

## Leeds Conservatoire Board and Committee Member Profiles (A-Z)

### **AARON CASSERLY STEWART**

Aaron is a jazz vocalist and former singer with the three-time Grammy Award winning group the 'Sounds of Blackness'. He is the former personal assistant to Morris Hayes (Prince's keyboardist and band leader of the New Power Generation). Winner of a 2012 NAACP Image Award, Aaron is a Professor of Music Business at the London Performing Academy of Music and is the Executive Producer at Supa Qween Records. Aaron is also the Chair of the Black Lives Matter Leeds and Guest Lecturer at the University of Bolton. He is a PRS Foundation Advisor; Music:Leeds Advisor; Founder/Lead of Paradise Hill Productions and former City Commissioner/ Mayor of Parsons, Kansas.

*Aaron is an external director on the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors; he is also one of two Vice Chairs of the Board*

### **AMANDA WILCOX (CO-OPTEE, EXTERNAL DIRECTOR)**

As University Secretary at York St John University, Dr Amanda Wilcox leads the University's corporate governance, quality assurance, academic registry and business administration, as well as student administration and support services. Amanda has responsibility for the student journey, student opportunities and experience in addition to equality, diversity and inclusion which are essential pillars of York St John's commitment to Social Justice.

Amanda joined York St John in 2018 with extensive experience in a wide variety of roles in institutions and sector bodies (including HEFCE, OfS and QAA). She has a background in academia, with a PhD in parasitology and immunology. After some time as a postdoctoral researcher, she began working in the FE sector where she spent 8 years, ultimately as Director of Higher Education for an FE college. She then moved into HE, with managerial positions including academic registrar at the University of Hull and strategic advisor for the Pro Vice Chancellors. Most recently, Amanda worked for the Office for Students (formerly Higher Education Funding Council) as Head of Student Engagement / Regional Consultant: North East, Yorkshire and the Humber.

*Amanda is an external director on the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors and Leeds Conservatoire Audit Committee; Amanda is also Vice Chair of the Audit Committee*

### **BEN SAUNDERS**

Benjamin Saunders was organ scholar of Downing College, Cambridge University and Assistant Director of Music at the cathedrals of St Giles' Edinburgh, Blackburn and Chester. Since 2002 he has been Director of Music for the Diocese of Leeds, carrying overall responsibility for the largest church music programme in the UK.

Ben has been engaged by many external bodies as a consultant in the management and development of music programmes with particular expertise in fundraising and organisational structure, especially addressing access in marginalised or deprived communities. He was appointed a Director of Leeds College of Music (now Leeds Conservatoire) in 2013 and Visiting Professor of Music at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana in 2015.

As an organist, he has performed to HM the Queen, Princess Anne and US President Carter and worked with conductor Carl Davis and jazz virtuoso Dick Hyman. He has given solo organ concerts in France, Italy, Holland, Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Russia and the United States and records as a soloist for Brilliant Classics and Herald AV. Ben has also been a drummer in two rock bands, keyboardist in the Edinburgh International Jazz Festival and is now studying the Classical Accordion - developing a project to introduce this new instrument to children across West Yorkshire. From January 2021 he is leading the roll out of the National Schools Singing Programme across the UK.

*Ben is an external director on the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors*

## **CAROLYN LORD**

Carolyn, a solicitor, has spent all of her life in Leeds and Yorkshire. In a career spanning over 30 years, she has advised on some of the most significant development schemes in Leeds, as well as projects across the UK, and has been appointed to external roles to deal with areas of governance of local authorities in West Yorkshire. She is also a trustee of Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

With nine years as a governor at Leeds Trinity University and a further two years as a member of the Board at Leeds Conservatoire, Carolyn is passionate about opening up the opportunities of Higher Education (HE) to the widest diversity of students and helping to ensure the long-term success of specialist HE institutions that add to the region's cultural richness.

Carolyn has a life-long love of music which she has passed on to her three sons. She has sung in many choirs and was a founder member of St Peter's Singers in Leeds in her teenage years. She has also sung in or been associated with Leeds Cathedral Choir since the 1980s.

*Carolyn is an external director (and Chair from 22 January 2022) on the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors; she is also a member of the Leeds Conservatoire Audit Committee*

## **CHERRY FRICKER**

Cherry is Director of Finance and Operations at the National Centre for Early Music. After graduating with a music degree she qualified as a Chartered Accountant, training in the Leeds office of a national accountancy firm.

*Cherry is an external director (and one of two Vice Chairs) on the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors, Chair of the Leeds Conservatoire Audit Committee and a co-opted member of the Group Audit Committee*

## **CHRIS MONKS**

In 1977, after studying saxophone and arranging at The City of Leeds College of Music, Chris joined the Royal Exchange Theatre Company in Manchester. Following several years working as a theatre composer and musical director, in 1990 he began to direct. Through the 90s his directing career included productions for D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, Bolton Octagon, The Belgrade, Coventry, and Salisbury Playhouse.

In 1995 he directed his reworking of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* for the New Vic, Newcastle-under-Lyme. Following its success his music theatre adaptations became an essential part of the New Vic's repertoire for over a decade, and included radical reworkings of *Die Fledermaus*, *Carmen*, and *Don Giovanni*.

In January 2009 Chris succeeded Sir Alan Ayckbourn at the Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough. After seven years as Artistic Director he returned to a freelance career, and now divides his time between directing drama students, mainly at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, and writing plays and musicals.

*Chris is an external director on the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors*

## **CLAIRE MARSH**

Claire has worked at Leeds Conservatoire since 1998, and is now Head of Library Services. She has degrees in music and in information management, and became a chartered librarian in 2001. In 2019 she was given a Personal Achievement Award by the International Association of Music Librarians (UK and Ireland) for her work.

The highlight of her time at the conservatoire so far was her involvement in the creation of the new library building, when she worked closely with architects and contractors to ensure the library was the best it could be.

She is active as a musician, singing in an award-winning ladies' choir, and directing a village community choir.

In 2018 she was elected by her colleagues to serve on the conservatoire board, a role she is proud to fulfil.

*Claire is the staff elected member on the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors*

## **CLUNY MACPHERSON**

Cluny was Chief Officer, Culture and Sport at Leeds City Council between 2013 and 2020 where he managed 31 cultural and sporting venues, including the largest city museum service in the UK.

He led Leeds' bid to become European Capital of Culture 2023 and, when Brexit prevented the UK taking part, he set up Leeds Culture Trust to deliver a 'Leeds 2023' anyway.

Before that he was Director, Yorkshire for Arts Council England, and also worked as a musician for 10 years.

*Cluny is an external director of the Leeds Conservatoire Board*

## **COLIN BOOTH OBE**

Colin was appointed as Principal and CEO of Leeds City College in 2015 before the change to become Luminare Education Group. Prior to moving to Leeds, Colin was Principal of Barnsley College for seven years where he steered the college to an Ofsted rating of outstanding. He has worked in the further education sector for over 35 years; his background is as a teacher and manager in Skills for Life and provision for students with disabilities or learning difficulties. He has also worked as a part-time inspector for Ofsted and the Adult Learning Inspectorate.

Colin was awarded an OBE for services to further education in the Queen's 2015 New Year Honours list.

*As Group CEO Colin is a governor of the Luminare Education Group and sits on each board within the group's governance structure; he is also a member of the Finance Committee, Governance & Nominations Committee and Property Strategy Committee*

## ELISE BROWN

A consultant and project manager in the classical musical and ballet industry, Elise has over 15 years of experience in music management, spanning a 25 year career in the arts, music and entertainment businesses.

Elise combines her interests in culture and the arts with a desire to assist her immediate and wider community. As well as spearheading her own voluntary initiatives, Elise is on the Development Committee for Clean Break, is a trustee for United in Hammersmith & Fulham and is the founder and Chair of Mama Haven, a charity she created to address socio economic barriers.

*Elise is an external director on the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors*

## JENNY HOY

Jenny has extensive teaching and senior academic leadership experience, most recently as Head of the Centre for Open Learning (Head of School) within the University of Edinburgh. Jenny's academic background is in Music and she will be a familiar face to many, having started her teaching career at 18 whilst she was a student at the conservatoire, leaving in 2015 to take up her post in Edinburgh.

During what was an almost 20-year period of involvement with the conservatoire, Jenny's influence included the early development of the Junior Conservatoire programme which continues to offer innovative provision for young musicians and which was the first in the UK to include music production as a dedicated subject area.

Committed to inclusion and a firm believer in the transformative power of education, Jenny continues to perform and record as a percussionist whenever she can and has enjoyed gigs everywhere from a squat in Sheffield to the Oslo Opera House. In recent years, Jenny has recorded vibraphone on Corinne Bailey-Rae's last album, drums on a film soundtrack for Netflix, and a mixture of instruments including a plastic bag and bowed cymbals on an album as part of Beccy Owen's *Refuge* female collective. Jenny is a founding member of La Banda Europa – a 36-piece ensemble, put together to celebrate music and culture across the European continent.

*Jenny is an external director on the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors and, as a governor of the Luminare Education Group, sits on the Group Board and Group Remuneration Committee*

## JOE ALLEN

Joe Allen is an interdisciplinary creative working across music and theatre. Joe is a recent graduate from Leeds Conservatoire's BA (Hons) Music (Jazz) degree pathway where he specialised in saxophone and music direction. Joe has worked as a Music Director on R&D weeks for new musicals by Gus Gowland, and by Leo & Hyde. As well as Music Director for his Big Band and Free Improvisation projects. As a stage director, Joe has most recently directed *Dido & Aeneas* for Leeds Conservatoire's opera project (a joint production between Leeds Conservatoire and LCSU Opera Society).

As a musician, Joe plays clarinet for Leeds-based Swing Manouche Trio 'Where Is The Red Scarf?' and works extensively as a pit musician for local musical theatre productions across his home region of Oxfordshire. Before starting at Leeds Conservatoire, Joe was also a clarinettist for the National Marching Band of the Air Training Corps. Currently, Joe's primary work revolves around free improvisation and music for theatre, something he intends to study at MA level in the near future.

Joe is the elected President of Leeds Conservatoire Students' Union for 2021/22 and has previously had roles within the Students' Union as LGBTQ+ Officer ('19-20) and Activities Officer ('20-21). Joe is also the Universities, Conservatoires and Outreach Officer for the National Student Opera Society.

*As President of Leeds Conservatoire Students' Union, Joe is a member of the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors*

## **JOE WILSON**

Joe Wilson's career incorporates extensive experience within the music and creative industries; not least as a founding member of the band Sneaker Pimps, but as a producer, artist and educator too. By the late 90s, Joe was an active producer for Mute Records, Creation Records and One Little Independent, and was still touring and performing with Sneaker Pimps, who by then had sold two million records around the world.

Professor Wilson moved into music education in 2010, after being recruited to design a Popular Music degree for the University of Gloucestershire, and joined Leeds Conservatoire in 2013 as Director of Curriculum. Since 2013, the training on offer has seen a huge diversification. Within four years, five courses with 900 students grew into a portfolio of 27 courses with 1300 students. Joe became Vice Principal in 2018, and is now the conservatoire's sixth Principal.

*As Principal of Leeds Conservatoire, Joe is a member of the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors*

## **JULIE DRAKE**

Julie is Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants England and Wales and the Higher Education Academy. A Principal Lecturer in Accounting, specialising in auditing, Julie has led strategic initiatives in education, including the development of foundation degrees and employer engagement.

She was previously Chair of the Joseph Priestley College Board of Governors and is a member of the Financial Ethics and Governance Research Group at the University of Huddersfield.

*Julie is a co-opted member of the Group Audit Committee and the Leeds Conservatoire Audit Committee*

## **PAUL HOLLINS**

Paul is Professor of Cultural Research Development for the Arts and Management at the University of Bolton and is Fellow of the Cybernetics Society. He has written extensively on themes of music and musical subcultures and education technology. His current work is focussed on deindustrialisation and music, more specifically on electronic music in Yorkshire.

For over a decade Paul directed the JISC national innovation support, the Centre for Educational Technology and Interoperability Standards (CETIS) and has extensive experience of Higher Education (HE), HE governance and management. His PhD was focussed on the efficacy of immersive environments in formal educational settings.

*Paul is an external director on the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors*

## **DR SHAID MAHMOOD**

A former governor at local primary and high schools and with over 20 years of governance experience in further education, more recently, as Chair of the Board of the Luminare Education Group, Shaid has worked in a diverse range of senior roles in science and industry and the public sector. Committed to making a positive difference to the lives of others and hugely passionate about further education, Shaid has worked nationally and internationally, led the integration of public services and worked closely with business, the third sector and with local and national politicians.

Shaid is also the Chair of the National Association of Colleges, a Chief Officer at Leeds City Council - designing and leading transformation programmes - and an associate trustee of Leeds United Football Club.

*As a governor and Chair of the Luminare Education Group, Shaid is also Chair of the Group's Governance & Nominations Committee, a member of the Group Finance Committee and Group Remuneration Committee and is a member of the Leeds Conservatoire Board of Directors*