emily Jones, Head of Programming, to identify the barriers to participation for women in jazz. In phase 2, I interviewed ten women jazz musicians on the challenges they experience in establishing themselves and moving through the scene as a professional. The project also hoped to provide a space for discussion and the sharing of practice. From the beginning, representatives from PRS Foundation, Help Musicians UK, and the four other UK jazz festivals signed up to *Keychange* were invited to a series of roundtables and workshops. These roundtables were also open to a range of musicians, music industry professionals, academics, and students from the UK jazz scene and beyond. Mindful of my own place within a particular city and my affiliation to Birmingham City University, it was also essential to invite music festival professionals and musicians active in and around Birmingham.

As the project progressed, it was increasingly clear that significant gaps in knowledge had become barriers for the women musicians who were interviewed. These related to the multifaceted role of the performing musician: from writing their own press releases to booking tour gigs and getting paid; releasing albums to establishing and maintaining an online presence. As will be noted in the findings section of this report, most of the women interviewed juggled these many roles but few had received training or skill development in these areas; many relied upon the support and mentorship of other musicians. This skill-gap is not a gendered experience, with men and women musicians equally struggling to keep up with the demands of the contemporary musician experience. However, for the women that I spoke to, this multifaceted role of the musician was stretched even further following incidents of gender discrimination and subsequent DIY strategies to avoid additional negative experiences. A women-led, women only musician-focused workshop was also organised in Birmingham as part of this project, the sessions tailored around the key skills and knowledge gaps identified within the research.

The *Keychange* initiative was developed by PRS Foundation (PRSF). As the philanthropic arm of PRS for Music (Publishing Rights Society) in the UK, PRSF engages in outreach, education and talent development. It exists within a member-led, industry-focused organization which is also a member of UK Music, a key organization in representing industry interests and concerns at a national and international industry and government policy level. *Keychange* is an international campaign which both invests PRSF funding in emerging female talent (initially supporting sixty emerging artists and innovators through a series of collaborations, showcases and creative labs) and encourages music festivals to pledge a 50/50 gender balance in their programming by 2022. As this project progressed, *Keychange* announced the extension of their pledge to music conferences and educational institutions, clearly demonstrating their awareness that the gender imbalance evident within the UK music industry relates to streams of new talent through both formal and informal educational routes in and the range of roles in the production and consumption of music. And in January 2020 *Keychange* announced their development programme, through which 74 artists and music



industry professionals from 12 different countries will be supported through development, networking and mentoring sessions.

The interpretation of 50/50 is down to the pledging festival, but a 'one woman on stage' approach was advocated by Vanessa Reed (CEO, PRS Foundation), pointing to the importance of female role models in the industry. As I note in a book chapter based upon the initial findings of this project, this is an accessible and achievable target, offering festivals a level of freedom and a starting point in addressing a pervasive and complex issue. However, as this report demonstrates, the 'success' of festivals in achieving 50/50 based upon this interpretation hides a range of continuing issues for women musicians. Such statistics should be carefully analysed by festival teams to ensure sustained and targeted support. Providing increased opportunities for women musicians in a male-dominated music scene and shining a spotlight on gender imbalance is an excellent start to what needs to be an ongoing focus, but as this report demonstrates, this push alone does not resolve pervasive issues of access, education, support and value within the jazz scene, and most likely the wider music industry.

Whilst this project and the contributing festivals involved in the production of this report critique the quota element of the *Keychange* initiative, it is important to note that each individual and institution are very much supportive of the *Keychange* mission. It is also very important to note that research projects such as provide evidence to explore questions and issues that are already central to the planned development for *Keychange* in relation to both their talent development activities and the quota element of the initiative. Through *Keychange*'s involvement with this project (and others like it), it is clear that they, too, are identifying the limitations to certain approaches and working with a range of institutions and individuals to develop their initiative, making sure that long-lasting and meaningful changes are made.

This report is part of these shared reflections upon the successes and limitations of the *Keychange* initiative and part of a collaborative effort to move towards increased gender equality in the music industry.



## PROJECT AIMS

- To outline the obstacles facing women musicians in the contemporary jazz scene in the UK.
- To provide a public report and recommendations for other jazz festivals in relation their *Keychange* pledge.
- To provide insight into the fundamental challenges for women musicians active on the UK jazz scene.
- To provide a space for discussion between UK jazz festivals, *Keychange* (PRS Foundation), Help Musicians UK, jazz musicians and scholars on the issue of gender representation and the benefits/limitations of the *Keychange* approach.
- To support Cheltenham in developing accurate gender data relating to festival programming.
- To provide genre-specific insight into the *Keychange* initiative and the continued gender imbalance for use in industry and academia.



# FINDINGS

## SUMMARY

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Cheltenham Jazz Festival signed the *Keychange* pledge in 2017, formalising their existing commitment to addressing the gender imbalance evident on their stages. *Keychange* became a focus for programming and for planning talent development initiatives. Equally, the pledge made this commitment tangible for the wider festival team and offered a means for the festival to articulate the problem clearly, both to staff and to musicians, the public and to the jazz industry more widely. One of the main incentives for signing the pledge was the gender imbalance of the schedule in 2017 – 81% of the full programme (excluding school bands) was made up of male musicians.

This project followed the programming team and the festival schedule for 2019, the second year of the festival after Cheltenham Jazz Festival signed the *Keychange* pledge. The 2019 festival hosted one female headliner (Katie Melua) and scheduled women-led ensembles in the main venues, such as Yazz Ahmed's orchestra playing *Polyhymnia* in the Jazz Arena (635 capacity) and several jazz vocalists such as Yola, Kizzy Crawford, and Madeline Peyroux in the Henry Westons Big Top (capacity 2,000). Emerging women musicians and gender balanced bands – Lydian Collective and Rue – were supported through "Showcase", sponsored by The Oldham Foundation to highlight the best new talent and scheduled in the Jazz Arena. Emily Jones, in her role as Head of Programming, also identified a number of slots at smaller venues for emerging women musicians and gender-balanced bands. In terms of gender data, 58% of the 2019 (paid) performances included at least one female musician, the

second year for '*Keychange* success' for Cheltenham. This data is analysed and critiqued in the section below.

It is important to note that this programme-focused intervention was part of a wider festival engagement with year-round artist development and support, from workshops to commissioning musicians. This support for women musicians also pre-dated Cheltenham's *Keychange* pledge. Addressing the gender imbalance evident within the festival's programme and the scene beyond has been an ongoing focus for Cheltenham and Emily Jones. As will be noted later in this document, communicating this to musicians, promoters, agents and to sponsors is part of Cheltenham Jazz Festival's plans going forward. Finally, by agreeing to work in partnership with a researcher and engaging so actively with this project, Cheltenham have demonstrated their desire to support women musicians active on the UK jazz scene. By working with me to develop this report, Cheltenham are keen to ensure that their support is targeted, effective, and long-lasting.

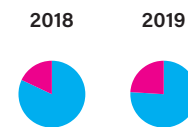
Beyond the paid schedule, the free Around Town programme – produced by Becky Woodcock – also hit their *Keychange* target in both 2018 and 2019. As the following data visualisation shows, 62% of 2019 (Around Town) performances included at least one woman, matched by 63% for the following year. However, the continued gender imbalance of the line-up is demonstrated by the percentages of women musicians overall, with women making up only 24% of the total musicians in 2019 and 18% in 2018. Equally, men dominated the bands at 75% in 2019 and 84% in 2018. This smaller example offers us a way in to exploring the festival's paid programme gender data.

## Around Town

### 50/50 Gender balance of performances\*



### Gender of total musicians



\* Based on 'one woman on stage' interpretation of 50/50

## Youth Performances

### Gender of musicians for Jazz It Up Schools



### Gender of musicians for Gloucestershire Jazz Live Youth Orchestra



● Male/all male    ● At least one female    ● Female/all female



# FESTIVAL GENDER DATA

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## Summary

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Much of the strength of the *Keychange* initiative is the articulation of a pervasive and complex issue within the music industry. In relation to this, it is interesting to note that Emily Jones had experienced a noticeable increase in women musicians being offered by agents, tapping into the demand stimulated by the *Keychange* pledge. As will be explored later in this report, this increased interest in representing female musicians is in stark contrast to the tokenistic strategies experienced by some women in the past. The focus on increased gender equality and representation by industry professionals as part of a *Keychange* pledge, or in response to increased demand, will ultimately support the development of future women musicians.

As the data visualisations that follow demonstrate, Cheltenham Jazz Festival has made increasing progress towards a 50/50 balanced schedule **based upon the 'one woman on stage' interpretation**, especially since signing the pledge in 2017.

However, from this data it is very clear that women are still **significantly under-represented** in terms of actual 50/50 performances and (by extension) the total musicians scheduled to perform at this annual jazz festival. Taken alone, the *Keychange* gender data would hide this continued imbalance.

The all-male band also continues to play a visible role on the jazz festival stage, in no way rivalled by all-female bands which are a rarity. Mixed-gender bands are increasingly common, however very few are *actually* gender balanced and the proliferation of an all-male band with a guest or permanent female vocalist deserves further investigation.

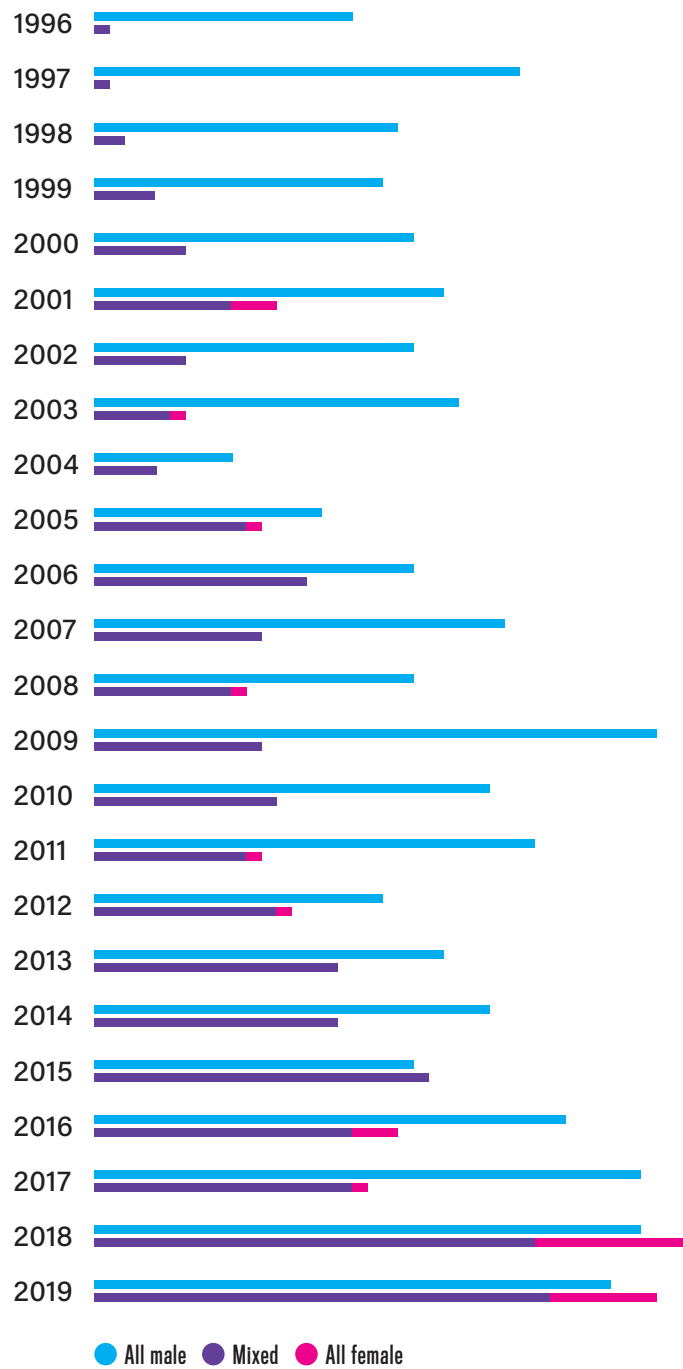
If we look at the primary role of the women scheduled to perform during each year of the festival's life, a further underrepresentation of women instrumentalists (and a higher number of female vocalists) is evident. This had been identified by Emily Jones and formed a central part of her plans for talent development and educational outreach activities. The reasons for this are extremely complex and a full discussion is beyond the time and funding limitations of this project. However, I do consider this in relation to conservatoire staff roles, media representation of jazz musicians and notions of value within the jazz scene, both historical and current. This is also discussed briefly in my chapter in *Towards Gender Equality in the Music Industry*, edited by Catherine Strong and Sarah Raine (Bloomsbury Academic: 2019).

This data highlights the dangers of an uncritical engagement with the *Keychange* interpretation of 50/50, namely the continued underrepresentation of women musicians at jazz festivals, in particular instrumentalists. As an analysis of the interview data demonstrates, the reasons for this are complex and require a long-term, reflexive and sustained range of musician-focused initiatives throughout career stages.

In other words, once '*Keychange*' success is achieved by a music festival, the real work of **analysing** the data and musician experience begins in order to provide long-term strategies for addressing the gender imbalance within respective music scenes more widely.

## Gender balance overview at Cheltenham Jazz Festival 1996–2019

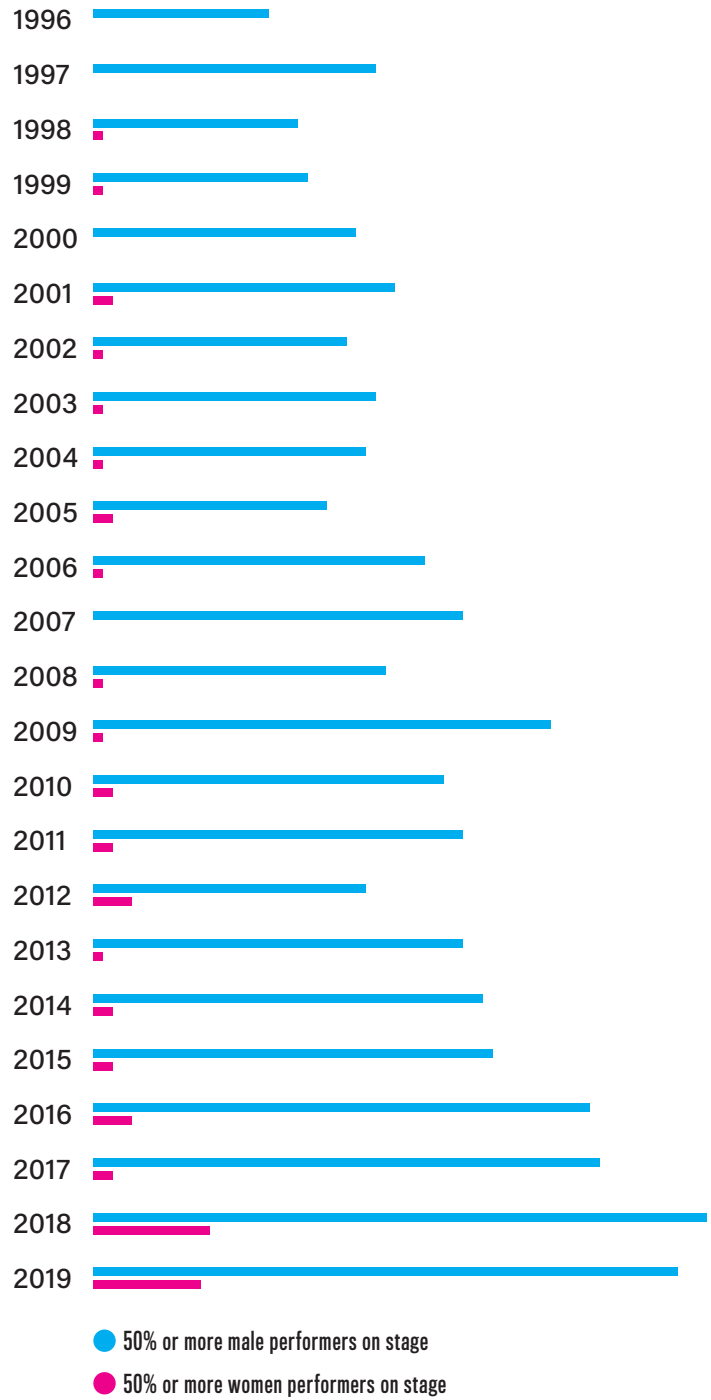
By Keychange interpretation of 'one woman on stage'



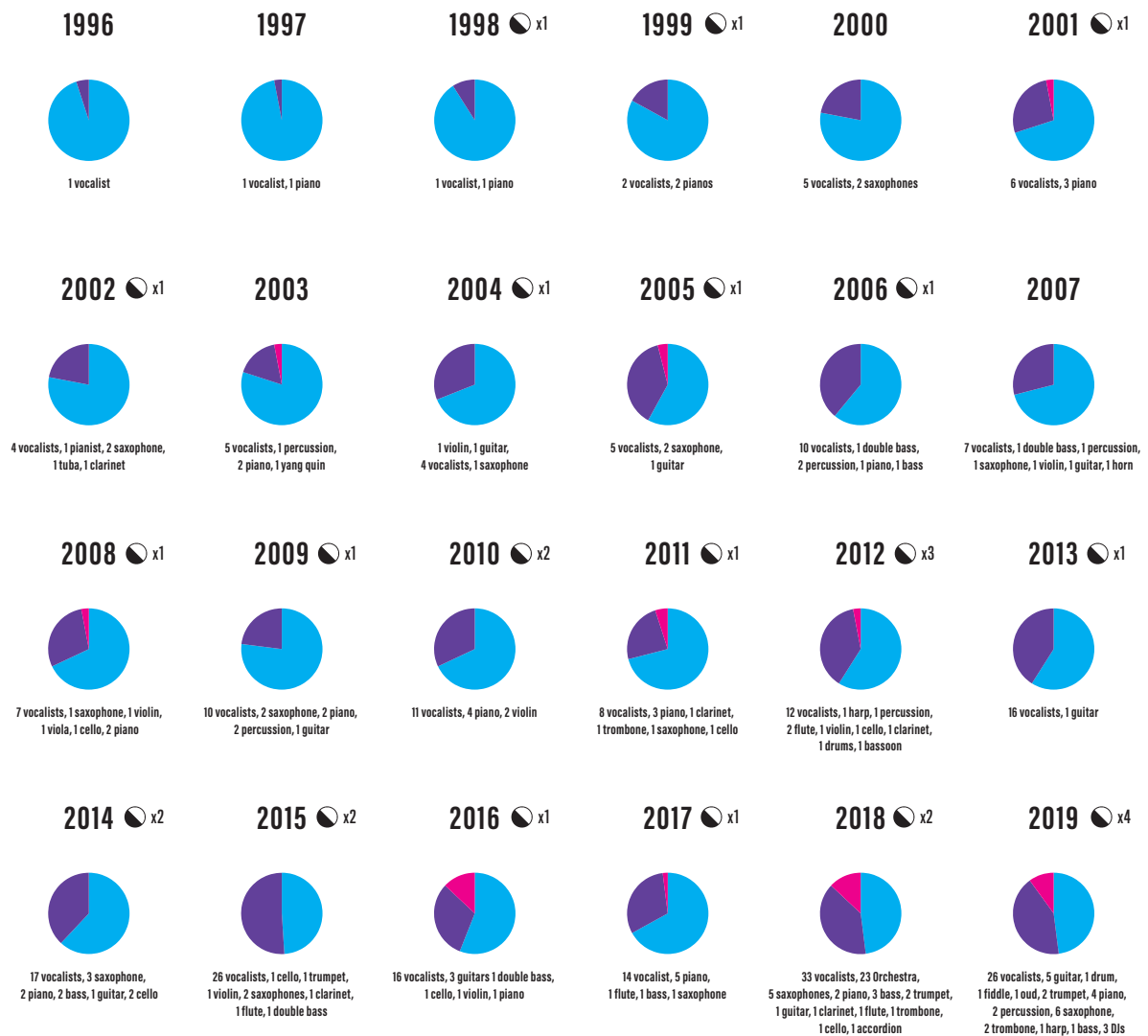


Gender balance overview at Cheltenham Jazz Festival 1996–2019

By actual 50/50



## Breakdown of gender and musical roles of women performing at Cheltenham Jazz Festival 1996–2019\*



\*based upon clear gender data. Performances with unreliable data have been removed.

Actual 50/50 All male Mixed Female

# BEING A WOMAN MUSICIAN

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## IN THE UK JAZZ SCENE:

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### INTERVIEW DATA

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#### Summary

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During this project, I interviewed ten women musicians scheduled to play at Cheltenham Jazz Festival in 2019. These individuals were selected by myself and Emily Jones in order to capture the experiences of women across difference ages, ethnicity, career stage and instrument played (to include voice). This sample included three BAME musicians, and three women in their forties, three in their thirties and four in their twenties. Nine were from the UK – eight based in London, one in Birmingham – and one was from mainland Europe. A range of instruments were played, three were primarily vocalists, several women composed, and five were band leaders. Two performed on one of the largest stages, five at smaller venues, two as part of the Fringe and one as part of a BBC live broadcast. It is important to note that the experiences of women musicians detailed within this report are those of individuals who have achieved a notable level of success. They were all chosen to perform at one of the largest jazz festivals in the UK. Any barriers to accessing the UK jazz scene are therefore unrelated to the quality of their musical ability but rather their experiences as women and as musicians.

Each individual was interviewed at a location of their choosing and spoke to me for at least an hour. Their responses have been anonymised to protect their identity. As a brief summary from these ten interviews:

- Nine women had experienced gender discrimination in their experience as musicians.
- Most found the jazz scene particularly male-dominated.
- Three had experienced direct sexual harassment.
- Many identified barriers in formal education – in particular the male dominated nature of conservatoire staff and students, and the formalisation of jazz through a focus on jazz standards.
- All the women relied upon peer support, informal mentoring or individual trial-and-error to develop the skills necessary to fulfil the full range of administrative and business roles required of a contemporary musician, skills which were rarely included in formal music education courses.
- Several women musicians expressed concerns that the *Keychange* pledge won't mean long term change for them and future generations.
- The most positive experiences came through collaboration and engagement with musician-focused collectives.

The male-dominated nature of the scene was experienced in a range of ways by the women interviewed. For some, this was an experience of rejection and tokenism. Valerie (instrumentalist, 40s) recounted conversations with agents who had rejected her as they “already had a woman on their books” who played the same instrument. She had also been



asked (several times) to change in the toilets at venues that lacked multiple dressing rooms, which she had found uncomfortable and unprofessional. Jenny (vocalist, 40s) had been dropped from her agency when she was pregnant with her first child due to an assumption that she would not return to work after the birth. One woman had received unwanted sexual attention from a venue owner, and another had been told to “sex up” her album cover. Other women had experienced issues with male technicians at gigs and festivals, who had asked whether the women musicians knew how to set up their own equipment. These negative experiences were fewer in number than the positives, but had in some way shaped the engagement of these women, belittling their skills and them as professionals. Equally, most of the women commented on the male-dominated nature of important scene gatekeepers, roles such as promoters, agents and journalists, but equally noted the increasing number of women festival programmers within jazz.

Beyond these particular examples of gender discrimination, three main barriers to engagement within the UK jazz scene emerged across the ten interviews: experiences within formal education; lack of knowledge and skills (and access to developing these); and relationships with festivals.

## **Barriers in Education**

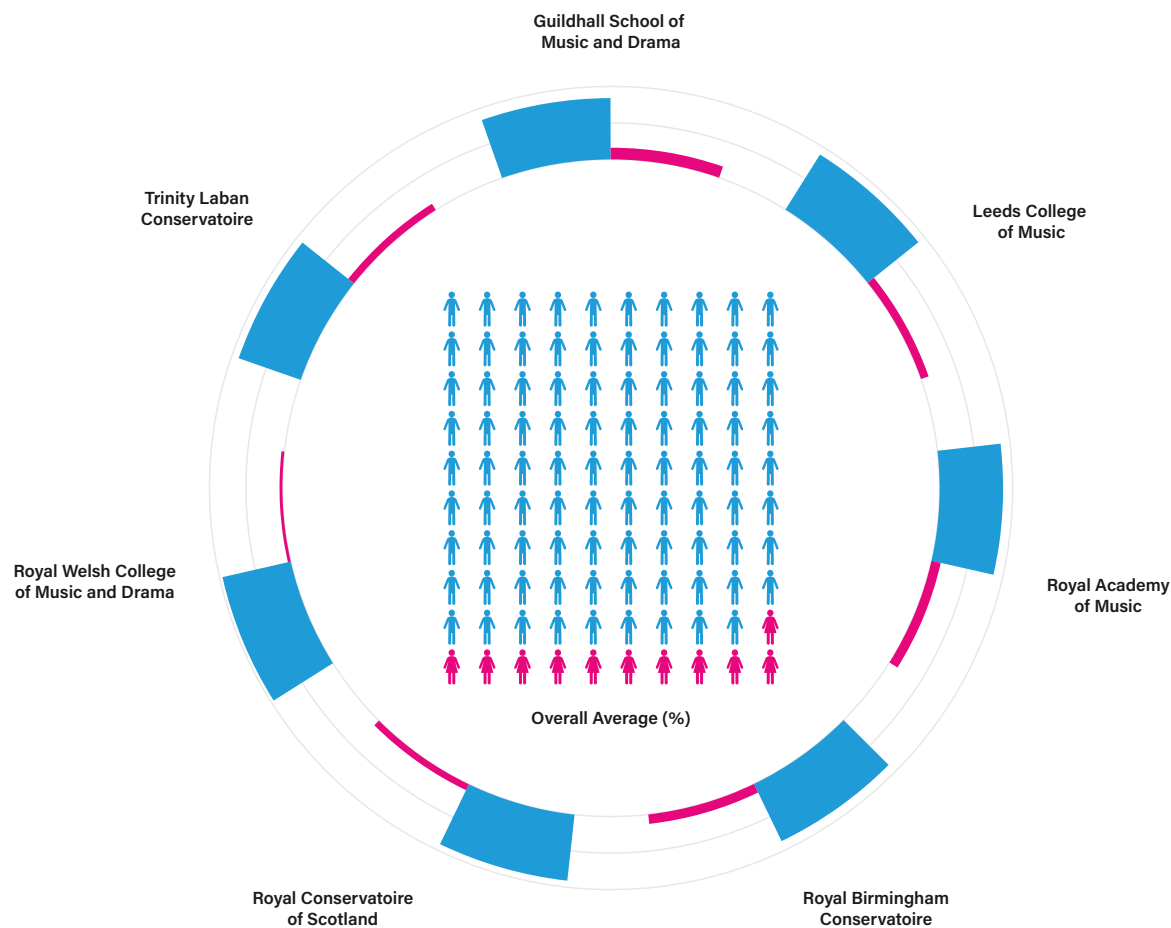
**“I remember when I was at uni, just feeling a bit like I always had to know what everyone else knew and it’s sort of hard to say, ‘Actually I don’t get this, can you help me out?’ You had to be constantly, ‘Oh yeah, I know this!’ So, I think that was a macho thing as well”**

— Laura (instrumentalist, 20s)

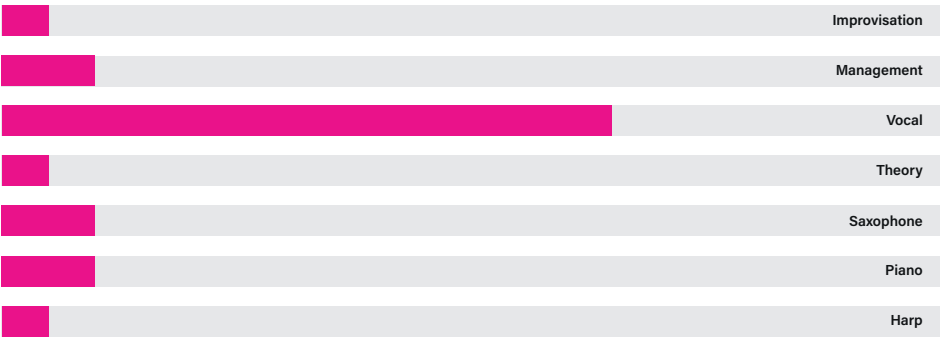
Three of the women interviewed had attended and another three regularly taught at a UK Conservatoire. Each commented on the male dominated cohort groups and permanent staff on jazz courses. Laura (quoted above) found this context difficult to negotiate, especially when she required extra help, exacerbated by a “macho” and competitive learning environment. This competitive environment was also identified by some of the women as existing in jamming sessions – within and beyond the Conservatoire setting – which some actively avoided. This is problematic as jamming sessions offer emerging musicians’ informal opportunities for skill development and networking. As Laura noted, conservatoire cohorts also play a central role in the formation of bands following graduation, with musicians developing a musical rapport and shared ethos. Reflecting upon conversations with members of all-male bands in Birmingham, it is clear that an all-male cohort is more likely to lead to an all-male network for future projects and ultimately increasing the probability of the continuation of all-male bands on the festival stage.

Equally, Sara (instrumentalist/composer, 40s) felt demoralised by what she saw as the “standardisation” of jazz at conservatoires – that students were expected to “learn this many standards and demonstrate competency in a certain amount of sort of bebop language” – and the associated assumption that “correct” and “incorrect” versions of jazz exist. The lack of individual exploration and experimentation contributed to Sara’s increased distance from the jazz scene. Beatrice (vocalist/composer, 20s) also noted the low numbers of women staff at her conservatoire, adding to an already male-heavy experience and the invisibility of women role models for musicians-in-training. The gender breakdown of permanent members of staff

# Gender breakdown of full-time staff on jazz courses at UK conservatoires



## Specialism of female staff across these seven institutions



at UK Conservatoires with a jazz course is provided in the data visualisation below, clearly demonstrating the lack of women and the clear gendering of certain musical roles, most consistently the vocalist as a "female" jazz role.

Three of the women interviewed taught at conservatoires. Sara, who returned to the conservatoire environment as a tutor following her negative student experience, expressed her initial reservations about teaching a predominantly male cohort within an educational context that she disagreed with:

**"I found it difficult going back to a conservatoire that was populated mostly by male students, I mean, they were young, you know, they were kids who had no idea what life was like in the outside world and then also a bunch of male teachers, who were doing box ticking, whether you could do that or that and could you do that and then if you could do that, then you could go on to the next year and then if you could do that, then you could get your final qualification."**

Sara was offered an opportunity to contribute to the jazz course by a contact at the conservatoire. However, when this contact left the institution, Sara lost her access to teaching and her temporary contract was not renewed the following year. Not only was Sara's income much reduced and destabilised by this change, but the students lost one of their few female role models. This example also highlights that the hiring of Visiting Tutors by Conservatoires as a means to address their gender imbalance is an unstable solution and places yet less value on the contribution of women musicians as "temporary" rather than "permanent".

An interesting contrast to these experiences can be found in the most positive interview of the project. El (instrumentalist, 20s) discussed her experience of developing her musical skills within a diversity-aware collective, describing it as a "very family orientated kind of organisation...so it's about coming together, jamming a lot, learning tunes". Within this supportive, gender-balanced and reflective learning environment focused on being "exposed to" and "absorbing" jazz, El felt extremely comfortable engaging in jamming sessions, finding her own way to engage:

**"The jamming felt quite the place to be. I mean, there are multiple ways to access jazz, like, one can be, 'I'm going to be the best, I'm going to be better than you!' And that's totally cool and totally fine, and there is also another way, which is like, 'I'm going to do things that feel good to me and that make sense to me'"**

## **Knowledge Barriers**

The last commonly voiced issue with formal jazz education relates to the next key barrier in women's engagement with the contemporary music scene in the UK:

**"[Conservatoires] don't even really teach you how to market yourself or write a press release or sort yourself out in that respect. And I feel like it can be a very thick bubble to pop...I've been very much teaching myself how to do all this stuff, how to sell yourself and sell your act and be a business essentially."**

— Beatrice, (vocalist/ composer, 20s)

Women such as Beatrice had experienced a jazz course which prepared her as a musician in the protected and artificial environment of the Conservatoire. It had not, however, prepared her for the realities of the contemporary music industry. As the following quote from Valerie summarises, the various roles that contemporary live musicians have to take on (and, indeed, excel at) in order to be successful are numerous.

**"I want to play the piano, I want to write music. I want to do that and I'm not being allowed to do the thing that I want to do, because I have to be about 10 or 15 different people. I have to be a record company producer, I have to update the website, do the mailing list, run around selling CDs after the gig, you know, be tour manager, get the band sorted, be that communicator between me and the promoter, all those things"**

— Valerie (instrumentalist/composer, 40s)

Alongside high levels of musicianship, jazz musicians in the contemporary scene require a range of practical, industry-focused skills; from writing a press release to developing a consistent and marketable identity online. None of the women interviewed for this project had received any formal tuition in these areas and many struggled to develop these skills. This skill-gap is not a gendered experience, with men and women musicians equally struggling to keep up with the demands of the contemporary musician experience. However, for the women that I spoke to, this multifaceted role of the musician was stretched even further following negative experiences with agents, promoters, producers, distributors and record labels. From the examples of gender discrimination mentioned earlier in this section to a desire to have total control over the identity of the music produced and released, each of the women that I spoke to relied heavily upon and had developed DIY strategies for success. Many self-released their music and those in well-connected geographical locations and that were an active part of a musical scene engaged in supportive and collaborative networks, through which they shared their practices and knowledge.

**I take on the responsibility for, like, making the money and getting the agent together and it's cool and all those roles and everything else, like, talking to distributors and artists and press and the press agent and manufacturers for the vinyl, mastering engineers, mixing... I mean, that's what a manager does, but all of those different roles I'm doing pretty well. Like, when I'm saying do all I can, that includes learning from my mistakes and getting better, and I do feel that this year especially, with this album cycle, that I've really done it well, there's not much to learn from. Having learnt [all] that from day one, from zero, that's really empowering and I feel really proud of myself."**

— Harriet (instrumentalist/composer/ band leader, 30s)

Harriet detailed this long, DIY process of learning what it is to be a successful band leader and composer through careful collaboration and self-reliance, a process which was at times difficult and lonely but ultimately empowering for Harriet as a band leader and as a musician. Harriet recognised that her resilience and personal (positive) approach to undertaking this long path of self-development and leadership was key to her eventual success. For the women that lived in more isolated areas, who had children and the financial responsibility of mortgages, and who were less embedded within supportive musician networks, this journey was often a longer and more exhausting one. Several women spoke about the emotional toil of being a musician in the contemporary scene, intensified by what they saw as a comparative



undervaluing of women musicians by promoters, agents, and media and the scene's reliance upon a 'boy's club' network of male individuals to gain access and opportunities.

## Access to Festivals

Unsurprisingly, the women interviewed as part of this project were keen to discuss issues relating to access to festivals and the *Keychange* initiative itself. In relation to their relationship with Cheltenham Jazz Festival in particular (and jazz festivals more generally), younger, emerging artists viewed the festival and its team as accessible and supportive. The older, mid-career musicians were more critical of the festival and wary of the renewed interest in women musicians. This is unsurprising. The *Keychange* initiative and the festivals that have signed up must undo a long history of struggle, underrepresentation and gender discrimination, detailed in the interviews within this project and summarised by Valerie (instrumentalist/composer 40s):

**"This is what I mean about Cheltenham and festivals like that, if they want 50:50, they have to actively go and find it, it's not going to come to them because we don't know how to go to them because they're unapproachable. They really have to try, you know, to go and see, they're not going to read about it in Jazzwise."**

— Valerie, (instrumentalist/composer, 40s)

This reference to the comparative invisibility of women in specialist music media was made by other musicians during these interviews, and indeed reflected within the data visualisation below which shows the gender imbalance of *Jazzwise* magazine – one of the most widely-read specialist publications in the UK – front covers over the last six years. More established musicians in particular raised this as an issue in their interviews, and linked this to their struggles gaining recognition amongst jazz festivals and the scene more widely. As the response from *Jazzwise* demonstrates, this is a complex issue that is critically considered by the editorial team. Content must address the demands of magazine readership, the activity of musicians, and the trends within the scene. However, the visibility of women musicians on the front cover and within jazz magazines clearly articulates their value and offers strong role models. This perception of underrepresentation by women musicians is something that jazz media professionals must actively address in their support of a more gender-balanced jazz scene.

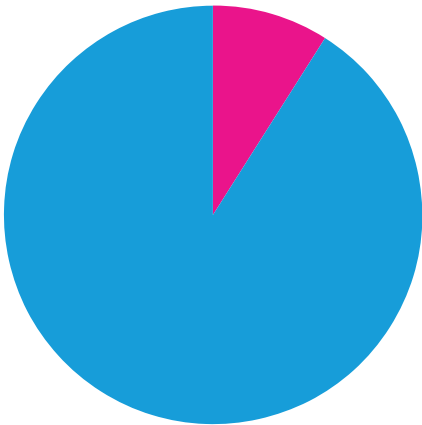
# Representation of gender and jazz

Gender (im)balance of the front cover of Jazzwise 2019–2014\*

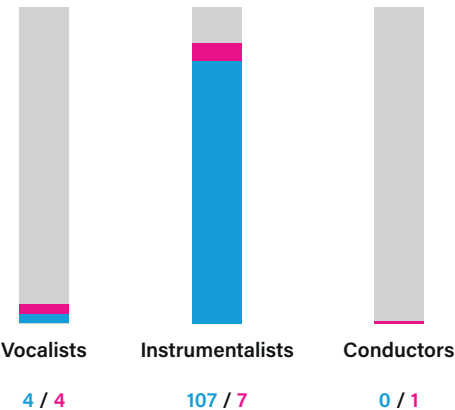


\* including the Dec/Jan issue in the second year

Gender of total number of women/men musicians on the front cover of Jazzwise 2014–2019



Women and men musicians by primary role 2019–2014\*




Male Mixed Female

\* one of the women was described as both a vocalist and bass player (although the front cover did not include instruments)



# Jazzwise



Ever since editor-in-chief Jon Newey relaunched Jazzwise in Spring 2000, the magazine and website has always sought to present jazz in a forward looking way – its editorial and imagery were a bold and colourful reaction away from the stuffy, often black and white, male dominated, inward-looking style of the jazz magazines that preceded it. Jazzwise was the first to feature more women jazz musicians and currently reflects the increasing diversity of the global jazz scene, which has far more female instrumentalists coming to the fore than there were 10 or 15 years ago.

There's also a greater variety of artists and bands coming through, building on the inspiration and legacy of the 'jazz legends'. From an editorial perspective this has provided many more opportunities to regularly include a much more balanced mix of features each month, and far greater variety of artists on the cover in the last five years. The 'new jazz' scene simply hadn't taken off until late 2017/early 2018 – Jazzwise in fact featured Yazz Ahmed and Nérija as rising stars at its 20th anniversary festival at Ronnie Scott's in March 2017 – both of whom have subsequently featured on the cover within the last two years.

Another key factor in this editorial 'levelling-up' was the end of the dominance of the big record labels – Universal, Sony, EMI, BMG and Warner Bros. – whose jazz departments have all but been closed down, with the rise of a huge range of independent and artist-run labels, as well as an increasing number of eclectic new jazz (and arts) festivals, promoters and venues, have provided numerous opportunities for this new wave of women-led bands to break through and reach new, often younger, audiences – many of whom have recently discovered jazz. These audiences are a completely new demographic to the predominantly male, 'ABC1' jazz fanbase that are typically the people that have been long-time fans and supporters of the music in the UK. I think it's important to be as inclusive as possible – respecting the older jazz fans' tastes – but also challenging any preconceptions by presenting high calibre musicians in an intelligent and thought-provoking way.

The real positive from all of this is that the jazz scene is richer and more diverse than ever before, and Jazzwise will continue to present this new, inclusive scene in the most authoritative and vibrant way possible.

**Mike Flynn,**  
Editor, Jazzwise Magazine



The generational difference in perceived access to festivals may also relate to different expectations of the festival. Emerging artists were happy to apply online to perform at the festival, and to demonstrate their value and fit within the stylistic boundaries of Cheltenham Jazz Festival. More experienced musicians with a longer history on the scene and an established reputation, however, expected the festival to contact them directly. Increasing access to women musicians is therefore not a simple task of providing clear, supportive online application forms, but rather working to understand what different musicians expect from festivals and why. In dealing with a community of women who have experienced gender discrimination and success through perseverance, festivals must rebuild the trust lost and demonstrate that they value these musicians and their work. As the following quote from Marnie (composer/ instrumentalist/band leader, 30s) also demonstrates, fears of tokenism or discrimination become part of the ways in which women musicians discuss festivals and how they then engage with them:

**"I've had a good few chats with them and they've been so supportive and really encouraging, so yeah, my relationship with Cheltenham is really good... but I have heard from others that [other festivals] might just have one female instrumentalist on their kind of festival each year or whatever, because they think that more than one might be a bit odd."**

Whether these statements are based upon demonstrable experiences or not is irrelevant. Some women musicians – particularly those with a history of negative experiences within the jazz scene, who have not benefitted from recent women-focused funding and development initiatives – expressed a distrust of festivals generally and questioned the longevity and reach of the *Keychange* initiative. Eventual success within the jazz industry is hard won and musicians of all career stages expressed the need for further skill and knowledge development, especially relating to their multifaceted musician role. Festival support of women musicians cannot therefore be achieved by focusing solely on the development of emerging artists, but rather by asking 'how can we support women at different stages in their career to overcome barriers?'. More subtly, engaging productively with musicians (particularly relating to sensitive issues of underrepresentation) is a question of building trust and communication. Addressing issues of access and musician development therefore requires an understanding of different expectations and the experiences that inform them.

**"A difficult task for the festival is to work beyond the normal channels of jazz media and agents to identify musicians, to communicate their less visible long-term aims to women musicians and to gain their trust that such strategies are indeed rooted in making a difference" – Sarah Raine, 'Keychanges at Cheltenham Jazz Festival' in *Towards Gender Equality in the Music Industry* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019: 197)**

## **Listening to Musicians**

### **■ 'I haven't spoken to anyone about this before...'**

Many of the women that I spoke to reiterated the same statement. Very few had been asked about their experience of the jazz scene beyond performance, and many had not consciously articulated the ways in which they had negotiated their multifaceted role as a musician. Some of the gaps in their knowledge and skills that emerged could, with external support, be addressed. As a pilot event, I organised a free, one-day musician-focused workshop at Birmingham City University. Nineteen women musicians from the Midlands took part in discussion groups on access and experiences and three practical workshops led by women experts. Professor Diane Kemp (Birmingham City University) discussed engaging with the media, from writing press releases to giving interviews. Emily Jones led a workshop on representing yourself online from the perspective of the festival programmer. And Mary Wakelam Sloan (Jazzlines, Town Hall Symphony Hall) explored the ways in which musicians can most productively engage with promoters. Feedback forms distributed at the end show that all of the attendees learnt something new and that was essential to their development as musicians. Further comments reiterated the isolation and self-sufficiency that some of the women interviewed for this project had expressed:

**■ "It helps to know that there are others out there with the same problems – we are often working on our own to promote ourselves!"**

**■ "Today was a vital injection of encouragement and information. A very necessary component of a contemporary woman musician's work and art life."**

Having listened to the women that I interviewed, I was able to identify specific skills and areas of development that could be addressed within a workshop setting. As an academic, I was able to offer a venue, industry experts, and a budget for lunch. Equally, jazz festivals have the facilities and contacts necessary to run similar workshops for musicians. This comes down to the perceived role of the music festival (and, indeed, academic institutions). Are music festivals the prize at the end of a successful trajectory of musician development, a badge of prestige for worthy talent? Or should festival teams take an active role in ensuring the health and continuation of the scenes that feed them? The Cheltenham Jazz Festival team already offer a range of talent development and support activities that focus on issues that have emerged from this project and their own research. In this, Cheltenham (and other festivals that offer talent development programmes) have taken on their position as a role model for the jazz industry, and in their response to this project and to *Keychange* they have embraced the responsibility that this brings.

**■ "In acting as an industry role model, CJF will also have to establish particular expectations of promoters, agents, educational institutions and policy makers on their subsequent roles that feed into the annual festival program"**

— Sarah Raine, 'Keychanges at Cheltenham Jazz Festival' in *Towards Gender Equality in the Music Industry* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019: page 198)

# KEYCHANGE AND CHELTENHAM JAZZ FESTIVAL

## IMPACT ON PRACTICE

**Emily Jones**

Project Industry Partner and Head of Programming (2018–2019)

### Communicating our intentions

The project led me to map all the ways female & non-binary artists interact with the festival, from reading about the festival, to approaching us in search of a gig, through to advancing a show and engaging with our team on the day.

Changes explored as a result:

- Wording about our commitment to gender balance was added to a new webpage providing useful information for artists applying for a gig at the festival
- Started to add wording to gig confirmation emails to encourage gender balanced band line-ups (see example below)
- Considering how to make the festival more approachable to artists, without adverse impact on programmer's workload
- Internal discussion about how freelance delivery staff are briefed, to help raise awareness of unconscious bias that may occur when dealing with artists
- Explored whistleblowing systems for artists and others to report sexism and harassment during the festival
- Gender balance of the festival programme planned to be a focus of the 2020 marketing strategy, using the hashtag #diversitymatters on social media
- Initial review of festival partners/sponsors to ensure they support our aims



## **Role of the programmer**

The project led me to consider more carefully our role as a gatekeeper, most directly for performing at the festival but also for the impact that has in terms of gaining greater profile within the industry and radio coverage while in Cheltenham.

To support the aim of achieving gender balance across all areas of the programme, the programming team needs to look beyond artists 'pre-selected' by normal industry channels such as agents, media, record labels. The festival also needs to be more approachable for female and non-binary artists, so that they don't get lost in the flood of artists seeking gigs, and so that they feel it is worth approaching us.

Changes explored as a result:

- Inviting established female and non-binary jazz artists to act as scouts to assist the festival in identifying artists with potential
- Discussions with colleagues in the Education team about developing the talent pipeline to ensure more young women are playing jazz.

The impact above has been achieved through:

- **Informed planning meetings** – initial findings have been used in CJF planning meetings to raise awareness within the festival team of the issues facing female artists and to improve support strategies.
- **Informed supportive strategies** – working closely with festival staff and developing future initiatives.

Additional impact was achieved through:

- **Collaborative projects** – e.g. musician-focused workshop in July run involving myself and other industry experts.
- **Sharing of practice** – building a network of *Keychange* pledged jazz festivals.

## **Wording from Cheltenham Jazz Festival**

### **correspondence with musicians:**



**CJF has signed up to the Keychange pledge to reach a 50/50 gender balance by 2022. If the personnel for this show are not already fixed, we would appreciate you giving extra consideration to the gender balance of the line-up.**

# GENDER IMBALANCE AT OTHER JAZZ FESTIVALS\*

## Summary

As part of this project, the four other jazz festivals that had signed up to *Keychange* by the beginning of 2019 were asked to take part in roundtable events to discuss gender issues within the scene and to provide gender data. Representatives from Glasgow Jazz Festival, Hull Jazz Festival, and Manchester Jazz Festival agreed to be contributors to this project.

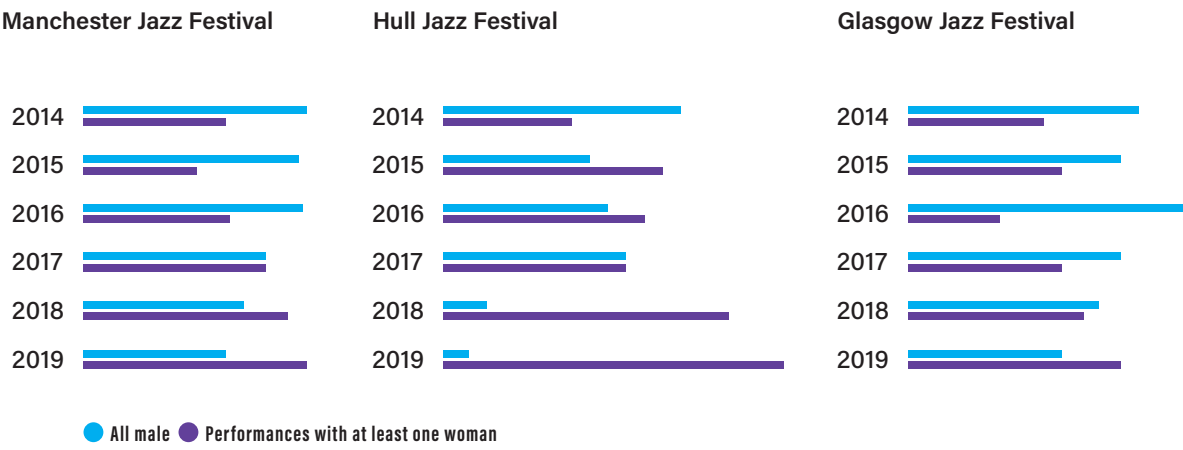
Each festival was aware of the current gender imbalance in the jazz scene and the comparative lack of active women musicians. For David Porter (Director, Hull Jazz Festival), this imbalance became extremely apparent when he was faced with an all-male ensemble from the National Jazz Youth Orchestra, and for each of the festivals involved in the project this imbalance became a focus for programming and talent development initiatives. Each festival has also been tracking the gender data for their musicians and developing support mechanisms to ensure the diversity of their programming.

As the data visualisations below demonstrate, like Cheltenham Jazz Festival each of the festivals have achieved 50/50 gender balanced programmes, based upon the "one woman on stage" interpretation. Yet, as also seen in the Cheltenham data, the gender breakdown in relation to the total number of musicians performing indicates a continued gender imbalance of festival stages. Furthermore, the roles of women musicians also indicate a comparative lack of women instrumentalists. Equally, Steve Mead (Artistic Director, Manchester Jazz Festival) noted the disparity possible in *Keychange* data, with "success" easier to achieve by smaller festivals with fewer performances to address.

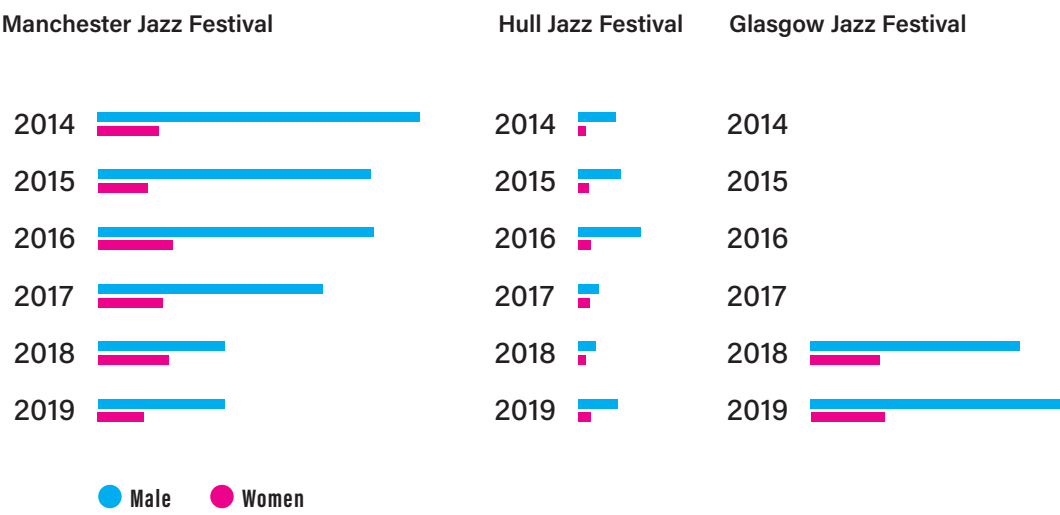
It is clear that the issues experienced by Cheltenham Jazz Festival – in sourcing female instrumentalists, in moving away from solely female-fronted all male bands, and encouraging young musicians to continue to engage with jazz – are experienced by these other three festivals. It is also clear that each festival is very aware of issues of musician diversity within the scene and that addressing these have become central to plans for development, outreach, and programming. The roundtable events as part of this project was a valuable opportunity for the sharing of practice, negotiating their *Keychange* pledge in meaningful and sustainable ways, and discussing potential ways forward.

\* Some of this data was gathered by researchers at Kings College London.

### Gender breakdown of performances by 50/50 (one woman on stage) 2014–2019



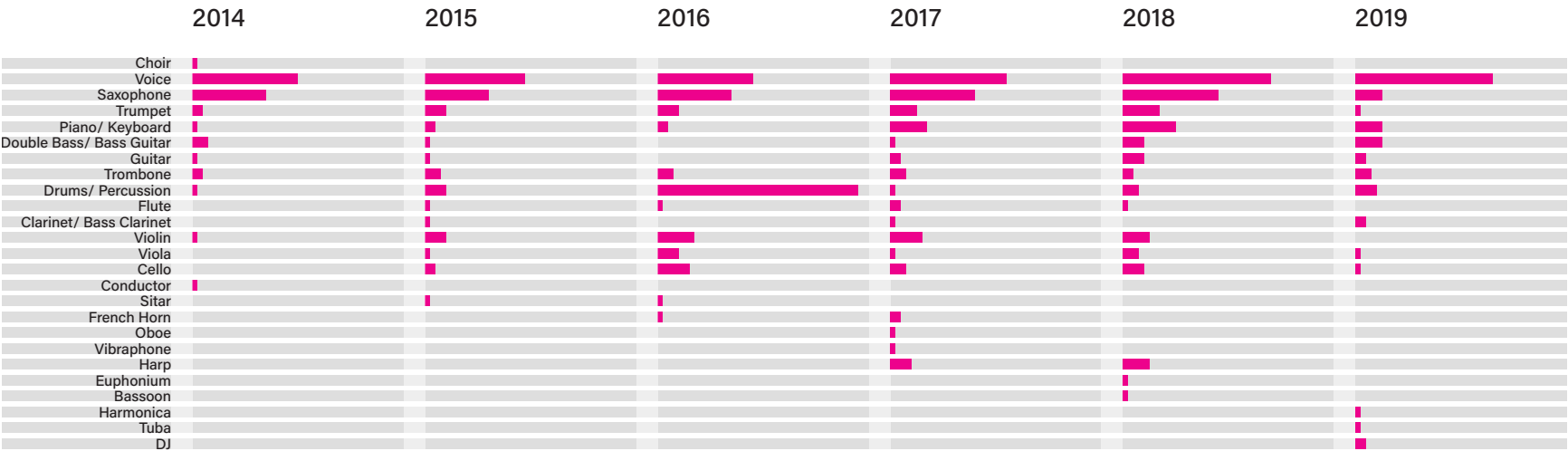
### Gender breakdown of total musicians 2014–2019



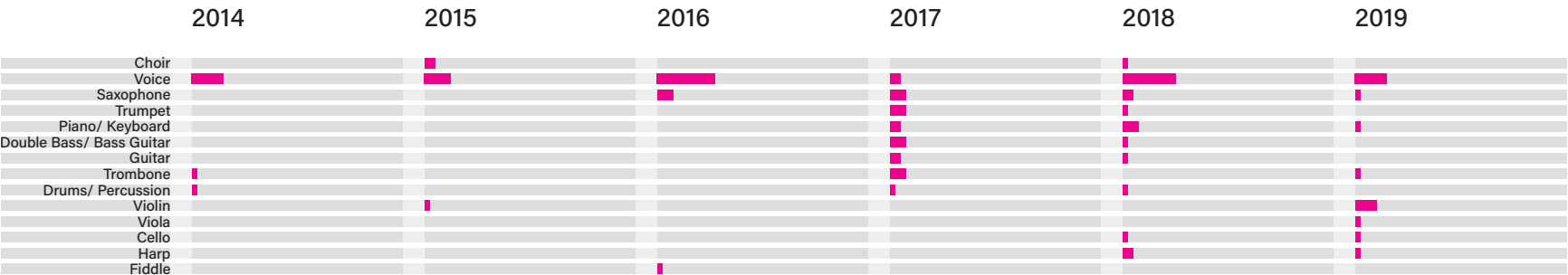


Female artists by instrument

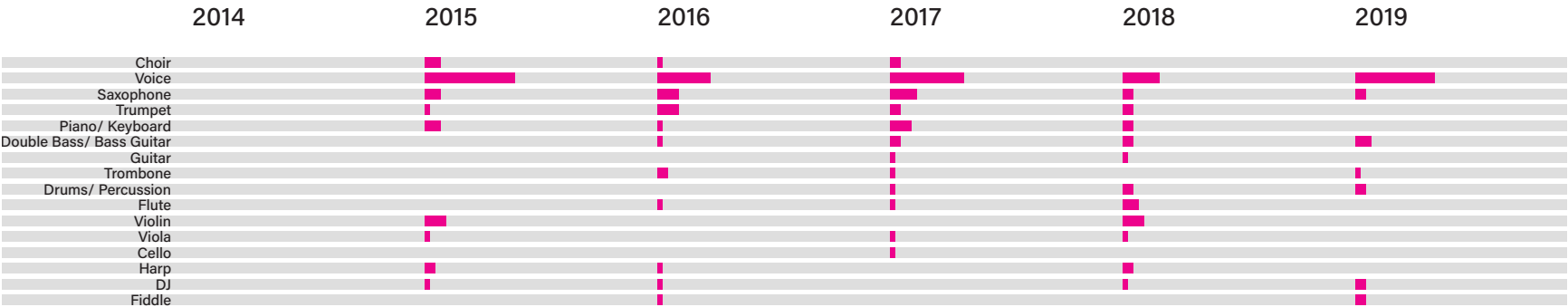
Manchester Jazz Festival



Hull Jazz Festival



Glasgow Jazz Festival



## Keychange and Manchester Jazz Festival: Reflections

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**Steve Mead**

**Artistic Director, Manchester Jazz Festival**

On the whole, being part of *Keychange* is a positive experience and it feels good to be playing a part in effecting change and building awareness within and beyond the sector. I've always taken a 'show, don't tell' approach to programming that has resisted putting a spin on – or drawing special attention to – the gender balance within our programme. Whilst I feel this is a more organic way of resetting the norm, it has conversely prevented us from publicly celebrating our historical achievements in this area.

There are some technicalities of the 50/50 metric that mean comparative successes can be recorded as failed targets, which can be frustrating and not give a true picture of achievement. My concerns are around the backlash amongst female artists feeling they are being programmed just because they are women, and in the problematic environment in which our success is measured against targets that need to accommodate increasing numbers who 'prefer not to say' – thereby weakening the extent to which we are able to evidence success to the outside world.

For me, *Keychange* principles have to be embedded throughout an organisation, including its governance, staff, volunteers and audiences as much as its programmed artists. There are also always factors beyond our control that can frustrate our attempts to sustain gender balance. Proactive measures to help realise our *Keychange* ambitions include flagging our ambitions on our artists submissions portal, making sure all our marketing platforms have visible representation and devising specific schemes to address imbalance. It is important to note that it has been easier to meet *Keychange* targets with emerging artists than it has been with high-profile/international artists. And we must be mindful that efforts to achieve gender balance can sometimes compromise efforts to achieve other diversity targets.

Finally, it always has to be about quality, not quantity.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UK JAZZ FESTIVALS IN ENGAGING WITH KEYCHANGE

- 1 Address limitations with *Keychange* head on. Clearly state your interpretation of 50/50 and be aware of the issues inherent within this interpretation.
- 2 Identify areas of underrepresentation and address these through targeted programming, education and talent development strategies.
- 3 Communicate your plans and long-term support for musicians, irrespective of gender, class, and ethnicity.
- 4 Act as a role model – communicate clearly your expectations to other music industry professionals, such as promoters, agents, and institutions.
- 5 Future-proof all strategies and plan beyond *Keychange* and individual staff members.
- 6 Engage with *Keychange* as a talent development programme as well as a quota initiative.
- 7 Balance approaches – from supporting emerging talent to skill development for mid-career women musicians.
- 8 Speak to musicians about what support they need for progression.
- 9 Consider issues of gender across the festival – such as: employee, volunteer, committee gender imbalances; issues of safety; sponsor relationships; marketing materials etc.
- 10 Take your application processes accessible to all – how can you access underrepresented groups and communicate your support for all musicians?







# GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICE: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT MUSIC FESTIVALS

## Emily Jones

Head of Programming (2018–2019), Cheltenham Jazz Festival  
Senior Producer (2019–present), Sage Gateshead

A useful model for addressing barriers to diversity is attraction, selection and inclusion. In this context, 'attraction' refers to recruiting artists and communicating your intentions to them, 'selection' refers to the programming process, and 'inclusion' means making sure these artists feel welcome at the festival. Mapping out the ways you attract and select artists, and ensure inclusion, should provide a clear list of areas for improvement. For example:

### Attraction

- Female band leaders and band members should be visible in all marketing collateral and press releases (whether images or names) and where a selection of artists are featured, this should reflect the gender make-up of the programme.
- Speak publicly about the festival's commitment to gender balance as much as possible.
- Review list of artistic partners and media partners annually to ensure they are helping to meet this commitment.
- Review wording
  - on gig application pages, relevant press releases and forms to ensure commitment to gender balance is mentioned.
- If the organisation delivers outreach or education work, ensure there is a talent pipeline in to the gig programme, and seek partners who have a track record of working with young female/non-binary musicians to further develop the pipeline.

## **Selection**

- Consider including wording about commitment to gender balance in gig offers, confirmations and contracts. If space allows, include an explanation to provide context.
- Consider consulting established female and non-binary artists to find new artists below the radar or to help broaden programmers' knowledge.
- Find a mechanism to continually monitor gender balance throughout the programming process. Consider setting a separate target for non-binary artists.
- Where there is a panel of decision makers, ensure it has a representative mix of genders.
- Ensure fees are equal for female and non-binary artists when compared to similar-profile male artists.

## **Inclusion**

- Seek female and non-binary artists to act as 'critical friends' for the festival, providing honest, impartial feedback on processes, language, the backstage and on-stage experience.
- Ensure a separate dressing room is always available for female/non-binary musicians in the tour party.
- Recruit female/non-binary stage managers and sound engineers where possible.
- Find a way to brief freelance staff on issues around unconscious bias, such as:
  - Ensure your questions are directed to the bandleader or relevant person, regardless of their gender.
- Assume that all musicians know how to use their equipment, regardless of their gender.
- Consider finding a quick, easy, anonymous way for artists and staff to report sexism or harassment at the festival – consider online tools like In Chorus
- Ensure robust data collection methods are in place for use during or after the festival – band line-ups often change at the last minute so data collected before the event will not be accurate.

# KEYCHANGE RESPONSE

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## Maxie Gedge

*Keychange* Project Manager, PRS Foundation

We welcome this detailed and insightful research into the progress being made by *Keychange* signatories and beyond. We know from our partners and grantees that the barriers that people face in music because of their gender are numerous and complex, and whilst we know that *Keychange* has encouraged significant progress globally, there is still much work to do. We want to see meaningful and long-lasting change in the industry so it's important that our positive action is both ambitious and realistic. It's also important that the pledge can be applied to all areas of music – so the challenges that are genre, country, sector, or gender-specific definitely require sensitivity and hard work from our signatories above and beyond the pledge. The *Keychange* pledge works as a starting point because in signing the pledge, organisations publicly accept that there is a gender problem in the music industry and commit to taking responsibility for that problem.

We know that the pledge is not enough on its own – *Keychange* was funded by Creative Europe initially as a talent development initiative that supported 60 talented artists and innovators to navigate the barriers of the music industry and make change on their own terms; the pledge was developed alongside this as a way to make sure we are encouraging change on both a micro (individual) and macro (institutional) level. The pledge is constantly evolving and we are always looking at ways to strengthen the target, make it more inclusive, and focus on specific areas of the music industry. At the moment we are focusing on agencies and inclusivity riders. We are also revising our data collection methods based on learnings from our pilot project in 2018/19. Although the categorisation of 50/50, 50% and including mixed gender groups means that the progress may not be so steep/immediate in some areas of the industry, we have decided with our partners that acknowledging all women and gender minority artists and innovators (including those who perform alongside men) is a very important aspect of the pledge – to make sure that *Keychange* 'sees' and champions all roles in music, and not just all-women and gender minority groups. An example of this is PRS Foundation grantee Zara McFarlane, who is an important role model to champion although there are more men in her band than women and gender minority performers. For the greater good, we see individuals over stats sometimes. Equally, Lizzy Exell is just as important to the movement in Old Hat as she is in Nerija. We do not and we will not prioritise one type of performer, professional or musician in our campaign; meanwhile we of course acknowledge that genre-norms, regional influence, and cultural-norms encourage gendered roles. Our stats will scrutinise this and tell us about our progress in more detail when we release our report at the *Keychange* conference at Tallinn Music Week in 2023. Cultural change (in magazines, at venues, in conservatoires) will take longer than the 1–2 years that we've been working on the pledge but we believe that *Keychange* is encouraging and contributing to a shift.

Alongside the pledge we continue to work on the talent development programme and we recently secured a large-scale cooperation grant for €1.4m from Creative Europe to deliver a 4 year project that tackles the industry-wide gender problem on a global level. Pledge

activity accounts for under 3% of the grant. Between 2020 and 2023 we will work with 222 women and gender minority artists and innovators to help to shift the perspective of visible talent and develop new strategies for change. In 2018 we recognised 4 key areas that need development from the music industry and beyond in our manifesto, and presented it to European parliament:

- 1. Working conditions & lack of senior role models:** Addressing recruitment, remuneration, career development and sexual harassment policies in a male dominated workforce
- 2. Investment:** Making more funds available, from the industry and public sector at national and European level, for targeted programmes which empower underrepresented artists and industry professionals
- 3. Research:** Commissioning an independent analysis of the current gender gap, including an economic impact study of companies with increased female participation and efficacy studies of programmes and activities to improve gender balance.
- 4. Education:** Promoting role models and career campaigns in schools which tackle gender stereotypes and diversify career options for young men and women.

We see more and more initiatives that are dealing with these points (including this research), and we are appreciative and receptive to all. We look forward to discussing specific challenges and nuances with all 300 of our signatories, our partners and our participants over the next 4 years. We remain open and flexible in the name of progress, and hopeful for a more balanced future in the music industry.



# MOVING FORWARD

## Summary

Cheltenham Jazz Festival and the other festivals that took part in this project have now reached a 50/50 gender balanced programme based upon the “one woman on stage” interpretation. Many other music festivals across the world have been equally successful. It is clear that this “success” must herald the beginning of careful data analysis and active interventions to address the barriers that confront women and other underrepresented groups of musicians. This report, the recommendations that have emerged from the project, and the model provided by Cheltenham Jazz Festival offers a guide to engaging with *Keychange* and issues of representation.

Reaching true 50/50 within jazz requires some significant work and will take time, energy, perseverance, focus, and funding. Through the process of undertaking this research, it is clear that fewer women musicians are coming through the UK education system, itself a large and complex research project which would have to explore national music provision, role models, and career choices (to name but a few potential avenues of consideration). Equally, the underrepresentation of women instrumentalists in comparison to jazz vocalists requires further consideration, building upon the academic work that has identified a gendering of this role and the comparative devaluing of the (woman) jazz singer (see Raine 2019 for a discussion of this literature). By working together, industry and academia have the tools to support musicians, to ensure a healthy music scene, and to work to address barriers to access, each taking responsibility for their role as instigators for and champions of change.

In addition to sometimes harrowing stories of gender discrimination and data demonstrating the continued gender imbalance of the jazz scene, it was heartening to hear of the increasing success of women musicians and the organisations that support them. Collectives such as Tomorrow's Warriors in London, Jazzlines in Birmingham, Jazz Camp for Girls (Jazz North), Women in Jazz, and Scottish Women Inventing Music (to name but a few) offer supportive and socially-aware programmes for musician development, diversifying musician and audience understanding of the genre, and actively doing something to inspire the next generation.

# **GENDER BALANCE AND CHELTENHAM JAZZ FESTIVAL GOING FORWARD**

**Dave Gaydon**

**Head of Programming, Cheltenham Jazz Festival**

I am in the fortunate position of taking over from Emily Jones and inheriting her excellent work. Stepping into an organisation that is already fully committed to *Keychange*, I have a clear path forward. We are set to meet the target again in 2020 and we will continue striving to maintain our 50/50 *Keychange* pledge to 2022 and beyond.

Long-term, we hope our talent developments initiatives will support women and non-binary musicians at all stages of their careers. Cheltenham Festivals has pledged to triple platforms for unsigned talent across its four Festivals and in this way, we can look forward to more equal representation.

# **FUTURE PLANS FOR COLLABORATION AND RESEARCH**

This project and the network of individuals, institutions and organisations that it involved will form the backbone of a larger funding application and future research to more fully explore the issues that have emerged, with industry and academic applications of these insights. We welcome collaborations and partnerships. This report and data from other jazz festivals and institutions will be hosted on a project website, alongside a contact form – [www.womenandjazzfestivals.com](http://www.womenandjazzfestivals.com)

This report is Open Access and can be shared.

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**Dr Sarah Raine** undertook this research in her post as a Research Fellow at Birmingham Centre for Media at Cultural Studies (BCMCR) at Birmingham City University. Having completed her doctoral research on the younger members of the northern soul scene in the UK, Sarah was funded through an AHRC Creative Economy Engagement Fellowship. This project was in partnership with Cheltenham Jazz Festival to consider the obstacles facing women in jazz and aims to identify barriers to female participation in relation to the PRS Foundation *Keychange* initiative. Sarah was also the Network Coordinator for an AHRC project, *Jazz and Everyday Aesthetics* (2016–2018) and is a member of the *Rhythm Changes* conference committee.

Sarah is now a Research Fellow at Edinburgh Napier, working on a project with Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival.

Sarah is also co-Managing Editor of *Riffs: Experimental writing on popular music*, the Review Editor for Popular Music History and a book series editor (*Icons of Pop Music* and *Music Industry Studies*) for Equinox Publishing. Alongside Dr. Catherine Strong, she co-edited *Towards Gender Equality in the Music Industry: Education, Practice and Strategies for Change* (Bloomsbury: 2019) and she is one of the editors of *The Northern Soul Scene* (Raine, Wall and Watchman Smith, Equinox: 2019).

This project was overseen by **Professor Nick Gebhardt**. Nick is Professor of Jazz and Popular Music Studies at Birmingham City University and the Director of the Birmingham Centre for Media and Cultural Research. He has participated in a range of jazz-focused research projects, including the AHRC-funded *Jazz and Everyday Aesthetics* and the JPI-funded *Cultural Heritage and Improvised Music in European Festivals*. He is also the co-editor of the Routledge book series *Transnational Studies in Jazz* and a founding member of the *Rhythm Changes* jazz studies conference.

**Midlands3Cities Creative Economy Engagement Fellowships** (M4C) are funded by the AHRC, through the National Productivity Investment Fund. The fellowship programme is designed to support post-doctoral researchers in the arts and humanities to engage with businesses in the creative and digital economy and other organisations involved with the commercial endeavours of the Creative Economy.

These fellowships aim to support some of the UK's most talented researchers and nurture future leaders to work at the interface between the arts and humanities and other disciplines. The fellows engage with businesses in the creative and digital economy and other organisations involved with the commercial endeavours of the Creative Economy. M3C supports research which is cross-disciplinary and innovation-orientated undertaken by the best international talent.

This report and the data visualisations were designed by **Adam Kelly-Williams**. Adam is an art director and graphic designer operating as *Handsprings* ([handsprings.co.uk](http://handsprings.co.uk)).

## Ethics

This research was approved by and carried out under Birmingham City University's Research Ethics Framework. All participants were granted anonymity and their accounts anonymised to protect their identities. All data offered was provided by the jazz festivals in question and the industry partner involved in the development of the project material. This report was co-produced by Dr Sarah Raine and the named festivals. Data was also provided by **Dr Christina Scharff** and researchers at Kings College London.





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