

RSAMD Publication Scheme

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ROYAL SCOTTISH ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND DRAMA

The origins of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama lie in the Glasgow Athenaeum, a pioneering body founded in 1847 to provide further education for adults in the fields of commerce, science and the arts. Within this institution, where as many as 2500 part-time students enrolled in the late nineteenth century, both music and drama played an important part and many eminent Victorian personalities gave lectures and performances under its auspices. In 1888 the Athenaeum moved to St George's Place, now known as Nelson Mandela Place, and, in 1890, part of the building was extended to house the School of Music.

During the first quarter of the twentieth century science, commerce and fine arts were transferred to sister institutions within the city. In 1928 the status of the School of Music was enhanced when it became the Scottish National Academy of Music and a formal link with the University of Glasgow was established when the office of Principal of the Academy was combined with that of Professor of Music at the University in 1929 in the person of Dr W Gillies Whittaker. At this time the corner building in St George's Place, formerly the Glasgow Liberal Club, was acquired through the generosity of Sir Daniel Stevenson and others.

In 1939 the Academy became a Scottish Central Institution supported by the Scottish Education Department and, in July 1944, His Majesty King George VI bestowed the Royal prefix to the Academy's name and our title became the Royal Scottish Academy of Music. In October of the same year Her Majesty The Queen consented to become the Patron, a capacity in which she graciously acted as Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother until her death in 2002.

The Royal Academy of Music, the Royal College of Music, the Royal Northern College of Music (formerly the Royal Manchester College of Music) and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama have, since 1947, formed the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and conducted examinations throughout the world.

In 1950 the College of Dramatic Art was instituted and became an integral part of the Academy. The importance of this development was reflected in a further change in title during 1968 to the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

The Robbins Report on the expansion of Higher Education in Britain was published in 1963 and, shortly afterwards, the Board of Governors of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama was invited by the Scottish Education Department to look for a site suitable for a new custom-built Academy.

In 1962 the St Andrew's Halls in Glasgow had been destroyed by fire and Sir Leslie Martin was appointed Architect both for the new Academy building and for the proposed new City Concert Hall. The Glasgow Royal Concert Hall was completed when Glasgow became the European City of Culture for 1990.

The way became clear in 1978 for the Academy to acquire the site upon which our building now stands and, in 1979, Glasgow District Council agreed to sell this site to the Governors. In September 1981 the Scottish Education Department approved the plans for the new Academy building and, in April 1983, The Right Honourable George Younger, then Secretary of State for Scotland, authorised the Governors to invite tenders for the construction of this building.

On 27th September 1984 the foundation stone was laid by Dame Janet Baker, the President of the Academy, and on 23rd October 1985 The Right Honourable The Lord Provost of Glasgow, Dr Robert Gray, performed the 'topping out' ceremony.

In 1987 the Academy moved to its new premises at 100 Renfrew Street and the building was formally opened by Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother on 9th March 1988.

An important milestone in the development of the institution was reached in 1994 when the Privy Council conferred degree - awarding status upon the Academy. Later that year the first degree was awarded to our Royal Patron in the Golden Jubilee year of her Patronage.

In 1997 the Academy celebrated its first 150 years with a variety of concerts and other commemorative events as well as the publication of a lavishly illustrated history of the institution.

The Alexander Gibson Opera School was completed in 1998. This magnificent new building adjoins the main building and incorporates a unique venue for a wide range performance activities including Chamber Opera and Musical Theatre. In addition there is a variety of rehearsal and coaching rooms as well as a conference suite with state of the art facilities. The Alexander Gibson Opera School was formally opened by Dame Janet Baker CH DBE on 1st December 1998.

The RSAMD continues to grow and develop. It is now standing at an important point in its history. Post-devolution Scotland is in a process of redefining its place in the world. Culture and the performing arts are an important factor in defining a nation and it is essential that the RSAMD be central to this process of national repositioning.

The Academy's mission is "to produce musicians, actors and other professionals in music and drama well-equipped to pursue a diversity of careers at national and international level." In 2002, the RSAMD appointed a new Principal, John Wallace, to fulfil that mission and to evolve a new mission for the twenty-first century. The next few years will be eventful. Changes and developments will be reported in the Publication Scheme and on the Academy's web site.

The RSAMD Today

The RSAMD is Scotland's International Academy for Music and Drama. It is one of the four Royal Schools of Music in the UK that go to make up the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. The others are the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music in London and the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. It is also one of the three Royal Academies of Drama, the others being the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) in London, and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (RWCMD) in Cardiff.

Click here to view an organisation chart of the RSAMD. This illustrates in diagrammatic form how the Schools of Music and Drama are structured and how they fit within the framework of the Academy as a whole, under one Principal and supported by the various departments in Finance and General Administration. For further information on the decision-making structure in the Academy including the committee structure and line management on Quality Assessment Handbook Chapter 13.

The RSAMD offers a wide range of courses from undergraduate degrees through to practice -based PhDs in an artistic performing environment.

Details of all our courses can be found in our Prospectus which is published annually. The prospectus can be obtained by calling in at the RSAMD, or by ringing +44 (0)141 332 4101 or by e-mail to registry@rsamd.ac.uk

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