

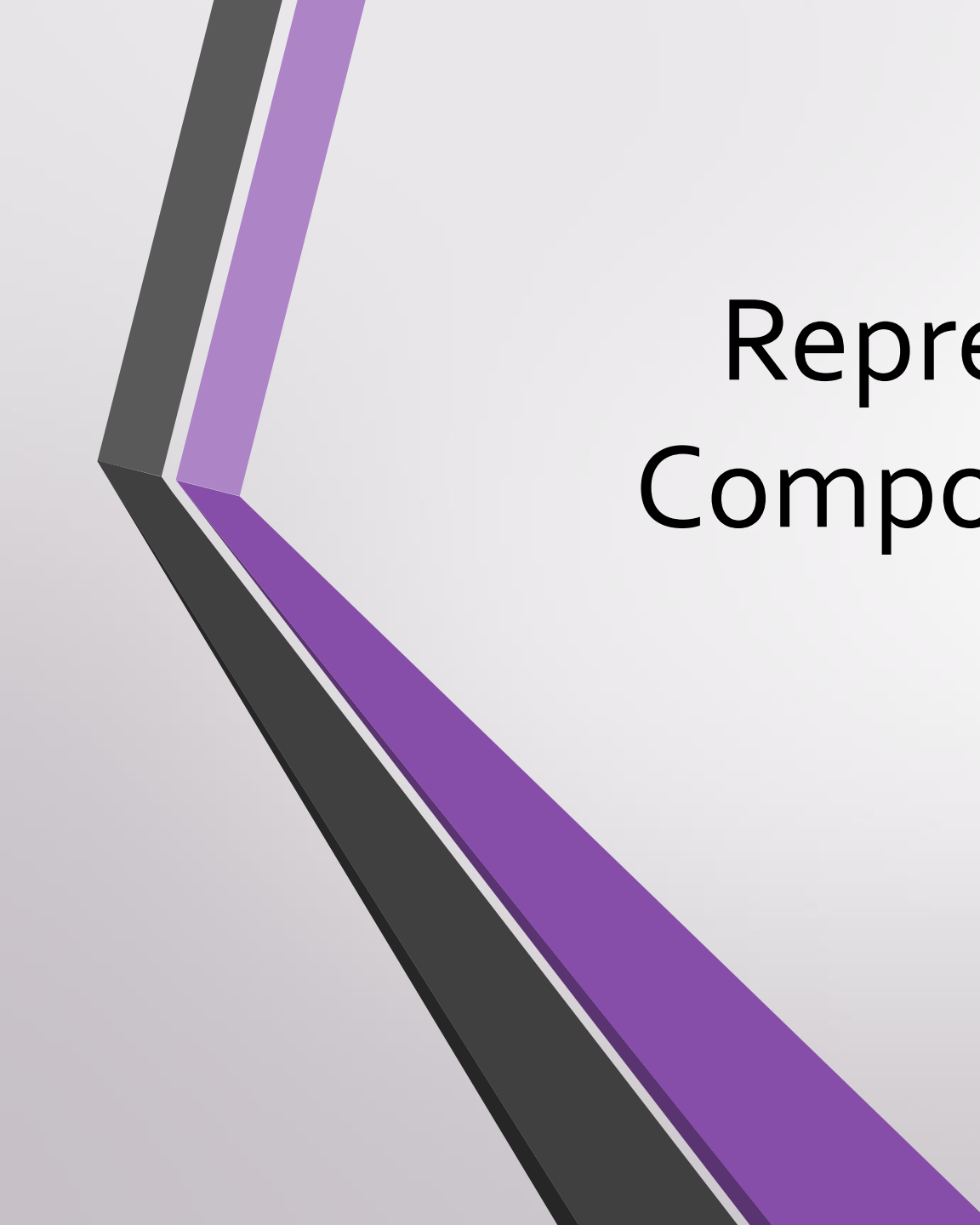


# International Women's Day

Tuesday 8 March

#BreakTheBias



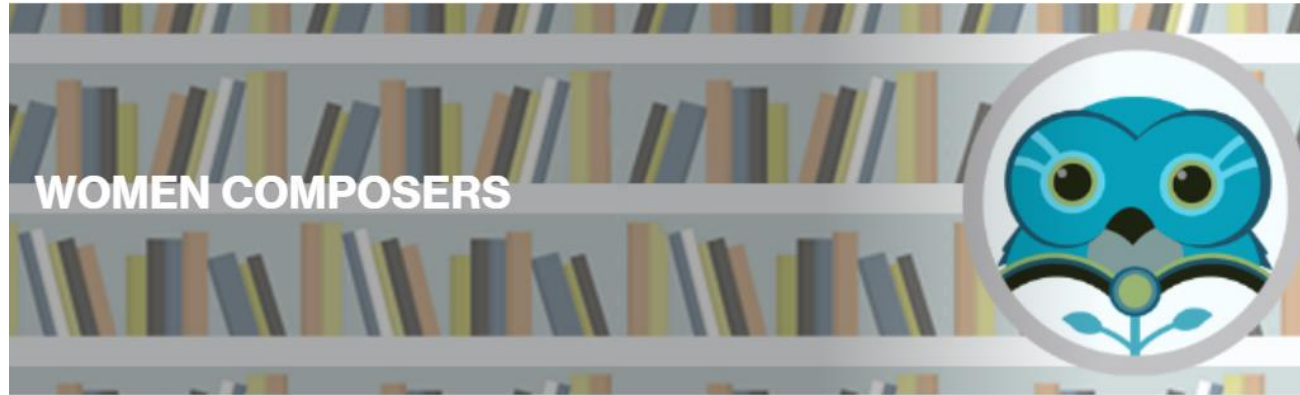


# Representation of Women Composers in the Whittaker Library

Dr Karen E McAulay

Performing Arts Librarian & Postdoctoral Researcher

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland



### Organisations & Resources



This list is always growing! Please do check the [catalogue too](#). [Catalogue Plus](#) has all our resources, physical and digital.

### Navigation Menu

- > Research
  - > Open Access
- > Acting
- > Production Arts & Design
- > Modern Ballet
- > Film
- > Musical Theatre
- > Education (Music)
- > Contemporary Performance Practice
- > Brass
- > Strings
- > Vocal Studies (incl. Opera)

Portal page:  
Women  
Composers  
(Organisations  
& Resources)

# Portal page: Women Composers (Individuals)

## Individuals



**This list is always growing! Please do check the catalogue too ... and don't forget that Catalogue Plus has lots more online resources!**

[Aboulker, Isabelle](#) – look out for our vocal score of Aboulker's *Melodies*

[Alberga, Eleanor](#) music in RCS [catalogue](#); lots of info in Catalogue Plus,

14 SPARKLING STORIES

8-PAGE MURDER MYSTERY

The People's Friend

Special 2020

No. 197 £2.99

Real Life Behind the scenes of

Heritage The female composers that time forgot



American composer Amy Beach had an extensive output.

**The Sound Of Forgotten Music**

Karen McAulay uncovers some of the great female composers who have been lost from history.

Wikipedia Commons



Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre was publishing music by the age of twenty-two.

**F**IVE years ago, an English schoolgirl hit the headlines when she asked exam board Edexcel to include women composers in the A-Level Music syllabus.

Jessy McCabe set up a petition, and five women's compositions were added to the Music syllabus as "set works", with twelve pieces recommended for further listening.

This maybe doesn't sound

like much, but it's a huge step forward in a world where women composers have historically had a raw deal.

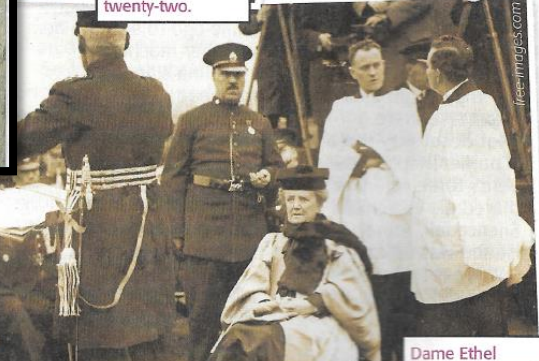
If you read historical novels, you'll know a well-bred young lady was expected to have musical accomplishments.

It added to her marriageability and gave her something else to do besides embroidery and drawing!

their chances of publishing were very limited.

However, a brilliant 17th-century Italian singer and composer called Barbara Strozzi did publish eight books of her music.

Barbara was illegitimate, but the man who adopted her may have been her father. A famous poet himself, he nurtured her musical talent to enable her to earn a living.



Dame Ethel

Playing the harpsichord, harp, guitar or flute and accompanying your friends and relations was socially desirable, but an "amateur" didn't play in public concerts; a genteel lady amateur still less so.

That was for paid professionals, along with teaching music and – if they were men – perhaps publishing their compositions.

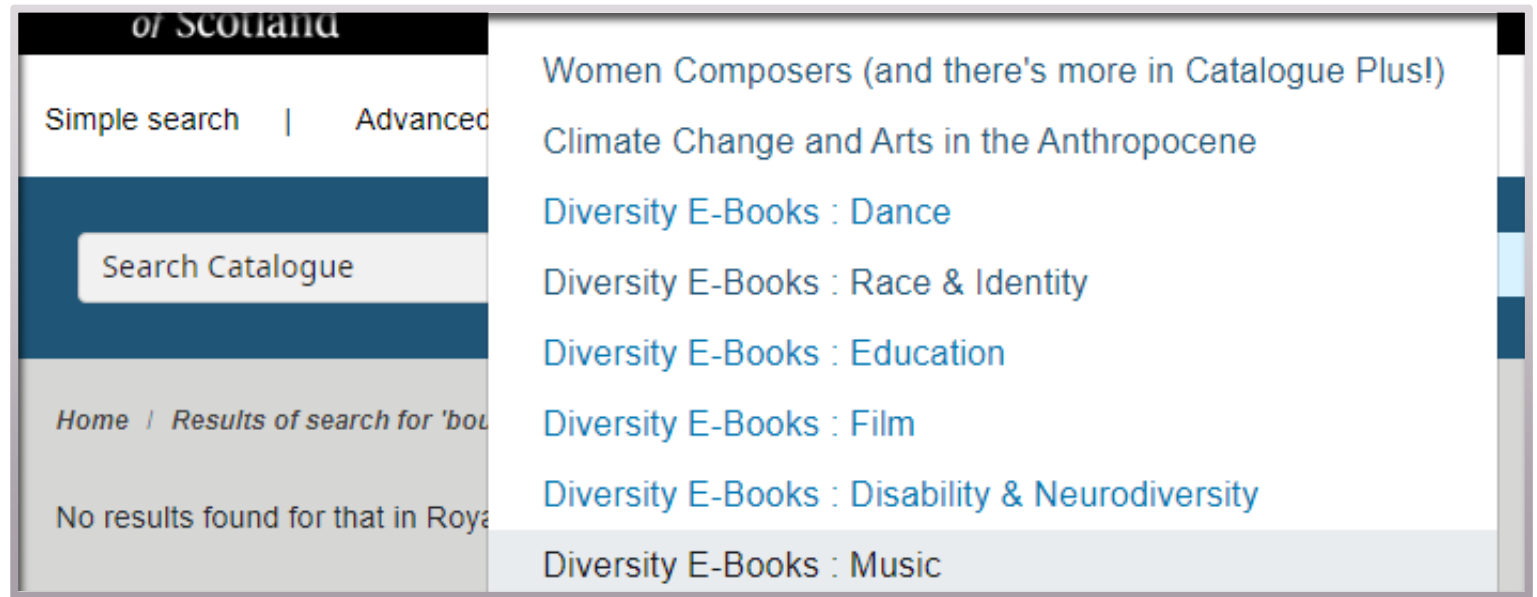
Paid musicians often depended on wealthy patrons to ease their career along.

Isabella Leonarda was another 17th-century Italian composer who came from a wealthy family and spent her adult life in a convent – allowing plenty of time for composing – and later published a lot of music.

She wrote most of her compositions after the age of fifty – a great example for older female musicians!

The French harpsichordist and composer Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre was from a younger generation, and her background was different again.

There wasn't much music



The image shows a screenshot of a library search results page. The page title is "of Scotland". At the top, there are links for "Simple search" and "Advanced". Below this is a search bar with the text "Search Catalogue". The search results show "Home / Results of search for 'bo" and "No results found for that in Roy". A dropdown menu is open, listing several e-books:

- Women Composers (and there's more in Catalogue Plus!)
- Climate Change and Arts in the Anthropocene
- Diversity E-Books : Dance
- Diversity E-Books : Race & Identity
- Diversity E-Books : Education
- Diversity E-Books : Film
- Diversity E-Books : Disability & Neurodiversity
- Diversity E-Books : Music

# Reading Lists



## WHITTAKER LIVE

Performing arts blogging by the Whittaker Library at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland – scroll down to search for words or categories

Home

Blog

About Us

## Women Composers in the Whittaker Library

FEBRUARY 8, 2022 / DR KAREN E MCAULAY / EDIT

For over two years, we've been particularly focusing on the representation of women composers in the Whittaker Library at RCS. There's a listing on our library portal pages, but that only lists women, websites, and suggestions to visit our catalogue. It doesn't (and can't) list all the music individually – it would be too hard to keep updating it!

We do want our readers to be aware of all the music we have – as well as a multitude of anthologies and books *about* women composers, too. So what could be more practical than a customised reading list?

Here it is, a reading list of **Women Composers in the Whittaker Library**. The list includes books about women composers, as well as their compositions.



**WHITTAKER LIVE  
BLOGPOST  
HIGHLIGHTING  
READING LIST**

<https://whittakerlive.wordpress.com/2022/02/08/women-composers-in-the-whittaker-library/>

***Where are all the black female composers?  
the ultimate fun facts guide*** / Nathan  
Holder; illustrated by Charity Russell

- Series: [Why Books](#).
- [Holders Hill Publishing](#), 2020
- ISBN: 9781999753030; 9781999753047





# COMPOSERS OF COLOUR



Watch this space! We're actively working on increasing our coverage of music by composers of colour. Don't forget to check our [Catalogue Plus](#) for e-resources including digital streaming and scholarship.

## Multiple Composers & Organisations

[AfriClassical.com](#): website documenting African heritage in classical music

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- < Composition



# DIVERSIFYING READING LISTS

This page is to help support staff to diversify their reading lists. Information has been taken from a variety of sources and we hope it will be of some use to you. It includes advice and a list of resources you can use.

Navigation

> Research

> Open

## D is for Diversity: Chloe Zhao

DECEMBER 13, 2021 / DR KAREN E MCAULAY / LEAVE A COMMENT / EDIT



Image: Variety

Dr Andy  
Dougan's A to Z  
**D is for  
Diversity**  
blogpost series

# Spotlight on Diversity blogpost series



## WHITTAKER LIVE

Performing arts blogging by the Whittaker Library at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland – scroll down to search for words or categories

[Home](#)

[Blog](#)

[About Us](#)

[Contact](#)

## Spotlight on Diversity

JANUARY 21, 2022 / DR KAREN E MCAULAY / EDIT

### A New Blogpost Series promoted jointly by the Library & the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Team

Have you ever requested the library to buy a book, and it turned out to be really inspiring? Or maybe you just found something on the shelves, or read an e-book online – and it felt as though the author was writing directly to you, giving you fresh insights and sparking off new ideas, even a new sense of direction? Sometimes we just dive into a book, totally absorbed until we reach the end. Or at other times, it's just so rich, so detailed, that you read a little bit at a time, then go away and do something else whilst you think about and absorb it. And then you want to tell everyone about it!

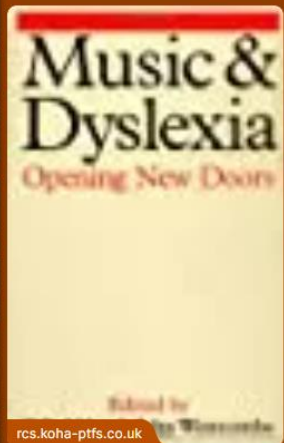
Last year, the Whittaker Library blog hosted a popular series of blogposts by film lecturer Dr Andy Dougan, entitled 'D is for Diversity'. It attracted so much attention that we're planning a new



## Diversifying the Library Collections

The Library is committed to counter contemporary and historical racism and inequality in our collections. We will endeavour to build inclusive collections, reflective of the global performing artist talent pool, and the RCS stance on anti-racism and injustice. We welcome your comments and contributions to this work. This page showcases some of the resources, events, performers, publishers, creators and makers in support of that aim. [library@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:library@rcs.ac.uk)

### Dyslexia reading list



[rcs.koha-ptfs.co.uk](https://rcs.koha-ptfs.co.uk)

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Library Catalogue

We made a reading list of all our books about dyslexia.

### Autism, Aspergers & Neurodiversity reading list



[rcs.koha-ptfs.co.uk](https://rcs.koha-ptfs.co.uk)

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

We collated all our books about autism, Aspergers syndrome and neurodiversity. See if you like the look of any of them!

### NEUK Manifesto for diversity in the arts

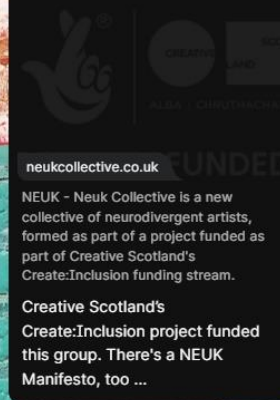


[neukcollective.co.uk](https://neukcollective.co.uk)

Manifesto – NEUK

NEUK's manifesto for neurodiversity in the arts in Scotland is also available in a number of accessible formats. They also have a limited number of Braille copies available for those who need them.

### NEUK Collective



### Catherine Lamb, Composer



### Cassandra Miller, Composer



[cassandramiller.wordpress.com](https://cassandramiller.wordpress.com)

From Cassandra's bio:- 'Dr Cassandra Miller (1976) is a Canadian composer of vocal, chamber and orchestral music, living in London, UK. Her works are published by **Faber Music**.'

### Sky Macklay, Composer



# Padlet: Diversifying the Library Collections

Special big thanks to ....



*Dance of the Paper Umbrellas*  
Elena Kats-Chernin  
<https://youtu.be/OiWXzoryDEg>



# REFERENCES 1

- *Archive Frau und Musik – International Archive for Women in Music* <https://www.archiv-frau-musik.de/> (contact: Heike Matthiesen, classical guitarist, is a board member)
- *Daffodil Perspective* <https://www.thedaffodilperspective.org/> - radio station produced by Elizabeth de Brito
- *Donne – Women in Music* <https://donne-uk.org/blog/> - to 'celebrate, advance and amplify women in music'
- Holder, Nathan, *Where are all the black female composers? the ultimate fun facts guide* (Holders Hill Publishing, 2020)



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- *Whittaker Live* library blog, Spotlight on Diversity [irregular series], 2022  
<https://whittakerlive.wordpress.com/2022/01/11/spotlight-on-diversity/>

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- Blog Homepage:- <https://whittakerlive.wordpress.com/>

With thanks to Catherine Small for her work on Diversifying Reading Lists